

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/033/2001

20 September 2001

Further information on UA 226/01 (MDE 14/029/2001, 07/09/2001) and follow-up (MDE 24/030/2001, 11/09/2001) - Prisoner of Conscience

SYRIARiad Seif (m), Parliamentarian, 54  
Hassan Sa'dun (m), Retired teacher  
'Aref Dalilah (m), Economist, in his early 60s  
Walid al-Bunni (m), Physician, 38  
Kamal al-Labwani (m), Physician, 44  
Habib Salih (m), Businessman, 52  
Further arrests: Habib Isa (m), Lawyer, 55  
Fawaz Tello (m), Engineer

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On 12 September, Syrian Political security agents (*al-Amn al-Siyassi*) arrested prisoners of conscience, Habib Isa and Fawaz Tello as part of a continuing crackdown on the activities of political dissidents who criticise the government. Both men are being held incommunicado and are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Habib Isa was reportedly taken from his home in Damascus in the early hours of 12 September. He is one of the founding members of the Human Rights Society in Syria and also one of the lawyers representing detained Parliamentarian Riad Seif who was arrested on 6 September.

Riad Seif, along with the other detainees, is reportedly being held in Adra Prison, though the charges against him are still not known. The charges against the other detainees are also unknown, though they have reportedly appeared before the State Security Court. The court was established in 1968 and is not bound by the rules of the Syrian Code of Criminal Procedures, which contains fair trial standards. Amnesty International has documented a pattern of grossly unfair trials before the State Security Court, the verdicts of which are not subject to appeal.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals in Arabic, English or your own language:**

- calling for immediate and unconditional release of prisoners of conscience: Riad Seif, 'Aref Dalilah, Walid al-Bunni, Kamal al-Labwani, Habib Salih, Hassan Sa'dun, Fawaz Tello, Habib Isa;
- seeking assurances that they are being well treated in custody and not tortured or ill-treated;
- urging the authorities to ensure that they are allowed immediate access to their families, lawyers and any medical care they may need;
- expressing concern at reports that other human rights defenders and activists may face arrest and detention for exercising their right to freedom of expression and association.

**APPEALS TO:**

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

His Excellency  
Nabil al-Khatib  
Ministry of Justice  
Al-Nasr Street  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax: + 963 11 224 6250**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

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

**COPIES TO:**

His Excellency  
Nasser Qaddur  
State Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Al-Rashid Street  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax: + 963 11 332 0686**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

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 2 November 2001.