

URGENT ACTION

FOUR ACTIVISTS REMAIN DETAINED IN IRAQ

The seven remaining activists from the Ayna Haqqi NGO that had been detained in Baghdad on 28 May have been released. However four activists that were detained during protests on 27 May remain in detention.

On 28 May, Iraqi security forces detained at least 11 activists from the headquarters of Ayna Haqqi ("*Where is my right?*"), a local NGO. Four of those arrested were released the day after but the other seven continued to be detained. On 3 June the activists that remained in detention were released. Sources in Iraq say they are in good health and that they have been released without charges, although Amnesty International has not been able to verify this.

Four other activists who were detained on 27 May, **Ahmed Alaa al Baghdadi, Jihad Jalil Ibrahim, Muayyad Faisal al-Tayeb** and **Ali Abdul Khaliq al Jaf**, remain in detention and still have not seen their families or lawyers, however sources in Baghdad have confirmed that visits by family and lawyers should be allowed from 11 June.

The four men, aged between 19 and 29, were arrested in Baghdad on 27 May just before a planned demonstration. They had previously called for and participated in peaceful demonstrations in protest against deteriorating economic and other living conditions in Iraq. They are accused of possessing false ID cards. However, Amnesty International is concerned that their arrests and detention may be directly linked to their involvement in peaceful protests involving the legitimate exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Call on the authorities to allow Ahmed Alaa al Baghdadi, Jihad Jalil Ibrahim, Muayyad Faisal al-Tayeb and Ali Abdul Khaliq immediate access to their families and lawyers;
- Call on them to release the four activists immediately and unconditionally if they are being held solely for the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.
- Urge them to ensure that these activists and all other detainees are protected against possible torture or other ill-treatment, and that any officials responsible for torture are brought to justice;
- Call on them to respect fully the rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression in Iraq

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 JULY 2011 TO DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ IN YOUR COUNTRY AND ADDRESSED TO:

Prime Minister and Acting Minister of Defence and Interior

His Excellency Nuri Kamil al-Maliki,
Prime Minister
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

His Excellency Mohammad Shayaa al-Sudani
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Email: info@humanrights.gov.iq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Hassan al-Shammari
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 158/11. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/029/2011/en>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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FOUR ACTIVISTS REMAIN RETAINED IN IRAQ

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since early February 2011 tens of thousands of Iraqis, inspired by the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, have protested against corruption, unemployment and lack of basic services, and demanded greater civil and political rights. In the Kurdistan region of Iraq, demonstrators have also protested against the two main parties that have dominated local politics for decades.

On 16 and 17 February the first deaths were reported, during protests in Kut, Wasit province, and in Sulaimaniya, Iraqi Kurdistan Region. During February and March, there were many demonstrations across Iraq; 25 February was marked as a “Day of Rage” across Iraq and was the day with the highest number of reported detentions and casualties to date.

The security forces have frequently responded with excessive force, using live ammunition, sound bombs (which make a very loud noise, though no explosion) and other weapons to disperse peaceful protesters, particularly during the “Day of Rage” on 25 February when demonstrations were held across Iraq. At least 20 people have been killed since protests started in February. Many of those arrested say they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Journalists trying to cover the protests as well as political activists have been attacked or threatened.

Amnesty international has recently published a report, *Iraq; Days of rage: protests and repression in Iraq* (MDE 14/013/2011) that documents human rights violations during the recent protests in Iraq.

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