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Turkey: Fatal shooting of protester in Lice must be investigated

Amnesty International calls on the authorities to conduct a prompt, impartial and effective investigation following the fatal shooting of 18 year-old Medeni Yıldırım and the injury of nine others by gendarmerie officers in the south-east of Turkey.

Violent demonstrations took place on Friday at the fortified gendarmerie station in the village of Kayacık in the district of Lice, part of the province of Diyarbakır, as part of protests against the extension of the building. According to the authorities, demonstrators threw stones, petrol bombs, and home-made explosives burning the tents of construction workers while attempting to enter the gendarmerie station. The authorities state that 50-60 demonstrators took part in the protest.

Gendarmerie officers used live ammunition against the demonstrators resulting in the death of one protester and the injury of nine others. While the authorities claim that gendarmerie officials fired into the air, eye witnesses state that officers fired directly at the protesters.

The incident took place following a month in which unrelated demonstrations across Turkey have been met with heavy force by law enforcement officials, resulting in the death of at least two protesters and the injury of thousands of others. Demonstrations across Turkey on Saturday called for those responsible for the death of Medeni Yıldırım to be brought to justice.

Amnesty International notes that international law standards require that firearms are only used in such circumstances by law enforcement officials in cases of imminent threat of death or serious injury to themselves or others and where other less extreme measures are insufficient to achieve these objectives.

Amnesty International calls on the authorities to investigate the use of force by gendarmerie officials in Lice in line with these standards and to bring to justice any officers found to have used excessive force.

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