Turkey: Reports of human rights violations committed by the Turkish military against civilians living in the Bingol province, particularly in the Kigi district (November 1996 - April 1998)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa


Only one news report made specific reference to armed clashes between the PKK and the military in Kigi, which resulted in the death of 16 PKK members (AFP 17 Mar. 1997).

In March 1998, Agence France Presse (AFP) stated that the fighting between the PKK and the military had subsided in the preceding months in south-eastern Turkey due to the winter conditions (9 Mar. 1998). However, over a period of one week in mid-March 1998, the military reportedly killed 78 PKK members in Sirkak, Diyarbakir, Tunceli and Bingol (AFP 14 Mar. 1998).
In late April 1998, over 40,000 military troops were deployed in Bingol province, among other provinces in eastern and south-eastern Turkey for an offensive operation against the PKK (AFP 29 Apr. 1998). It was identified as "the largest Turkish army offensive since fighting started in 1984" (ibid.; see also AP 29 Apr. 1998). In the first week of that military operation, reportedly 38 PKK members were killed in the mountainous area between Bingol and Diyarbakir (Turkish Daily News 30 Apr. 1998).

In July 1997, Xinhua News Agency reported that since 1978, 18,000 PKK members, 4,209 military personnel and 4,245 civilians were killed in "armed clashes and raids" in eastern and south-eastern Turkey (total 26,454) (19 July 1997). AFP reported in September 1997 that over 26,000 people have been killed in PKK-related violence since 1984 (9 Sept. 1997). By the end of April 1998, Xinhua News Agency reported, over 35,000 army personnel, PKK members and civilians had been killed (25 Apr. 1998), AFP reported that over 29,000 people had died (29 Apr. 1998) and Associated Press (AP) reported that approximately 37,000 people had died (29 Apr. 1998).

Additional information on human rights violations committed by the Turkish military against civilians living in the Bingol province, particularly in the Kigi district between November 1996 and April 1998 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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