

URGENT ACTION

CURFEW PARTIALLY LIFTED, PEOPLE REMAIN AT RISK

On 19 January the twenty-four hour curfew in place since 14 December 2015 in the town of Silopi, Şırnak province, in south eastern Turkey, was reduced to operate daily between 6pm and 5am. Round-the-clock indefinite curfews continue in the town of Cizre (also in Şırnak province) and Sur district, in the city of Diyarbakır.

On 18 January, the governor of Şırnak province announced the lifting of the curfew between 5am and 6pm daily. Media footage of the town, taken since the partial lifting of the curfew, shows extensive damage to homes and other buildings, rendering them unusable. Speaking to Amnesty International, a lawyer based in Silopi said that extensive damage to infrastructure means electricity and water supplies are not fully restored. Water is being brought to neighbourhoods in tankers, not fully meeting the needs of the residents. Electricity main supply points have been severely damaged and as a result, supply is intermittent.

The lawyer told Amnesty International that food supplies also continue to be scarce. The majority of shops in the main street in Silopi have been severely damaged, and there are major delays on the roads into the town as curfews and security operations continue in the nearby town of Cizre.

Please write immediately in Turkish or your own language:

- Calling on the Turkish authorities to refrain from imposing arbitrary restrictions on freedom of movement and to ensure residents of Cizre in Şırnak province and Sur district in Diyarbakır have sufficient time each day to leave their homes or are provided with other safe means to access all necessary supplies, medical care, water and electricity, and are able to leave affected areas if they so wish;
- Calling on them to restore electricity and water supplies in Silopi and ensure that adequate food supplies reach the residents as a matter of urgency;
- Urging them not to use firearms except in the event of imminent threat of death or serious injury and to ensure prompt, independent and impartial investigations into deaths and injuries that have occurred in curfew areas;
- Calling on them to ensure the right to freedom of peaceful assembly is fully respected for citizens wishing to show their solidarity with those living under curfew.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 MARCH 2016 TO:

Minister of Interior

Efkan Ala
İçişleri Bakanlığı
Bakanlıklar
Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 418 1795
Twitter: @efkanala

Salutation: Dear Minister

Prime Minister

Mr Ahmet Davutoğlu,
Vekaletler Caddesi Başbakanlık Merkez
Bina
P.K. 06573
Kızılay / Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 403 62 82
Email: ozelkalem@basbakanlik.gov.tr

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

And copies to:

Chair of the Human Rights Institution
Dr Hikmet Tülen
Yüksel Caddesi No. 23, Kat 3, Yenışehir
06650 Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 422 29 96
Email: tihk@tihk.gov.tr

Also send copies to:

Ambassador Namik Tan, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey
2525 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC 20008
Phone: 1 202 612 6729 | Fax: 1 202 612 6744 | Email: embassy.washingtondc@mfa.gov.tr

Please let us know if you took action so that we can track our impact! EITHER send a short email to uan@aiusa.org with "UA 6/16" in the subject line, and include in the body of the email the number of letters and/or emails you sent, OR fill out this [short online form](#) to let us know how you took action. Thank you for taking action! Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if taking action after the appeals date. This is the first update of UA 6/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR44/3178/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The town of Cizre in Şırnak province have been under a curfew since 14 December, as security forces launched military operations against the armed Revolutionary Patriotic Youth Movement (YDG-H) the youth wing of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Local lawyers and activists told Amnesty International that there had been more than 40 reported deaths in Cizre since the start of the curfew, including women, children and elderly people, many due to alleged sniper fire from security forces. In the Sur district of the city of Diyarbakır, six neighbourhoods have been under curfew since 11 December. Lawyers reported at least 13 residents to have been killed. Around half of the district's population is reported to have left for neighbouring areas, currently not under curfew. Protests and vigils taking place daily outside the curfew areas are routinely dispersed by police using tear gas and water cannons, and protestors are detained.

In all areas under curfew many residents are facing severe electricity and water shortages and they cannot leave their homes to access basic food supplies. Residents requiring medical care have also been unable to safely leave their neighbourhoods to access such care. Ambulances in some cases have been unable to enter areas under curfew due to the security situation or because they were denied access by the security services.

Since the breakdown of the peace process between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the government in July, armed clashes between the Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement (YDG-H), the youth wing of the PKK, and security forces have taken place in urban areas in south-eastern Turkey.

According to the Minister of the Interior, over 3,000 "terrorists" have been killed in this latest round of violence. In mid-December, clashes intensified after a mass deployment of police and military personnel to the region.

In towns and cities where security forces have mounted operations against the YDG-H, town and district Governors have imposed extended, round-the-clock curfews, confining residents to their homes. The authorities state that the curfews are required in order to enable "the capture of members of the separatist terrorist organization [PKK] and to protect the security of the people and their property".

Turkey has an obligation to uphold the right to freedom of movement. While this right may be subject to certain limitations, any restriction must meet the "necessity and proportionality test", this means that they must be provided by law, imposed for a legitimate purpose and be necessary and proportionate. Restoring public order can serve as a legitimate reason for restricting movement. However, an indefinite, 24-hour curfew is a disproportionate restriction that has now entered its fourth week in several locations, and has resulted in violations of other human rights. Other security measures also must meet the "necessity and proportionality test" to be lawful. Cuts to water have been reported in all areas under curfew. Allowing residents to remain without electricity and water constitute disproportionate measures. In any event, preventing residents from seeking safety in others areas cannot be justified as a necessary security measure.

International standards protecting the right to life require that lethal force by law enforcement agents, and particularly their use of firearms, be limited to self-defence or defence of others against imminent threat of death or serious injury. Intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable to protect life (Principle 9, UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms).

Name: More than 200,000 residents in all areas including those affected by 24-hour indefinite curfews
Gender m/f: all

Further information on UA: 6/16 Index: EUR 44/3295/2016 Issue Date: 22 January 2016