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**£KUWAIT: @AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR INVESTIGATION  
INTO ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

Amnesty International said today that it feared Palestinians and some Arab nationals living in Kuwait were being arbitrarily arrested and tortured, both by armed Kuwaiti civilians and members of the regular army, and called for an investigation into these alleged abuses.

The organization said that over the past two weeks there had been disturbing reports of Palestinians and others, including Sudanese and Iraqis, being arbitrarily picked up and tortured. Some have been targeted because they are suspected of collaborating with Iraqi troops and others apparently on account of their nationality.

"It's too early for us to be able to confirm many of these human rights violations," Amnesty International said, "but the growing number of reports point to a pattern of abuses that must be open to urgent and independent investigation."

The organization welcomes recent steps by the United Nations to appoint a Special Rapporteur to investigate human rights abuses by Iraqi forces during the occupation and to send a high-level team to Kuwait to carry out a preliminary investigation.

"The UN already has the mandate to investigate the gross abuses committed during the Iraqi invasion," Amnesty International said. "We believe that the UN has a continuing responsibility to ensure that the human rights of all people in Kuwait are protected."

Amnesty International said that allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross immediate access to all detainees was one way of ensuring they would not be tortured or ill-treated.

The organization said that several hundred Palestinians have reportedly been arrested and detained since the withdrawal of Iraqi troops on 26 February. In the past week, the Kuwaiti military

authorities have expelled scores of them to Iraq, where their safety and lives cannot be guaranteed.

"We urge the Kuwaiti government not to expel people to countries where they may face torture or execution," Amnesty International said.

The organization said that several people who had been released after being detained for a week or more alleged that they were tortured during interrogation, including beatings with canes, cables, rifles and rods, as well as having electric shock treatment and cigarettes extinguished on various parts of the body.

According to some reports, scores of Palestinians were hospitalized after being tortured in detention. Others have apparently been beaten after being stopped at checkpoints.

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