

EXTERNAL (for general distribution) AI Index: EUR 44/88/91  
Distr: CO/GR

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1 July 1991

### **£TURKEY: @Measures of Repression in Payamlı Village, Southeast Turkey**

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is estimated to number some 10 million people. Any activity for a separate Kurdish political or cultural identity is punishable under Turkish law. The Kurdish population lives mainly in southeastern Turkey. Frequent allegations of torture and ill-treatment have been received from the region. 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 on the security forces, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the police, gendarmerie and the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces. Some 3000 lives so far have been lost on both sides and among the civilian population in the continuing fighting. Emergency legislation is in force in ten provinces in the region and the Emergency Legislation Governor in Diyarbakır has extraordinary powers over three additional provinces. In May 1990 the Turkish government issued Decrees 424 and 425 (in December replaced by Decree 430), further extending the already extraordinary powers of the Emergency Legislation Governor.

Payamlı village (Kurdish: Deravit) near Siirt, in the Botan region of southeast Turkey, was a rather prosperous village of some 150 inhabitants with fertile land. In recent years the villagers had to slaughter most of their livestock because they are prohibited from grazing them on the mountain pastures and their fields remain untended because they are forbidden to work on them. The village has attracted the authorities' suspicion. During the referendum on the 1982 Constitution held by the military government of the day, there were ballot boxes for each village. On counting the votes it was found that the ballot box from Payamlı contained 100% rejection votes. Furthermore, the village refuses to provide and accept so-called village protectors, that is villagers who are armed and paid by the authorities to fight the Kurdish guerrillas (villagers who do take up arms generally are targets for attacks by the guerrillas as punishment). Refusal to serve as village protector is taken by the authorities to be an indication of passive or even active support for the guerrillas. As a consequence the village has been subjected to a number of restrictive measures. Moreover, in recent months the security forces alleged that several young people left the village to join the guerrillas. Amnesty International has received a number of first-hand accounts describing living conditions in the village and the measures taken by the security forces.

According to these reports, the villagers of Payamlı were last year made to sign a document to the effect that they should not leave their houses during the hours of darkness; and that anything that was seen would be shot at. Where the head of the household was not present, children were made to sign the document instead.

Although there is a gendarmerie post in the village, the soldiers have taken over the village school premises. They have also been occupying a villager's house for two years without paying compensation.

The village has two parts, connected by a road which passes in front of the gendarmerie post. The villagers are not permitted to use this road. The gendarmerie has more than 10 dogs, which it unleashes on the villagers and permits to roam freely about the village.

There is no shooting range in the village, so the orchards and gardens are used instead. They eat the villagers' chickens and turkeys without paying for them and raid the orchards. "They have ruined our hazel groves and our gardens. And they have cut down our fruit trees. They are cutting down the trees in the village cemetery. We went to the commander of the post to try to stop this. They pulled weapons on us. They said 'Complain to whoever you want. You'll get nothing out of it, and we are going to continue to practice shooting there.' When we go out to plough the fields they stop us."

One night the son of a villager phoned from Istanbul. The father went to the house of the muhtar (village headman) where the village telephone is kept. When he returned, the lieutenant together with the other gendarmes beat him up, because he had not asked them permission to go to the muhtar's house while dark.

Since mid-April some ten mainly elderly villagers have been forced to spend the nights outside the gendarmerie post, because their sons or daughters are alleged to have left the village to join the guerrillas. Such posts have frequently been subject to night attacks with rockets and machine gun fire. "They were putting us in places around the gendarmerie post where we had to stay from 19.00 till 8.30, as a human shield. We have all had diarrhoea from the rain and cold. All my joints ache. They kept us for days in the cold and under the rain. Now they allow us to go into a stable until morning. They take away everything we have on us. They took my two lighters. They forbid us to say our prayers, or to use the toilet, and subject us to the vilest insults. They say that my son left Istanbul and joined the PKK." Another one reported, "I am ill. And yet they have made me wait for 22 days outside in the cold and rain, and for 10 days in a stable, on the floor."

Two of the young people returned. These two girls, reportedly aged 12 and 13, were then held incommunicado for 20 days in detention in Siirt Gendarmerie Regimental Headquarters. They were formally arrested on 20 May 1991 and are now in prison in Diyarbakır awaiting trial. Their relatives are no longer forced to spend the nights outside the gendarmerie post.

On 24 May 1991, 18 military vehicles came to the village. The villagers were rounded up in the centre of the village. The relatives of the young people who had disappeared and anybody who disobeyed the soldiers' orders were beaten, women and children included. Three villagers were detained; two of them were later charged with sheltering guerrillas and sent to prison, the third was released.

On 9 May 1991 Amnesty International appealed to the Turkish Prime Minister on behalf of the mostly elderly villagers forced to spend the nights outside the gendarmerie post. No reply has been received to date. On 16 May the organization issued urgent appeals on their behalf and on 4 June reiterated its concern of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Amnesty International continues to urge the Turkish authorities that all necessary steps are taken to ensure that such practice is stopped.