

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**Fear of Torture**

**5 October 1990**

**TURKEY: Siddik YILDIZ**

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During continuing operations by the security forces in the Eruh/Siirt area, Selahattin Yildiz from Kayabogaz village was detained several days ago, but was released after interrogation and beatings. However, on 5 October 1990 his son, Siddik Yildiz, was detained, while another son, Ali Yildiz, is now wanted by the authorities. Siddik Yildiz is said to be held incommunicado at Eruh Gendarmerie Headquarters and it is feared that he is being tortured under interrogation.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is not officially recognized by the authorities, but is estimated to number some 10 million people. The Kurdish population lives mainly in southeastern Turkey. Frequent allegations of torture and ill-treatment have been received from the region and the number of torture allegations increased substantially after the 1980 military coup. Since August 1984, when Kurdish guerrillas - members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) - started armed attacks, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces, where more than 2000 lives so far have been lost in the continuing fighting.

Turkey ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture on 25 February 1988 and the UN Convention Against Torture on 2 August 1988. However, all information available to Amnesty International indicates that torture is still widespread and systematic in Turkey. Allegations of torture have continued since the transfer of power to a civilian government in 1983. Most allegations relate to ill-treatment of detainees in police custody during their initial interrogation when they are usually denied access to relatives or a lawyer. Under current legislation the maximum detention period before being formally charged or released is 24 hours; in cases involving three or more suspects or due to the 'nature of the crime' it may be extended to 15 days. This period may be extended to 30 days in areas under emergency legislation or martial law. Ten provinces in southeastern Turkey are under emergency legislation including the Eruh area.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/faxes/telegrams/express and airmail letters:**

- urging that Siddik Yildiz be granted prompt access to his family and lawyer and that he not be ill-treated while in detention;
- requesting to be informed of any charges against him.

**APPEALS TO:**

Prime Minister Yildirim Akbulut  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Basbakanlik  
Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey  
Telexes: 44061/44062/44063 BBMT TR, 42099 BASB TR or 42875 BBK TR  
Faxes: + 90 41 17 04 76 or + 90 42 30 88 96 (attn. Prime Minister)

Atilla Koc  
Siirt Valisi  
Governor of Siirt Province  
Siirt, Turkey

Telegrams: Siirt Valisi, Siirt, Turkey

**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Turkey in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 November 1990.