

URGENT ACTION

IRAQI DETAINEES REPORT TORTURE

A group of detainees held in Iraq, who were accused in a television programme of terrorism-related offences, have reported that they have been tortured. They say that they were coerced into making “confessions” that appeared on the programme. At least four of them continue to be denied access to a lawyer or to treatment for injuries apparently sustained during torture.

‘Amer Ahmad Kassar, Mu’ad Muhammad ‘Abed, Nabhan ‘Adel Hamdi and a fourth detainee who appeared in the programme are held at the Anti-Crime Directorate in the city of Ramadi, west of Baghdad. ‘Amer Ahmad Kassar has been incommunicado for over five weeks, but the other detainees have reportedly been visited by relatives.

Detainees reported that they had been tortured, including by being subjected to electric shocks, and coerced into making self-incriminating statements linking them to involvement in terrorism-related offences that were broadcast on a television programme at the end of April. Relatives of one detainee reported that he had hearing difficulties, apparently caused by torture and other ill-treatment. However, none of the detainees has been allowed to see a doctor and none of them has had access to a lawyer.

Relatives of the detainees have reported that they have been intimidated on a number of occasions, mostly since the broadcast of the television programme. Some relatives said that unidentified armed men in civilian clothes had threatened to kill them and had caused damage to their property. Some attempted to file complaints against the aggressors with the authorities in Ramadi, but the prosecution office reportedly refused to record their complaints. In addition to the four detainees held at the Anti-Crime Directorate, three other detainees who were shown with them on the same television programme have reportedly been transferred to another detention facility in Ramadi, where they are believed to be allowed visits by relatives.

Please write immediately in English or Arabic:

- Urging the authorities to grant ‘Amer Ahmad Kassar immediate access to his family and to ensure that he will not be subjected to torture or other ill-treatment;
- Calling on them to allow all four detainees immediate access to a lawyer, and to all necessary medical treatment;
- Calling for an investigation into allegations that detainees have been subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, and to protect them from any further torture or other ill-treatment;
- Urging the authorities to release the men unless they are charged with a recognizable criminal offence..

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 JUNE 2012, TO DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ IN YOUR COUNTRY, ADDRESSED TO:

Prime Minister and Acting Minister of

Defence and Interior

His Excellency Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

Prime Minister

Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma’aridh)

Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

His Excellency Mohammad Shayaa

al-Sudani

Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma’aridh)

Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Hassan al-Shammari

Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma’aridh)

Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 124/12. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/005/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Starting on 24 April, the television station al-Anbar broadcast a programme in which seven detainees, including 'Amer Ahmad Kassar, Mu'ad Muhammad 'Abed and Nabhan 'Adel Hamdi were accused of membership of an armed group and of involvement in terrorism-related offences. Interviews containing self-incriminating statements by the detainees were shown in this programme. Relatives who saw it told Amnesty International that the detainees appeared to have made these statements under duress.

In the last few years, hundreds of detainees have been shown on Iraqi television channels making "confessions" admitting responsibility for various terrorism-related offences. These "confessions" have generally been extracted under torture and other ill-treatment. Many people were convicted by Iraq's Central Criminal Court on the basis of such "confessions". Under Article 14(g) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Iraq is a state party, no one should be "compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt".

Names: 'Amer Ahmad Kassar, Mu'ad Muhammad 'Abed and Nabhan 'Adel Hamdi
Gender m/f: All male

Further information UA: 124/12 Index: MDE 14/006/2012 Issue Date: 11 May 2012