

EXTERNAL

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EXTRA 116/95

Fear of Torture

29 September 1995

TURKEY Ismet Celikaslan (f), Mersin Provincial Board member of HADEP (People's Democracy Party)

Amnesty International fears that Ismet Çelikaslan, who has been held incommunicado since being detained in Mersin on 27 September 1995, may be tortured.

During the week of 18 September, Ismet Çelikaslan had appeared on the Kurdish owned and operated satellite TV channel "Med TV" which broadcasts into Turkey from outside the country. She had presented the case of her daughter Leman Çelikaslan who alleged that she was repeatedly raped in July during 13 days in police custody in Ankara.

Following her TV appearance, police came several times to Ismet Çelikaslan's home in Mersin. She reportedly found a listening device behind her refrigerator and received a threatening letter. On 27 September, three plainclothes police officers arrived at her house, and told her that there was a document concerning her at the Police Headquarters and that they needed to talk to her about it. Initially she resisted, but when the police threatened to take her along by force, she went with them. Her lawyer telephoned the Police Headquarters one hour later and was told that Ismet Çelikaslan was being held, but that the lawyer could not see her as she was being held under the Anti-Terror Law.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Leman Çelikaslan (24) was detained on 21 July and held at Ankara Police Headquarters for 13 days. She alleged that during this time she was not only tortured, but also repeatedly raped by several officers. According to her own account she was taken by police officers from the Anti-Terror Branch of Ankara Police Headquarters to a woodland, stripped naked, tied up against a tree and sexually assaulted. She was then taken to Ankara Police Headquarters where during interrogation she was raped by three police officers. As a result of the rape Leman Çelikaslan was bleeding severely for days.

When she was to be medically examined prior to being committed to prison, she did not want to undress and so the doctor certified that there were no signs of ill-treatment. One week later, on 9 August, she filed a complaint of rape with the prosecutor and asked to be sent to hospital. When she was referred to the Forensic Medicine Institute the following day, she asked for a female doctor. As there was none, she refused to be examined. When the doctor asked whether she had been raped or sexually assaulted, she replied that she had been. He then referred her to hospital.

On 17 August she was taken by gendarmerie soldiers from prison to hospital where she was examined. The doctor maintained that due to the amount of time that had elapsed, he was not able to state whether rape had taken place. Leman Çelikaslan stated that one of the officers whom she had recognized while being suspended during interrogation, was present at the hospital while she was there.

On 18 August a prosecutor took a detailed statement from Leman Çelikaslan concerning her allegation of rape and advised her to give up her complaint as she was not going to win such a case. There were prison gendarmes present in the room while she gave testimony, but no lawyer on her behalf.

During the preliminary investigation of her complaint, the chief prosecutor made a public statement saying that Leman Çelikaslan had not been raped and that he considered opening a prosecution against her because of her allegation. An investigation has since been opened against Naciye Erkol, President of the Ankara Branch of the Human Rights Association (HRA), for "insulting the police" in a press statement which the HRA had issued on the case.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Ismet Çelikaslan, detained in Mersin on 27 September 1995;
- seeking assurances that she is not subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment;
- asking to be informed of any charges brought against her.

APPEALS TO:

1. Minister of the Interior:

Mr Nahit Mente_e
İçişleri Bakanl____
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: +90 312 418 1066; 418 1795

Salutation: Dear Minister

2. Mersin State Prosecutor:

Cumhuriyet Ba_savc_s_
Mr Osman Homurlu
Hükümet Kona__
Mersin, Turkey

Telegrams: Cumhuriyet Ba_savcısı, Mersin, Turkey

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES 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 29 October 1995.