

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/"Disappearance"

TURKEY

Ahmet Ece (m)

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Ahmet Ece, who has apparently "disappeared" following a phone call to his relatives on 23 September. He is believed to be in gendarmerie detention or police custody, where he is at risk of torture or ill-treatment. However, the authorities deny his detention.

Ahmet Ece had reportedly left his home in Istanbul around 16 September. On 23 September he called home to tell his relatives that he would return to Istanbul the following day.

On 24 September, the main police station in Findik village, near Güçlükönak in the southeast of Turkey, where Ahmet Ece is apparently registered as being resident, informed the local public registry office that Ahmet Ece had been taken into custody by gendarmerie in Lice in Diyarbakır province. The police station reported that this information had been received from the Güçlükönak gendarmerie.

After obtaining this information, lawyers from the the Diyarbakır Human Rights Association (IHD) spoke several times to the Lice public prosecutor. The prosecutor stated that, according to gendarmerie units, no individual of that name had been taken into custody.

On 24 September, the prosecutor had also apparently spoken to officials at the gendarmerie headquarters in Güçlükönak, who stated that they had no knowledge of the detention of Ahmet Ece, even though this information had reportedly been passed on by them the previous day.

By 25 September, Ahmet Ece had not been entered in the registry of individuals taken into custody at Diyarbakır State Security Court.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code (CMUK) for the prompt and proper registration of detainees and for notification to their families, are frequently ignored. This can facilitate the "disappearance" and torture of detainees and causes great distress to their families.

Since January 2002, people suspected of offences which fall under the scope of the State Security Courts can be held in police custody without access to legal counsel for up to forty-eight hours. The period before which detainees must be brought before a judge is four days, but can be extended to ten days in the two provinces currently under State of Emergency rule, including Diyarbakır, where Ahmet Ece is suspected of being detained. Although detainees are supposed to be granted access to a lawyer during extended periods of detention, this does not always happen in practice.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Ahmet Ece;
- urging that immediate steps be taken to establish his whereabouts and that his family be informed of the results without delay;

-urging that he be granted immediate access to legal counsel if he is in custody;
- calling for guarantees that he is not subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment if he is in custody;
-reminding the government of Turkey of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 3: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person".

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Interior

Muzaffer Ecemi_

Ministry of Interior

Içi_leri Bakanligi

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 418 17 95

Telegram: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Minister

Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie

General Mehmet_ener Eruygur

Jandarma Kuvvetleri Komutanligi

Bakanl_klar

Ankara, Turkey

Telegram:Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie, Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 418 9208

Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Ali Do_an

Office of the Prime Minister,

BaÖbakanl_k,

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 0476

Salutation: Dear Minister

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 7 November 2002.