

PUBLIC

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Fear for

SYRIA Hussain Daoud, aged 30

Hussain Daoud, an asylum seeker who was forcibly returned to Syria, has been held incommunicado since he was arrested by Syrian security forces. He has reportedly been tortured, and Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

Hussain Daoud, a Syrian Kurd, was forcibly returned to Syria on 10 December 2000 after the German authorities rejected his asylum application. He was reportedly arrested by the State Security Force (*Amn al-dawla*) when he arrived at Damascus Airport. He was initially brought to State Security detention centre No. 285, where he was apparently questioned about his and other Kurdish activists' activities in Germany. He has since been held at various detention centres in Damascus and al-Qamishli in northern Syria, and has been interrogated and tortured continually. According to unconfirmed reports, he was hospitalized about a month ago after he suffered a nervous breakdown as a result of torture. His current whereabouts are unknown.

The authorities have not acknowledged Hussain Daoud's detention, but some acquaintances of his reportedly saw him at State Security Detention centre No. 285 in March. They were not allowed to speak with him. His family have made numerous enquiries with the authorities, but have been unable to see him or find out where he is being held.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hussain Daoud applied for asylum in Braunschweig, Germany on 18 January 1996. His asylum claim was rejected by the German authorities in all instances. He was reportedly politically active while in Germany, and took part in demonstrations organised by Syrian exiled groups in front of the Syrian embassy.

Political detainees are routinely tortured or ill-treated in Syria, particularly during periods of interrogation. Throughout the years, scores of people have reportedly "disappeared" after being arrested by Syrian security forces.

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

- asking where Hussain Daoud is being held, and urging that he is treated humanely and allowed access to medical care, his family and a lawyer of his choice;
- asking the authorities why he was arrested and whether he has been charged or tried;
- expressing concern at reports that he has been tortured and ill-treated, and calling for an independent and impartial investigation into these allegations.

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

COPIES TO:

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

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 11 June 2001.