

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: EUR 17/12/93  
Distr: UA/SC

18 November 1993

Further information on EXTRA 87/93 (EUR 17/10/93, 8 October 1993) - and follow-up: EUR 17/11/93, 21 October 1993 - Legal Concern/Prisoner of Conscience

NORTHERN CYPRUS:Salih Askero\_ul  
Martin Hantke (German)  
Andreas Rabl (Austrian)

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On 12 November 1993, Salih Askero\_ul was sentenced by a military court in Lefko\_a to a total of three years and three months' imprisonment. He was sentenced to three months for failure to enlist when being called up and to three years for "making propaganda against the security forces" in his press statement of 24 September explaining his grounds for conscientious objection to military service. Salih Askero\_ul was also convicted on charges of "inciting to refuse military service" and "insulting the security forces" by his press statement. However, these two charges were considered to be subsidiary to the "propaganda" charge and therefore did not carry additional sentences. Salih Askero\_ul is appealing against the convictions on the three latter charges to the constitutional court of Northern Cyprus on the grounds that they violate his right to freedom of expression.

Salih Askero\_ul continues to be held in Lefko\_a Prison. As he neither used nor advocated violence, he is considered to be a prisoner of conscience. His partner Yiota Nikolaou and their baby daughter Melissa who were expelled from Northern Cyprus to the south are still not allowed any contact either by visits or by telephone.

Salih Askero\_ul's supporters Martin Hantke and Andreas Rabl had been detained on 18 October, together with the photographer Ahmet Serdar Gökasan, while distributing leaflets about the case. They were all released on bail on 27 October.

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

- expressing regret that Salih Askero\_ul was sentenced to three years and three months' imprisonment for stating his peaceful beliefs and refusing to perform military service on grounds of conscience;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience;
- expressing the hope that the Court of Appeal will quash the verdict;
- urging that the right to conscientious objection to military service be recognized in Northern Cyprus and that an alternative civilian service be established;
- appealing that while Salih Askero\_ul is still imprisoned his partner and child may be allowed contact by visits and telephone.

**APPEALS TO:**

Leader of the Turkish Cypriot Community

Mr Rauf Denkta\_

Cumhurba\_kanl\_\_\_\_

Lefko\_a, K\_BR\_S

via Mersin 10, Turkey

**Telegrams: Mr Denkta\_, Cumhurbaskanligi, Lefko\_a, Kibris, via Mersin 10, Turkey**

**Faxes: +90 520 72252**

**Salutation: Dear Mr Denkta\_**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 December 1993.