

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 88/92 Fear of Torture

29 October 1992

TURKEY: Hatice Toraman (female), aged 47
 Hasan Polat, aged 24
 and 14 other people (names not know to Amnesty International)

Amnesty International is concerned about the safety of 16 detainees in Istanbul including those named above.

On 28 October 1992 relatives and friends of Hüseyin Toraman gathered in the Kocamustafapa_a quarter of Istanbul on the anniversary of his "disappearance".

He was detained a year ago by plainclothes police officers outside the apartment in which he then lived (see UA 360/91, EUR 44/139/91 of 29 October 1991 and follow-ups EUR 44/145/91 of 6 November, EUR 44/150/91 of 14 November, EUR 44/152/91 of 21 November and EUR 44/161/91 of 20 December 1991). The gathering, at which Hüseyin Toraman's mother Hatice made a speech, is said to have been observed from the start by police who later attacked, beat and detained 16 of those present, including Hatice Toraman and Hasan Polat. The detainees were reportedly taken to Kocamustafapa_a Police Station. On the morning of 29 October they were then transferred to the Anti-Terror Branch of Istanbul Police Headquarters. It is feared that they may be interrogated under torture.

In spite of the family's desperate efforts to establish his fate, nothing has been heard of Hüseyin Toraman since October 1991 when he "disappeared" in unacknowledged police detention in Istanbul. An investigation by three members of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission concluded that he may either have fled abroad or been killed by political rivals. However, it is feared that he died in police custody as a result of torture. Several cases of "disappearance" in police custody have been reported from Istanbul since March 1991.

Hasan Polat was previously detained on the eve of 1 May 1991 (see UA 156/91, EUR 44/57/91 of 8 May 1991) and according to the Turkish authorities was subsequently standing trial for membership of an illegal organization.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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. 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. In August 1990, the government derogated from Articles 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 13 of the European

Convention on Human Rights, all of which contain important safeguards for human rights. Under current legislation the maximum period a detainee may be held 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.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters in English or your own language:

- urging that Hatice Toraman, Hasan Polat and the 14 people detained with them are immediately granted access to their relatives and lawyers;
- seeking assurances that they are not ill-treated while in police custody;
- requesting to be informed of any charges against them.

APPEALS TO

1) Minister of the Interior:

Mr _smet Sezgin

_çi_leri Bakanl____

06644 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey

Telexes: 46369 ICSL TR

Faxes: + 90 4 418 1795

Salutation: Dear Minister

2) Istanbul Chief of Police:

Mr Necdet Menzir

Istanbul Emniyet Müdürü

_stanbul, Turkey

Telegrams: Emniyet Muduru, Istanbul, Turkey

Telexes: 30811 IEHM TR, 30812 EMMH TR, 26177 IEMT TR

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES OF APPEALS TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission

nsan Haklar Ara_t_rma Komisyonu Ba_kan_

TBMM

Ankara, Turkey

and 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 11 November 1992.