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United Arab Emirates: Amnesty International calls for investigation into death in custody

Amnesty International calls for an independent investigation into the death in custody of ›Abdullah Abu al-Qasim al-Ghazal

On 6 September 'Abdullah Abu al-Qasim al-Ghazal's wife was asked to present herself at al-Khalidiya Police Station in Abu Dhabi only to be told that her husband had committed suicide whilst in detention. She was asked to collect his body for burial.

›Abdullah Abu al-Qasim al-Ghazal, a Libyan national, aged 39, was arrested at his local mosque in ›Ajman on 31 August 2001. On the same day five men and one woman, believed to be members of *Amn al-Dawla* (State Security), searched his house and asked for his passport. The reasons for his arrest and the place of his detention remained unknown.

›Abdullah Abu al-Qasim al-Ghazal, left Libya in 1989 to avoid arrest because of his religious activities. He went to Syria where he took up religious studies in Damascus, and travelled to the UAE in 1997. ›Abdullah Abu al-Qasim al-Ghazal was father of four children and worked as an accountant at a local company in Dubai.

Amnesty International is concerned that an increasing number of Libyan nationals have been forcibly returned, or are at imminent risk of deportation, from various countries. Several suspected opponents of the Libyan government, especially members of or sympathizers with Islamist groups, were forcibly returned to Libya during 2000. Several people who had been forcibly returned to Libya have reportedly been tortured and killed by the security forces.

Background

The fate and whereabouts of four other Libyans have also remained unknown since their arrest by the UAE authorities. They include Ahmad Ramadhan Hussain Qanud, who was arrested on 31 August 2001, Ahmad Mohammad ›Ali ›Akak and 'Ali Bashir, who were arrested on 3 July 2001, and 'Ali 'Amish who was reportedly arrested around May 2001.

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