

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/025/2003

22 July 2003

**Further Information on UA 114/03 (MDE 24/015/2003, 25 April 2003) - Incommunicado detention/Detention without charge/Fear of torture or ill-treatment**

**SYRIA**            **Jamal Mahmud al-WAFA'I (m), aged 44**  
                         **Fayzah 'Ali SHIHAB (f), aged 47**  
                         **Maha Ahmad Qarah QASH (f), aged 45**  
                         **Muhammad 'Adnan Ahmad MADLAJ (m), aged 46**  
                         **Muhammad Ahmad QASHUSH (m), aged 52**

**Released:**        **Mayyadah Muhammad Ghassan BENQASLI (f), aged 37**  
                         **Fathiyyah Rajab DAMUR (f), aged 32**

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Two of the seven people held in incommunicado detention since their return to Syria from exile in Iraq in April 2003 have been released. Amnesty International has learned that Mayyadah Muhammad Ghassan Benqasli was freed in the early morning of 17 July, and that Fathiyyah Rajab Damur was released in May. It is not known whether they were tortured or ill-treated while in detention.

However, there remain serious concerns for the safety of the other five members of the group, who were all arrested between 18 and 24 April. They are reportedly still being held incommunicado and without being charged with any offence, at an unknown location. They are at risk of torture or ill-treatment, particularly because of their purported links to the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood Organisation.

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

- welcoming the releases of Fathiyyah Rajab Damur and Mayyadah Muhammad Ghassan Benqasli;
- expressing concern for the safety of the other five Syrians who are being detained incommunicado at an unknown location following their return from exile in Iraq: Jamal Mahmud al-Wafa'i, Fayzah 'Ali Shihab, Maha Ahmad Qarah Qash, Muhammad 'Adnan Ahmad Madlaj, and Muhammad Ahmad Qashush.
- calling for their immediate release unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- urging that they be treated humanely and not subjected to torture or ill-treatment in detention;
- calling on the authorities to disclose their whereabouts immediately and allow them immediate and unrestricted access to relatives, lawyers and any medical treatment they require;
- calling for Syria to open its borders immediately to all refugees and asylum seekers from Iraq, without discrimination.

**APPEALS TO:**

Excellency President Bashar al-Assad  
President of the Republic  
Presidential Palace  
Abu Rummaneh, Al-Rashid Street  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

**Telegram:**        **President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax:**                **+ 963 11 332 3410**  
**Telex:**             **419160 prespl sy**  
**Salutation:**      **Your Excellency**

His Excellency Major General Ali Hammud  
Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of Interior  
Merjeh Circle  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegram: Interior Minister, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax: + 963 11 222 3428**  
**Telex: 411016 AFIRS SY**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES 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 2 September 2003.