

UA 169/96

Fear of "disappearance" / Fear for safety

4 July 1996

TURKEYAbdurrahman Temel, headman of Kocatepe village

_emsettin Temel

Abdülkadir Ektiren

Ali Ektiren

Ata Ektiren

Hami Ektiren

_ükrü Ektiren

Zeki Ektiren

Bube Efe

Seydo Efe

Sinan Efe

Yusuf Efe

Abdurrahman Efe

Esra Efe

Ali Akyol

Vedat Akyol

Musa Dursun

Mehmet Dursun

_ehmus Söylemez

Hasan Bozkan

Plus three other persons, names not known

There has been no news of the above-named villagers, all from Kocatepe village near Derik in the southeastern province of Mardin, since their reported detention on 27 June 1996 in a security force operation. Relatives have been unable to establish the whereabouts of the detainees, and the authorities have not acknowledged any of the detentions. There are serious fears for the lives of the detainees.

The operation, by soldiers and special team members, against Kocatepe followed the detention 10 days earlier of Vedat Akyol and was based on information supplied to the security forces by an informer. The villagers are known to have refused to join the village guard system and some of the families in the village are said to have relatives who have gone to fight as armed members of the PKK.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fears for the detainees' safety are heightened by previous incidents where detained villagers have "disappeared" without a trace or where the bodies of some were found later, in some instances mutilated and bearing torture marks as in the case of Süleyman Seyhan (see update to EXTRA 142/95, EUR 44/51/96, 2 April 1996). The six young people detained with him have never been found.

Another case is that of the villagers of Alaca village near Kulp in the province of Diyarbak_r. On 10 October 1993 the village of Alaca was raided by security forces. Eleven male villagers, Turan Demir, Mehmet_ah Atala, Hasan Avar, Mehmet_erif Avar, Mehmet Salih Akdeniz, Nusrettin Yerlikaya, Behçet Tutu_, Bahri_im_ek, Abdo Yamuk, Celil Aydo_du, and Behçet Taç were taken into detention and held handcuffed under guard for 10 days in the village. The detainees told villagers who brought them food that they were being beaten. Witnesses reported that on 20 October, "They were loaded into two helicopters and taken away.

Virtually the whole village saw the men being loaded into the helicopters. The village is now empty. It was burned down."

Since then the relatives of the 11 men have received no news of them. In response to petitions, the Emergency Region Governor in Diyarbak_r and the offices of the local prosecutor and of the State Security Court Prosecutor in Diyarbak_r have denied that these men are being held. On 28 September 1994, Amnesty International received a reply on the case from the Turkish authorities which stated that the allegations concerning Mehmet Salih Akdeniz, Nusrettin Yerlikaya and Behçet Tutu_ had been conveyed to the relevant authorities and that further information would be forwarded at a later date. The remaining eight villagers had *"not been detained at all, either on 10 October 1993 or before or after this date."* A relative of one of the "disappeared" told Amnesty International, *"We still believe that our loved ones are alive somewhere. There were thousands of soldiers in our village with tanks and vehicles. We all saw them being taken away. How can the authorities now deny that they have them?"*

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

- expressing concern for the fate of 23 villagers from Kocatepe near Derik/Mardin province who have been held in unacknowledged detention at an unknown location since 27 June 1996;
- urging that their whereabouts be established without delay, their detention duly registered and their relatives promptly informed;
- appealing that they are promptly brought before a judge to be charged or released;
- asking to be informed of the outcome of the investigation and any charges brought against the villagers.

APPEALS TO:

1. Chief State Prosecutor in Mardin:

Cumhuriyet Ba_savc_s_
Hükümet Kona__
Mardin, Turkey

Telegrams: Cumhuriyet Bassavcısı, Mardin, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

2. Derik Local Governor:

Derik Kaymakam_
Mr Mehmet Özmen
Derik
Mardin, Turkey

Telegrams: Derik Kaymakami, Mardin, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Governor

3. Emergency Legislation Governor:

Mr Necati Bilican
Ola_anüstü Hal Valisi
Diyarbak_r, Turkey

Telegrams: Olaganustu Hal Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

**Telexes: 72110 OHVT TR; 72084 DYVA TR "please forward to the Governor";
72090 JASY TR**

Faxes: +90 412 224 3572

Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Mrs. Tansu Çiller

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 30 August 1996.