

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 284/91 (EUR 44/116/91, 20 August 1991) - Fear of Torture

TURKEY: Tefvik Özer

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On 14 August 1991, leaflets by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) were distributed in the town of Siirt in southeast Turkey. Subsequently, Tefvik Özer, a member of the Human Rights Association and the Chairperson of the People's Labour Party (HEP) in Siirt, was detained in the street. A number of bystanders witnessed that he was severely beaten prior to being driven off to the Political Branch of Siirt Police Headquarters. Witnesses alleged that he was also threatened with being killed. It was feared that he would be subjected to torture while detained.

Tefvik Özer was not granted access to a lawyer. He was taken before the local court in Siirt on 26 August, where he was formally arrested and committed to Siirt prison. It is not known on what charges he is being held and it is thought that he will soon be transferred to Diyarbakır. He told a visitor to the prison that he had been severely beaten on his back.

Amnesty International received a petition to the public prosecutor written by Cüneyt Gündüz (13 years old and not 10 as indicated in the original UA 284/91) in which he alleges that he saw a plainclothes policeman referred to as "commissioner" placing the PKK leaflet in a drawer in Tefvik Özer's workplace. When he challenged the police about the leaflet, they took him to the police station: *"They said they were going to take my statement and blindfolded me. They said I should leave Siirt within one week, that my boss (Tefvik Özer) was a bad man ... they prepared some documents. They asked me to sign them. I was blindfolded. I asked if I could read them. They did not let me. They said it was forbidden to read the documents ... the police beat me badly in the workshop and in the police station. They said that if I did not leave Siirt within one week they would kill me."*

Please send no more appeals. The risk of torture is now past, and Amnesty International will continue to monitor the case closely.