

PUBLIC

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19 October 1998

Further information on EXTRA 71/98 (MDE 24/14/98, 16 October 1998) - Health concern/Legal concern

SYRIA Abd al-Majid Nimer Zaghmout, a Palestinian, aged 54

Abd al-Majid Nimer Zaghmout was admitted to Al-Muwasah Hospital last week, after almost three weeks of a hunger strike. He was comatose and suffering from internal bleeding caused by a chronic and untreated ulcer.

Abd al-Majid Nimer Zaghmout is also reported to be suffering from a serious ear infection apparently caused by unhygienic prison conditions. There is no specialist medical care to deal with serious ear problems in al-Muwasah Hospital and the Syrian authorities are refusing to allow him access to such medical care in a specialised state health institution.

Abd al-Majid Zaghmout has been allowed visits of up to two hours by members of his family. A delegation from al-Yarmuk Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus was reported to have petitioned the Syrian Minister of the Interior, requesting him to allow Abd al-Majid Zaghmout access to specialist medical care.

Abd al-Majid Nimer Zaghmout, who has now been detained for 32 years, may be the longest serving political prisoner in the Middle East.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Arabic, French or in your own language:

- expressing grave concern at the deteriorating health of Abd al-Majid Nimer Zaghmout and urging the Syrian government to ensure that he be guaranteed access to any specialist medical care that he needs;
- urging the Syrian authorities to immediately release Abd al-Majid Nimer Zaghmout, who has been in detention for 32 years following an unfair trial, and whose release was ordered nine years ago;
- urging the authorities to review his case and to investigate the reason for his continued detention;
- reminding the government of Syria of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 8: *"Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law"*.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
President Hafez al-Assad
Presidential Palace
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Telegrams: President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: 419160 prespl sy
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Lt. Gen. Mustafa Talas
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
Omayyad Square
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

His Excellency
Dr Muhammad Harba
Minster of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Merjeh Circle
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic
Telegrams: Minister Interior, Damascus, Syria
Faxes: + 963 11 222 3428
Telexes: 411016 AFIRS SY
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

His Excellency
Nasser Qaddur
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Al-Rashid Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Faxes: + 963 11 224 5747

and to diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 November 1998.

"Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law".

Article 8, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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