

PUBLIC

AI Index: EUR 44/75/00

21 December 2000

Further information on UA 378/00 (EUR 44/69/00, 13 December 2000) - Fear of torture and new concern: Possible "Disappearance"

TURKEY **Relatives and supporters of hunger striking prisoners**
Ümit Erkol, Ankara Medical Association Chairperson
65 other detainees

New name: Bayla Ba_ ta (f), aged 20, law student

Law student Bayla Ba_ ta was reportedly detained by police on 18 December, after she participated in the daily press conference given by relatives of prisoners on hunger strike in Taksim Square. Police have since denied having her in custody, and she is feared to have "disappeared".

Witnesses reportedly saw her being arrested at around 8pm in the Elmada_ area of Istanbul, by a plainclothes police officer who was encouraged by a group of over 20 other police officers. Others arrested at the same time, who were later released, did not see her while they were in custody.

Human rights defenders and representatives of the Bar Association were unable to get confirmation that she had been arrested. On 20 December Istanbul Police Headquarters reportedly told a relative of hers that she was detained there. When she tried to visit her there the next day, the police denied having Bayla Ba_ ta in custody.

Mass arrests linked to the hunger strike are continuing throughout the country. Police are reported to have sometimes used excessive force when arresting or dispersing demonstrators.

Of the detainees who were arrested on 12 December, 58 were released by the public prosecutor the next day. However, they have been charged with breaking the law on demonstrations. Their trial hearing will be on 21 January 2001.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Bayla Ba_ ta and asking where she is detained;
- urging that she is not tortured or ill-treated;

Please also continue appeals as before:

- expressing deep concern about allegations that police used excessive force and ill-treated Ümit Erkol and other detainees;
- urging the government to carry out a full and impartial investigation, including an independent medical examination, to establish the truth of these allegations, and asking to be informed of the results;
- urging the authorities to bring those responsible to justice, to suspend any officers accused of torture and ill-treatment from duty while they are under investigation, and dismiss them if they are convicted;
- urging the authorities to ensure that police do not use excessive force, torture or ill-treatment against demonstrators;
- reminding the government of its obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Turkey is a state party: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

APPEALS TO:

new address:

Istanbul Chief of Police

Istanbul Emniyet Müdürü

Istanbul Emniyet Müdürlüğü

Vatan Caddesi, Istanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: Istanbul Emniyet Müdürü, Istanbul, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Chief of Police

Minister of Interior

Mr Saadettin Tantan

İçişleri Bakanlığı

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 418 17 95

Salutation: Dear Minister

Minister of Justice

Prof Hikmet Sami Türk

Ministry of Justice

Adalet Bakanlığı

06659 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 417 3954 / 418 5667

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights

Mr Rüştü Kazım Yücelen

Office of the Prime Minister

Bakanlık

06573 Ankara

Turkey

Faxes: + 90 312 417 0476

and to diplomatic representatives of Turkey accredited to your country.

Please could appeal writers in EU member countries also send copies to their Minister of Foreign Affairs.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 February 2001.