

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "disappearance" / Fear of torture

12 July 1995

TURKEY

Mehmet Tünelli, livestock dealer from Diyarbak_r
Abdurrahman Tünelli, his son, aged about 18

Mehmet and Abdurrahman Tünelli, father and son from Diyarbak_r, have been held in unacknowledged police detention since 6 July 1995. Amnesty International fears that they may be tortured, and that they are at risk of "disappearance".

At 2am on 6 July, five or six men came to Mehmet Tünelli's home in a van with police markings and a car. They knocked and kicked at the door, saying, "We are police". They carried automatic weapons and walkie-talkies. They briefly looked under the beds and after some five minutes took Mehmet Tünelli and his eldest son, Abdurrahman, without giving any reason for their detention. Mehmet Tünelli's wife and six other children stayed behind.

The family has been living in Diyarbak_r since they were forced to leave their village (Kurdish name: Me_itki) near the town of Ç_nar in Diyarbak_r province, five years ago because they had not become village guards. Only the families of villagers who had agreed to become village guards were allowed to stay. Mehmet Tünelli has been making a living by dealing in livestock while his eldest son did painting jobs on construction sites. Abdurrahman Tünelli was briefly detained twice previously. Mehmet Tünelli's brother, Salih Tünelli, is a member of HADEP (People's Democracy Party - a legal political party with largely Kurdish membership) and currently in Diyarbak_r prison while on trial for either alleged membership or support of PKK, the illegal Kurdish Workers' Party.

On the day of their detention, Mehmet Tünelli's wife submitted a petition for information of her husband's and son's whereabouts to Diyarbak_r State Security Court. Police officers at the court, to whom she gives the petition every day, telephone the prosecutor for confirmation of Mehmet and Abdurrahman Tünelli's detention, and come back with a verbal response that the two men are not in custody.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The conflict in southeast Turkey between government forces and armed members of the PKK has claimed more than 17,000 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, including Diyarbak_r.

Any person suspected of supporting the PKK is at serious risk of torture, "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution. Detainees taken into custody on suspicion of political offences may be held without charge for up to 15 days. In the 10 provinces under emergency legislation the maximum detention period for political detainees may be doubled to 30 days.

In 1994 there were more than 55 confirmed "disappearances", and more than 400 people were killed in unclarified circumstances. Most of the victims were shot by unidentified assailants in the streets of cities in the southeast such as Batman where a member of parliament was shot in 1993. In many cases their relatives believe that they have been killed for political reasons by agents of the State.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Mehmet Tünelli and his son Abdurrahman, detained in Diyarbak_r on 6 July 1995 and since held in unacknowledged police custody;
- urging that their detention be duly registered at the prosecutor's office and that their family be informed of their whereabouts without delay;
- appealing that, while in police custody, the detainees be permitted access to their families and lawyers, and that they not be subjected to any form of ill-treatment;
- asking for information concerning the charges against the detainees.

APPEALS TO

1) Diyarbak_r Provincial Governor:

Mr Do_an Hatipo_lu
Valilikler

Diyarbak_r, Turkey

Telegrams: Valilikler, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Telexes: 72084 DYVA TR "Please forward to the Governor"; 72090 jasy tr; 72110 ohvt tr

Faxes: +90 412 222 2288

Salutation: Dear Governor

2) Chief Prosecutor at Diyarbak_r State Security Court:

Mr Bekir Selçuk

DGM Ba_savc_s_

Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi

Diyarbak_r, Turkey

Telegrams: DGM Bassavcisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

3) Diyarbak_r Chief of Police:

Mr R_dvan Güler

Diyarbak_r Emniyet Müdürlü_ü

Diyarbak_r, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Mudurlugu, Diyarbakir, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

4) State Minister with responsibility for Human Rights:

Mr Algan Hacalo_lu

Office of the Prime Minister

Ba_bakanl_k

06573 Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 417 0476

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Sabri Yavuz

nsan Haklar Ara_t_rma Komisyonu Ba_kan_

TBMM

Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 420 5394

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 28 August 1995.