

PUBLIC

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Possible "disappearance"/fear of torture

10 May 2002

LEBANON

Ramzi 'Irani (m), aged 35

Political activist Ramzi 'Irani has not been seen since 7 May, when he left work for his home in central Beirut. He works on student affairs for the unauthorized Lebanese Forces (LF), and Amnesty International fears that he has been detained incommunicado, and may be tortured to force him to reveal information about the LF's activities.

Ramzi 'Irani is an engineer working for the Total oil company. He has been arrested several times in the last 10 years, and has reportedly been tortured and ill-treated while held incommunicado.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The LF was banned by the Lebanese authorities in 1994. Their activists are at constant risk of arrest and incommunicado detention. They are mostly arrested and detained as they engage in peaceful political activities, including organization of rallies and distribution of political literature.

The security forces rounded up hundreds of LF members across the country, including students, in August and September 2001. Most were released, but some were held incommunicado at the Ministry of Defence detention centre, where they were reportedly tortured and ill-treated. Among them was a leading member of the organisation, Tawfiq al-Hindi, who was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in March 2002, after an unfair trial before the Military Court, on charges including "contacts" with Israel. He was the political advisor to jailed LF leader Samir Geagea.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic, French or your own language:

- urging the Lebanese authorities to reveal where Ramzi 'Irani is held, and to allow him immediate and unrestricted access to his lawyer and family;
- seeking assurances that he is being well treated, and not tortured or ill-treated;
- calling for him to be released immediately and unconditionally, unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to trial in accordance with international standards for fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency President Emile Lahoud
Office of the President
Ba'abda Palace
Ba'abda, Beirut
Lebanon

Telegram: President Lahoud, Beirut, Lebanon

Fax: + 961 1 425 393

Telex: 21000

Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Samir Jisr
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Rue Sami Solh
Beirut
Lebanon

Fax: + 961 1 611 142

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Judge 'Adnan 'Addoum
Prosecutor General

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Palace of Justice
Beirut
Lebanon

Fax: + 961 1 422 957

Salutation: Dear Judge 'Adnan 'Addoum

and to diplomatic representatives of Lebanon accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.