

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/16/97

EXTRA 31/97

Fear of torture / Health concern

7 March 1997

TURKEYRecep Mara\_1\_, publisher  
Nuran Mara\_1\_ (f)  
Levent Bakanay

---

Married couple Recep and Nuran Mara\_1\_ are reported to have been detained by police at Ankara Airport on 6 March 1997 and taken to the Anti-Terror Branch of Ankara Police Headquarters. Recep Mara\_1\_, Director of Komal Publishing house and former prisoner of conscience, was reportedly attempting to leave the country under the passport of Levent Bakanay. Levent Bakanay is believed to have subsequently been detained at his home in Ankara and taken to the Anti-Terror Branch.

Amnesty International fears that the three may be subjected to ill-treatment or torture in police custody. Concern for Recep Mara\_1\_'s well-being is heightened by the fact that he suffers from health problems associated with his earlier imprisonment. Both he and Nuran were tortured in custody in 1994 (see below).

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Recep Mara\_1\_ was first imprisoned at the age of 16 in connection with articles he published in newspapers in his home town of Erzurum. Upon release he began to work for a publishing house in Istanbul which produced works mainly on issues relating to the Kurdish minority in Turkey. In 1976 he became director of this publishing company which was the target of frequent police raids. In 1982 he was again imprisoned and in various trials received prison sentences which totalled more than 36 years.

Recep Mara\_1\_ suffers from neurological problems and he experiences difficulties with his vision and balance. These symptoms began in 1984 after a prolonged hunger-strike in Diyarbak\_r Military Prison where he was then held. The prisoners were ill-treated and beaten during the hunger-strike. Recep Mara\_1\_ was among a group of prisoners who were transferred to prison hospital in a critical state after the hunger-strike had ended.

He was conditionally released in April 1991 at the time of a partial amnesty. Following his release, he continued to write, to publish books and to speak of the problems faced by Kurds in Turkey.

In September 1993 an arrest warrant was issued against him after he had appealed for a peaceful political solution to the conflict in the southeast in a televised discussion. Recep Mara\_1\_ went into hiding, but was detained in July 1994 during a raid by police on the house he was staying. Recep Mara\_1\_ was tortured by electric shocks, *falaka* (beatings on the soles of the feet) and by repeated severe beatings. Nuran Mara\_1\_ was detained in 1994 with her husband and also tortured.

In November 1995, Recep Mara\_1\_ was sentenced to a further term of one year and four months' imprisonment for an article published in the newspaper *Jiyana Nû*. He was released shortly later and immediately went into hiding because of other charges pending against him.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:**

- expressing concern that Recep Mara\_l\_, Nuran Mara\_l\_ and Levant Bakanay are being held in incommunicado detention in Ankara police custody;
- urging that they not be subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- requesting that they be granted prompt access to their lawyers and to any medical care they may require.

**APPEALS TO:**

1. Minister of the Interior:

Mrs Meral Ak\_ener  
Içisleri Bakanl\_\_\_\_  
Ankara, Turkey

**Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Faxes: +90 312 417 2390**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

2. Prime Minister

Mr Necmettin Erbakan  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Ba\_bakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara  
Turkey

**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey**

**Fax: +90 312 417 0476**

**Telex: 44061/44062/44063 bbmt tr; 44099 basb tr**

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Lütfü Esengün  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Ba\_bakanl\_k  
06573 Ankara, Turkey

**Faxes: +90 312 417 0476**

and to diplomatic representatives of TURKEY accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 April 1997