

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/71/96

EXTRA 69/96

Fear of "disappearance" / Fear of torture

17 May 1996

TURKEYHanife Rüzgar (f) aged 47

Aycan Rüzgar (f) aged 27, Hanife's daughter

Fatma Rüzgar (f) aged 30, Hanife's daughter

Medeni Rüzgar, Fatma's husband

Four members of the Rüzgar family, named above, were taken into detention in their house in the Çamlıca quarter of Batman on 13 May 1996, reportedly by Special Operations Team members (*), who then reportedly occupied the family home for four days, holding another daughter. The latter has since been released, but it is not known where the four named above are being held or whether their detention has been duly registered. Amnesty International fears for their safety.

Hanife Rüzgar's husband, M. İrin Rüzgar, and their 12-year-old son, Abdül Halim, were shot in the street in Batman by unidentified assailants in January 1994 as İrin Rüzgar was going to work. The Rüzgar family house had been attacked 15 months previously by a large group of people who wounded İrin Rüzgar. The police who were called to the scene did not arrest the attackers, but detained İrin Rüzgar and one of his nephews. Following this incident İrin Rüzgar received frequent threats via the telephone.

(* trained for close combat with armed members of the PKK, under the authority of the Interior Ministry).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees, and for notification of their families, are almost universally ignored. Lack of prompt registration and notification is extremely distressing for the families of detainees, and creates the conditions in which "disappearances" and torture can occur.

People suspected of offences under the Anti-Terror Law can be held in police custody without access to family, friends or legal counsel for up to 30 days in the 10 provinces under State of Emergency in the southeast, and for 15 days in the rest of Turkey. When not being interrogated, detainees are held in cramped, airless and insanitary conditions. With no access to the outside world they are at the mercy of their interrogators.

Torture is often applied to extract confessions, to elicit information about illegal organizations, to intimidate detainees into becoming police informers or as informal punishment for assumed support of illegal organizations. Torture methods include being stripped naked and blindfolded, hosing with pressurized ice-cold water, hanging by the arms or wrists bound behind the victim's back, electric shocks, beating the soles of the feet, death threats and sexual assault.

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

- expressing grave concern for the safety of Hanife Rüzgar, her two daughters Aycan and Fatma Rüzgar, and her son-in-law Medeni Rüzgar, detained by Special Operations Team members in Batman on 13 May 1996 and since held at an unknown location;
- calling for an immediate investigation to establish their current whereabouts;

- urging that their detention be duly registered, their relatives be informed of their whereabouts without delay, and that they be promptly brought before a judge to be charged or released;
- seeking assurances that they are not being subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment.

APPEALS TO:

1. Batman Chief Public Prosecutor:

Cumhuriyet Ba_savc_s_
Batman C. Ba_savc_l____
Batman, Turkey

Telegrams: Cumhuriyet Bassavcısı, Batman, Turkey
Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

2. Chief of Police in Batman:

Mr Azmi Derin
Batman Emniyet Müdürlü_ü
Batman, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Mudurlugu, Batman, Turkey
Salutation: Dear Sir

3. Interior Minister:

Mr Ülkü Güney
Ministry of Interior
_çi_leri Bakanl____
06644 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 418 1795
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Mr Emre Gönensay
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
D__i_leri Bakanl____
06100 Ankara

Fax: +90 312 419 1547

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 20 June 1996