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Fear of Torture

29 September 1994

TURKEY Ali Ekber Kaya, president of Human Rights Association in Tunceli

On 22 September 1994, Ali Ekber Kaya, a civil servant with Tunceli Council and president of the Human Rights Association in Tunceli, was detained at his home in the middle of the night. He is being held incommunicado at Tunceli Police Headquarters and the police have acknowledged his detention.

Reportedly, the public prosecutor granted Ali Ekber Kaya's father permission to see his son in custody, but when he went to the Police Headquarters, the police refused him access. His lawyers were equally unable to gain access. Ali Ekber Kaya was said to be due to appear before the prosecutor on 27 September, but, to Amnesty International's knowledge, this has not happened either. Under Emergency Legislation, which is in force in Tunceli province, Ali Ekber Kaya may be held incommunicado for up to one month. There is great concern for his safety.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Human rights activists monitoring the fast deteriorating human rights situation in Turkey are being harassed, detained, tortured, imprisoned, threatened, murdered and "disappeared". A recent AI-report, *Turkey: Human Rights Defenders at Risk* (AI Index: EUR 44/88/94) describes the difficulties and dangers facing members of the Turkish Human Rights Association, founded in 1986, which has 56 branches throughout the country and a membership of 15,000.

The conflict in southeast Turkey between government forces and guerrillas of the PKK has claimed almost 13,000 lives since it began in August 1984. Police operations against suspected PKK supporters are being carried out all over Turkey. Since 21 September, the security forces have mounted a huge military operation in Tunceli province against the guerrillas of the PKK thought to be operating in this mountainous region. A state of emergency remains in force in the 10 provinces in the east and southeast.

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. Following a programme of visits to Turkish police stations in 1990, 1991 and 1992, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT - established by the Council of Europe) reported: "In the light of all the information at its disposal, the ECPT can only conclude that the practice of torture and other forms of severe ill-treatment of persons in police custody remains widespread in Turkey and that such methods are applied to both ordinary criminal suspects and persons held under anti-terrorism provisions".

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

- expressing your concern for the safety of Ali Ekber Kaya, detained on 22

September 1994 and since held incommunicado at Tunceli Police Headquarters;
 - mentioning the findings of the ECPT and seeking assurances that Ali Ekber Kaya is not subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
 - urging that his family and lawyers are granted access without further delay;
 - asking to be informed if any charges are brought against him.

APPEALS TO

1) State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Azimet Köylüo_lu
 Office of the Prime Minister
 Ba_bakanl_k
 06573 Ankara, Turkey
Faxes: +90 312 417 0476
Salutation: Dear Minister

2) Chief of Tunceli Police:

Mr Süleyman Güleç
 Tunceli Emniyet Müdürlü_ü
 Tunceli, Turkey
Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Tunceli, Turkey
Salutation: Dear Sir

3) Minister of the Interior:

Mr Nahit Mente_e
 İçisleri Bakanl____
 Ankara, Turkey
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey
Faxes: +90 312 428 4346
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Prof Mümtaz Soysal
 D__i_leri Bakanl____
 06100 Ankara, Turkey
Faxes: 90 312 287 1886

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 29 October 1994.