

TURKEY: Abdurrahman Sö_üt

Shortly after leaving his home on 18 January 1992 Abdurrahman Sö_üt, a Kurd, was shot in the head and chest at close range by three unidentified assailants in Nusaybin, Mardin Province in southeast Turkey. He died shortly afterwards. There have been allegations that this killing may have been carried out by members of the security forces. There is a widespread belief in the area that this and other killings or "disappearances" have been carried out by the kontrgerilla, an undercover force allegedly engaged in secret operations against Kurdish separatist organisations, but whose existence is denied by the government.

Like Vedat Ayd_n, abducted and killed in July 1991 (UA 230/91 EUR 44/92/92, 8 July 1991), and Mehmet Demir, who disappeared in Siirt on 10 January 1992 (UA 20/92 EUR 44/09/92, 15 January 1992), he was an active member of the People's Labour Party (HEP) a legally authorised political party which is perceived as representing the interests of Turkey's large Kurdish minority.

Abdurrahman Sö_üt had been detained on 2 November 1991 on suspicion of harbouring or supporting members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) and interrogated, allegedly under torture, at the Political Branch of Mardin Police Headquarters (see Extra 76/91, AI Index: EUR 44/01/92 Abdurrahman Sö_üt is recorded as Su_ut). On 25 November, he and 26 other detainees were taken to Mardin Criminal Court. While they were waiting to appear in court they were visited by Selim Saddak, Member of Parliament for __rnak, who forcefully expressed to police officers who were present his concern about the very poor physical state of the detainees. He later repeated his complaint to the local governor and to the prosecutor. At the hearing shortly afterwards, all those detained were released by the court. However, the police immediately rearrested 21 of the detainees and took them back to Mardin Police Headquarters where three of them were allegedly beaten once again by police officers who said "What does your Member of Parliament think he is doing, coming to tell us off. Let him come and save you now." Abdurrahman Sö_üt and the others were brought before another judge by another prosecutor later in the day and were committed to Diyarbak_r E-type prison.

Abdurrahman Sö_üt was released on 31 December 1991. Shortly afterwards he submitted a written account of his interrogation at Mardin Police Headquarters to Amnesty International: "I was physically and psychologically tortured. I was subjected to a jet of cold water, hanging by the wrists and electric shocks. Psychological torture included hearing the screams of other people, not being allowed to sleep, eat, or go to the toilet. This lasted for 24 days. They were interrogating me for my membership of HEP and for going to the funeral of a dead guerrilla."

Abdurrahman Sö_üt was a shopkeeper, 38 years of age, married with eight children.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Turkey has a Kurdish minority of some 10 million people living mainly in southeastern Turkey. Since August 1984, when Kurdish guerrillas of the PKK started armed attacks, a large number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces. During 1991 there was an alarming increase in the number of allegations of extrajudicial execution and "disappearance" in the area, and in November 1991 Amnesty International sent a memorandum to Turkey's newly-formed government, urging the independent and impartial investigation of 25 allegations of "disappearance" and

extrajudicial execution in Turkey during 1991. Since May 1991 in the Midyat/Nusaybin district there have been at least 18 killings alone in which the security forces have been implicated.

A number of local politicians have been targets of extrajudicial execution (see Southeast Turkey: Attacks on Human Rights Activists and Killings of Local Politicians, AI Index EUR 44/114/91), and HEP members in particular. Vedat Aydın, President of Diyarbakır Branch of HEP, was taken from his house in Diyarbakır at around midnight on 5 July 1991 by several armed men who introduced themselves as plainclothes police officers, and his body was found with bullet wounds three days later. On 10 January 1992 Mehmet Demir, Deputy Provincial President of HEP, left his restaurant in Siirt, southeast Turkey, and has not been seen since. See also UA 414/91 concerning the abduction and killing of İsmail Hakkı Kocakaya in Diyarbakır, and UA 446/91 concerning the killing of Agit Akibe and İbrahim Demir in Çukurlu, near Dil, Erzurum province.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- urging a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into the killing of Abdurrahman Söüt in Nusaybin on 18 January 1992;
- recommending that the investigation should be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the United Nations Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions;
- pointing out that such an investigation would be the most effective way of preventing further extrajudicial executions;
- urging that those found to be responsible for the killing of Abdurrahman Söüt should be brought promptly to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1. Prime Minister:

Mr Süleyman Demirel
Office of the Prime Minister
Başbakanlık
06573 Ankara, Turkey

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Ankara, Turkey
**Telexes: 44061/44062/44063 bbmt tr/42099 basb tr/
42875 bbk tr**
**Faxes: + 90 41 17 04 76 PRIME MINISTER
+ 90 42 30 88 96 (attn: Prime Minister)**

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

2. Minister of the Interior:

Mr İsmet Sezgin
İçişleri Bakanlığı
06644 Ankara, Turkey
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ankara, Turkey
Telexes: 46369 ICSL TR
Faxes: + 90 4 118 1795
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission:

Mr Ahmet Türk
_nsan Hakları Araştırma Komisyonu Başkanı
TBMM
Ankara, Turkey

Faxes: + 90 4 11 91 664;
+ 90 4 42 06 941

- 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 1 March 1992.