

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 31/15/97

UA 363/97 Fear of ill-treatment / Medical concern /  
Possible prisoners of conscience

20 November 1997

**YEMEN**Hussein Ba'um, Secretary of YSP in Hadhramout province

Muhsin al-Amudi, Secretary of LSY

Hussein Sa'id al-Muhammad, a member of LSY

**And at least 28 others**

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At least some of 31 people detained recently in Yemen are alleged to have been subjected to beatings and ill-treatment in custody. Amnesty International is concerned that they remain at risk of ill-treatment and that they may not have access to medical treatment in Mukalla prison where they are currently believed to be held. One of the detainees is reported to have been transferred to hospital as a result of the ill-treatment.

The 31 detainees were arrested between 10 and 13 November 1997 in Hadhramout province, mostly in al-Mukalla city. The arrests began when opposition political party leaders in the province, particularly those of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), the League of the Sons of Yemen (LSY), and independent politicians, began to mobilize campaigns against a government proposal to divide Hadhramout into two provinces. The proposal is currently being studied by parliament. The leading campaigners were arrested on 10 and 11 November while the rest were arrested on 13 November during a demonstration in al-Mukalla.

All but two of the arrests are said to have been carried out without judicial warrant.

The detainees are believed to have been held incommunicado until 18 November when they were allowed access to family and lawyers for the first time. They were reported to have been subjected to beatings with sticks. Reports indicate that Hussein Sa'id al-Muhammad, a member of LSY, suffered internal bleeding as a result and was transferred to hospital where he underwent an operation.

The detainees may be prisoners of conscience, held solely for the peaceful expression of their opposition to government policies. It is reported that they neither used nor advocated violence during their protest campaigns.

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

- calling for a prompt independent investigation into the alleged beatings of the detainees, and for anyone found responsible for ill-treatment to be brought to justice;
- seeking assurances that the detainees are now being treated humanely and given regular access to lawyers and family, and to any medical attention they may require;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained if they are being held solely for peaceful protests against the government proposal to divide Hadhramout. Please add that if they have been charged with recognizably criminal offences, they should be given prompt and fair trials.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency

General 'Ali Abdullah Saleh

President of the Republic of Yemen

Sana'a, The Republic of Yemen

**Telegrams: President 'Ali Abdullah Saleh, Sana'a, Yemen**

**Faxes:** +967 1 262 017  
**Telexes:** 2422 RIASAH YE  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Minister of Interior  
Husain Muhammad 'Arab  
Ministry of Interior  
Sana'a, The Republic of Yemen  
**Faxes:** +967 1 251 566  
**Telegrams:** Interior Minister, Sana'a, Yemen  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister

Minister of Justice  
Isma'il Ahmad al-Wazir  
Ministry of Justice  
Sana'a, The Republic of Yemen  
**Telegrams:** Justice Minister, Sana'a, Yemen  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Dr 'Abdul Karim 'Ali al-Iryani  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Sana'a, The Republic of Yemen  
**Faxes:** +967 1 276618  
**Telegrams:** Foreign Minister, Sana'a, Yemen  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 January 1998.