

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/25/96

EXTRA 22/96

Fear of "disappearance" / Fear of torture 13 February 1996

TURKEYMahmut _entürk

Devrim _entürk

Hüseyin Yüceda_ , aged 35

The whereabouts of three men, originally from Sivas province but now living in Istanbul and detained there on 6 February 1996, remain unknown. Amnesty International fears that they are at risk of "disappearance" or torture while held in unacknowledged detention.

Mahmut _entürk and his son, Devrim, were detained by plainclothes police officers in the Anadolu coffee-house in the Gaziosmanpa_a district of Istanbul. They were last seen being taken towards a nearby wooded area. Their relatives have made inquiries with the relevant authorities in Istanbul and Sivas, but have been unable to establish the whereabouts of the two men.

Hüseyin Yüceda_ was also detained in the Gaziosmanpa_a district on 6 February. On 8 February he was escorted by police officers to the house of his uncle, Süleyman Yüceda_ , in Gaziosmanpa_a , which was then searched. Hüseyin Yüceda_ has not been seen since, and, as with the other two men, attempts to establish his whereabouts have been unsuccessful.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Counter-insurgency operations against armed opposition groups, which began four months ago, are continuing in Sivas province. Under these operations, villagers are being forced from their homes and villages, and scores of people have been detained (see EXTRA 15/96, EUR 44/19/96, 2 February 1996). It is possible that the three men named above, all from Sivas province, are detained in connection with these operations. Any person suspected of supporting the PKK or any other illegal armed organization is at serious risk of torture, "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution.

People suspected of offences under the Anti-Terror Law can be held in police custody without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to 30 days in the 10 provinces under State of Emergency in the southeast and for up to 15 days in the rest of Turkey. With no access to the outside world they are at the mercy of their interrogators.

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees, and for notification of their families, are almost universally ignored. Lack of prompt registration and notification is extremely distressing for the families of detainees, and creates the conditions in which "disappearances" and torture can occur.

Torture is used mainly in police and gendarmerie stations during the first days or weeks following detention. It is often applied to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as informal punishment for assumed support of illegal organizations. Torture methods include being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, hanging by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Mahmut _entürk, Devrim _entürk and Hüseyin Yüceda_, detained in the Gaziosmanpa_a district of Istanbul on 6 February 1996, and held in unacknowledged detention since then;
- calling for an immediate investigation to establish their whereabouts, and for their family members and lawyers to be informed of the results without further delay;
- seeking assurances that the three men are not being subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment.

APPEALS TO:

Chief Prosecutor at Istanbul State Security Court

Mr Ahmet Köksal

DGM Ba_savc_s_

Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi

Istanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Istanbul, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

Interior Minister

Mr Teoman Ünüsan

Ministry of Interior

_çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Icisleri Bakanligi, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 418 1795

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Adnan Ekmen

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanl_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

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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 16 March 1996.