

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further Information on UA 400/90 (EUR 44/139/90, 5 October) - Fear of Torture/HealthConcern

TURKEY:

Ali Avsar

Mensure Avsar (f), mother of five small children, wife of Ali

Sait Avsar, male nurse

Songul Avsar (f), nurse, wife of Sait

Tevfik Avsar, brother of Ali and Sait

Servet Cercel

Tahir Ulug

Cevdet Ipek

Sait Kilic

Serif Pinar

Huseyin Cercel

Arif Cercel

Yemlihan Cercel

Sehmuz Kurudere

Vahit ...

Aliko ...

Abdulkerim Avsar

Hamdullah ...

Ekrem Kizilkaya and his brother

Ihsan Kizilkaya

new name: Metin Guven, journalist

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Amnesty International is informed that Tahir Ulug and Cevdet Ipek were released on 2 October, and Mensure Avsar and Songul Avsar on 5 October. Both women reportedly were ill-treated and one needed medical treatment after release. Most of the others named above continue to be held at Diyarbakir Rapid Force Headquarters and there is particular concern for the well-being of Ali Avsar. He is reported to be in ill-health following torture.

On 4 October another group of some 30 people had been taken into detention after a bomb explosion at a primary school in Bismil. All except Metin Guven were released two days later. Metin Guven, aged 19, is reported to be held incommunicado in police custody and it is feared that he may be subjected to torture during 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

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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. Emergency legislation is currently in force in ten provinces, including Bismil and Diyarbakir.

Lawyers in the region have been finding recently that they can often meet detainees if they already hold a power of attorney, but for this to happen the detainees must already have appointed a lawyer as their legal representative before arrest. Otherwise no lawyer is granted access, because none has been authorized to speak to them.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Faxes/telegrams/express letters/airmail letters:

- urging that Ali Avsar is granted all medical treatment he may require;
- urging that all detainees from Bismil including Metin Guven be granted prompt access to their families and that they are provided with the opportunity to appoint and consult with a lawyer of their choice;
- requesting to be informed of any charges against them.

APPEALS TO:

Hayri Kozakcioglu
Olaganustu Hal Valisi (State of Emergency Governor)
Diyarbakir, Turkey

Faxes: 90 831 26471 Olaganustu Valisi
Telegrams: Olaganustu Valisi, Diyarbakir, Turkey

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Turkey in your country.
Milliyet (Newspaper), Nuruosmaniye Cad. 65, Cagaloglu-Istanbul

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 November 1990.