

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Torture / Fear of "disappearance"

31 March 1995

TURKEY

Mehmet Ali Çetinkaya, aged 62

Veyis Diler, aged 67-68

Ya_ar Özdemir, aged 55-58

Hüseyin Sevindi, aged 26

Hüsnu Söz

Yusuf Turan, aged 48-50

Mustafa

Hasan Sevindi, father of Hüseyin Sevindi

Amnesty International has grave fears for the safety of at least seven people detained in eastern Turkey by the security forces on the night of 21/22 March 1995.

On the night of 21/22 March, members of the Turkish security forces clashed with Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) guerrillas in an area approximately two miles from A_veren village, which is in the Tercan district of Erzincan. During the shooting, two members of the security forces were killed and one injured. A local villager, the son of `Mustafa', one of those later detained, was also killed in the encounter.

Shortly after this, the security forces raided A_veren village, and took all the men of the village into detention. Amnesty International has the names of eight of these men (named above), all of whom are from A_veren village, except "Mustafa", who is from a neighbouring village. The men were all taken to Vican (Yollar Üstü), between the towns of Erzincan and Mercan, and held.

Two of the detainees were later released: Hasan Sevindi, who reportedly showed signs of severe torture, and a seriously asthmatic prisoner whose name is not known to Amnesty International. Another of the detainees, Hüsnu Söz, was allegedly taken by the security forces to show them where the PKK hideout was.

He has not been heard from since, and fears are growing that he may have "disappeared". Amnesty International has received no indication that any of the detainees has any links with the PKK.

The detention of the remaining six people named above has been acknowledged by the security forces, but Amnesty International fears that they are at serious risk of torture.

Mehmet Ali Çetinkaya was taken to the village on 29 March by the security forces in order to make a statement. Reportedly, one of his ears had been cut off, his face had been slashed and he had been so badly tortured he was virtually unrecognizable. Mehmet Ali Çetinkaya was taken back into detention, and there has been no news of him, or the other detainees, since.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The conflict in southeast Turkey between government forces and guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) has claimed more than 14,000 lives since it began in August 1984. Police operations against suspected PKK supporters and other Kurdish activists are being carried out all over Turkey. A state of emergency remains in force in 10 provinces in the east and southeast, although Erzincan is not one of those affected.

Any person suspected of belonging to, or supporting, the PKK is at serious risk of torture, "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution. In 1994 there were more than 50 reported "disappearances", and more than 400 people were killed in unclarified circumstances. There were 29 reported deaths in custody due to torture during the first 10 months of 1994, more than in any year since 1982, and all information available to Amnesty International indicates that torture is still widespread and systematic in Turkey.

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

- expressing serious concern for the safety of Mehmet Ali Çetinkaya, Veyis Diler, Ya_ar Özdemir, Hüseyin Sevindi, Yusuf Turan, all from A_veren village, Tercan, Erzincan, and `Mustafa', from a neighbouring village, all of whom were detained by security forces on the night of 21/22 March 1995, and who are currently in custody in Vican;
- urging that the whereabouts of Hüsnu Söz, taken by security forces in order to search for a PKK hideout, be immediately established;
- calling for an investigation into the alleged torture of Mehmet Ali Çetinkaya and Hasan Sevindi, and urging that Mehmet Ali Çetinkaya be immediately given appropriate medical treatment;
- ask to be kept informed of the results of any investigation carried out.

APPEALS TO:

1) President Süleyman Demirel

Office of the President

Cumhur Ba_kanl____

06100 Ankara

Telegrams: President Demirel, Ankara

Telexes: 42303 kosk tr

Faxes: +90 312 468 50 12 (via Press Office)

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Minister of Interior

Mr Nahit Ment_e

_çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 418 1066; 418 1795

Salutation: Dear Minister

3) State Governor of Erzincan:

Erzincan Valili_i

Erzincan, Turkey

Telegrams: Erzincan Valili_i, Erzincan, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Governor

4) 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

Telegrams: Mr Köylüo_lu, Ba_bakanl_k, Ankara, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES 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 20 May 1995.