

TURKEY R_dvan Olcasöz (m), election observer for DEHAP
Fahri Kini (m), election observer for DEHAP
_emsettin Solhan (m), election observer for DEHAP
Ramazan Akman (m), election observer for DEHAP
Salahattin Örnek (m), villager from K_z_ltepe, Mardin province
Sava_Y_ld_z (m), villager from K_z_ltepe, Mardin province
Alaatin Ar_ (m), villager from Bu_day village, Mardin province
and other local villagers in Mardin province

Gendarmerie and village guards in the province of Mardin, southeast Turkey have reportedly beaten and threatened those named above, who are supporters and members of the legal pro-Kurdish political party DEHAP. The beatings and threats took place during and after the 3 November Turkish parliamentary elections in an apparent attempt to limit voting for legal Kurdish political parties. Other villagers in the area may also be subjected to threats and violence.

During the elections, R_dvan Olcasöz, Fahri Kini, _emsettin Solhan and Ramazan Akman were allegedly beaten by members of the village guard militia (villagers paid and armed by the government to fight the illegal armed group, the Kurdistan Worker's Party - formerly PKK, now known as KADEK) in the neighbourhood of Yüceli in K_z_ltepe, Mardin province. The four men were acting as election observers on behalf of DEHAP. All of them needed hospital treatment for injuries sustained during the beating.

On 4 November Salahattin Örnek and Sava_Y_ld_z, villagers from the same area, were also reportedly beaten by a group of village guard militia. Salahattin Örnek and Sava_Y_ld_z were reportedly beaten again on 7 November by the same group of village guard militia and had to be taken to K_z_ltepe state hospital for treatment.

Alaatin Ar_, from the village of Bu_day in Mardin province, has allegedly received death threats from the local gendarmerie after he talked to a visiting delegation of election observers from Norway shortly before the elections. He had complained that local villagers had been pressured by the gendarmerie not to vote for DEHAP but for the Turkish nationalist political party, the Nationalist Action Party (MHP). Since then the gendarmerie have apparently visited the village twice in order to look for him, and he has received anonymous telephone death threats saying "...give up on this, we will kill you".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Legal Kurdish political parties face daily harassment by the authorities: some have been closed, while others have been threatened with closure. Their supporters and members have been tortured, have "disappeared" and have even been killed.

DEHAP is a coalition of three parties, the largest of which is HADEP which is the successor to two previous parties which the authorities closed down for "separatism". Although HADEP opposes the use of political violence, in some quarters the party is regarded as the "political wing" of KADEK.

HADEP members in the southeast of Turkey are at risk of detention and harassment - including death threats - by security officials. Amnesty International has received reports of HADEP members being tortured or ill-treated while in

detention. On 25 January 2001, the two heads of the HADEP branch in the town of Silopi, Serdar Tan__ and Ebubekir Deniz "disappeared" after visiting a gendarmerie station. (See UA 26/01, EUR 44/007/2001 30 January 2001, and follow-ups EUR 44/010/2001, 26 February 2001, and EUR 44/019/2001, 29 March 2001. Their whereabouts remain unknown.

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

- expressing concern at reports that R_dvan Olcasöz, Fahri Kini, _emsettin Solhan, Ramazan Akman, Salahattin Örnek and Sava_Y_ld_z have been beaten by members of the village guard militia in Yüceli, in K_z_ltepe, Mardin province;
- expressing concern for the safety of Alaatin Ar_ who has reportedly been threatened with death in Bu_day village in Mardin, and urging the authorities to take immediate steps to guarantee his safety;
- raising the concerns that villagers in Mardin province may be subjected to violence by village guards or gendarmerie following the elections of 3 November and reminding the authorities that Turkey is a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights, of which Article 3 states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment";
- urging the government to carry out a full and impartial investigation, to establish the truth of these allegations, and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior
Ministry of Interior
İç_i_leri Bakanl____
06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegram: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey
Fax: + 90 312 418 17 95
Salutation: Dear Minister

Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie

~~General~~
Jandarma Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı
Bakanl_klar
Ankara, Turkey

Telegram: Chief of Staff of the Gendarmerie, Ankara, Turkey
Fax: + 90 312 418 9208
Salutation: Dear General

Governor of Mardin province

Mardin Valisi,
Mardin Valilili_i,
Mardin, Turkey

Telegram: Governor, Mardin Province, Mardin, Turkey
Email: mardinvaliligi@mardin.gov.tr
Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights
Ali Do_an
Office of the Prime Minister,
Ba_bakanl_k,
06573 Ankara, Turkey

Fax: + 90 312 417 04 76

Salutation: Dear Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country.

SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 December 2002.