

## International Appeal

In March of 2008, over half a million people took part in the largest Newroz event in the metropolis Diyarbakir, while in cities like Cizre or Sirnak around 20,000 people participated. In March and April 2008, Turkish police and military attacked the celebrators in many Kurdish cities in Kurdish south-eastern Turkey because they were celebrating Newroz.

The state powers proceeded with excessive brutality, shot arbitrarily at anyone on the street and beat children and elderly people who were already lying on the ground.

Special task forces and/or police shouted “**you’re not people**” through loudspeakers out of moving cars, and police searched women in a demeaning way down to beneath their underwear. Kurdish representatives, the mayor of Hakkari and members of the legal DTP party were insulted, threatened, assaulted and prevented from doing their work.

Police and military also ravaged Kurdish property, houses, cars, and businesses at random during the attacks.

In northern Kurdistan, police and special task forces arrested more than 2000 Kurds, from which almost half were detained, including many children and adolescents. The exact number of detainees and people indicted is not yet known, but is growing daily due to the protests against these actions. **Four** people have already succumbed to their injuries. 25-year-old Ramazan Dag, who passed away in Van, had numerous ruptures and a bullet wound on his stomach, which means that he was first beaten then purposefully shot. The parents were not allowed to see their son after his death.

In this atmosphere, police beat countless children and adolescents until they lay face down in the street, unconscious, with bloody faces and cracked skulls. Children who could still walk were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, and put in solitary confinement with the accusation that they were involved in terrorism. The facts at hand: eyewitness reports, television videos, etc. prove without a doubt that the entire populations of Kurdish cities were attacked, and that people were randomly and systematically injured and killed. In doing so, the “security forces” purposefully attacked children and adolescents.

People who want to file charges because of these events are intimidated and threatened. They, like the then 13-year-old A.Y. risk being accused of terrorism, 15 years of imprisonment, and an unfounded dismissal of their cases. The age of the

defendant plays no role whatsoever. Many children and adolescents have already been charged with terrorism.

Clinics rejected numerous injured people, including children, and gave the police and the military patients' personal details. Out of fear of being denounced, many are not getting treatment at all.

In this respect, the case of 15-year-old Cuneyit Ertus has achieved a sad fame in the last few weeks.

Link:[http://www.dailymotion.com/related/8202245/video/x4vd0l\\_newroz-tragedy-2008-better-version\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/related/8202245/video/x4vd0l_newroz-tragedy-2008-better-version_news)

Visible on the video, the torturer Turgay Sen broke 15-year-old Cuneyit Ertus's arm backwards in Hakkari, the Newroz celebrations being the reason. The torturers then had a medical examination report prepared, according to which the boy had no injuries and had no reason to make a complaint against the police. No findings were attached to the "medical examination report". Cuneyit Ertus was also tortured during detainment. Cuneyit has been without medical treatment ever since.

Although amnesty demands that the persons responsible be punished in Cuneyit Ertus's case, Turgay Sen and the two other torturers are still on the streets of Hakkari and are hunting down others.

All actions by the police and the military were ordered and approved by the highest offices.

**The assaults on the Kurdish population are against international law, are crimes against humanity and should be internationally condemned.**

In the face of the repression committed recently against the Kurdish population, we appeal worldwide to the public, the institutions of the EU and the Council of Europe, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement of the EU, **Olli Rehn**, who is responsible for the accession negotiations with Turkey, and France, which holds the presidency within Europe:

Pressure must be effectively and quickly exerted on Turkey in order to bring about an immediate release of and to provide medical treatment for the incarcerated and tortured children in particular, and so that Turkey abandons the baseless and automatic terrorist claims, particularly against children and adolescents.

European courts and authorities must investigate these horrible events and hold the responsible persons to account.

Europe must make use of all options to end the crimes against the Kurds and to advocate a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue which permanently guarantees the Kurds their rights.

We, the signatories, support this appeal: