

PUBLIC

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Fear of torture and ill-treatment / Legal concern

18 April 2000

ISRAEL/SOUTH LEBANON Tariq Gharib, Computer Engineer, aged 34
Mohammed Yaqub, Agricultural Engineer, aged 50

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Tariq Gharib and Mohammed Yaqub who were arrested by the South Lebanon Army (SLA) in the last two weeks and are now believed to be held at Khiam Detention Centre in South Lebanon. Torture and ill-treatment of detainees is systematic at Khiam and many detainees are held for years without charge or trial.

Tariq Gharib is a computer engineer who lives in al-Khiam, South Lebanon. Mohammed Yaqub is an agricultural engineer who teaches at a technical school in South Lebanon and lives in Hula village, also in south Lebanon.

Individuals believed to be helping the resistance to Israeli occupation of south Lebanon are routinely arrested by the SLA or the Israeli security services.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Khiam Detention Centre is the main SLA detention and interrogation centre in Israeli-occupied south Lebanon. At least 150 detainees are presently believed to be held there, some without charge or trial for up to 14 years. Former detainees have described systematic torture and ill-treatment, including beating, whipping, torture with electric shocks and dousing with hot and cold water. Detainees are routinely denied access to lawyers.

Israel asserts that it is not responsible for Khiam Detention Centre and directs all inquiries about it to the SLA, yet there are clear links between Israeli forces in south Lebanon and the Khiam administration. In September 1999, the head of the Israeli army's Operations Division admitted to Israel's High Court that members of Israel's internal security service, the General Security Service (GSS), "cooperate with members of the SLA, and even assist them by means of professional guidance and training... and hold meetings several times annually with SLA interrogators at Khiam prison." According to the officer the GSS visited the prison three times in the first seven months of 1999. The officer also admitted that the salaries of the interrogators at Khiam Detention Centre were paid by the Israeli army though he said they intended to stop this.

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

- seeking assurances that Tariq Gharib and Mohammed Yaqub, who were arrested by the South Lebanon Army in the last two weeks and believed to have been taken to Khiam Detention Centre, will not be tortured or ill-treated in any way during their detention;
- calling for their immediate release if they are not charged with recognizably criminal offences and tried according to international standards for fair trial;
- urging the Israeli government to respect its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

APPEALS TO:

Ehud Barak
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
Office of the Prime Minister

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3 Kaplan Street
Hakirya, Jerusalem 91007, Israel
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel
Faxes:+ 972 2 566 4838
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Major General (Res.) Uri Lubrani
Coordinator of Government Activities in Lebanon
Ministry of Defence
7 'A' Street
Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel
Telegrams: Uri Lubrani, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faxes:+ 972 3 697 7358
Salutation: Dear Major General

General Antoine Lahad
South Lebanon Army
c/o Lieutenant-General Shaul Mufaz
Chief of General Staff
7 'A' Street
Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel
Telegrams: General Lahad, c/o Chief General Staff, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faxes:+ 972 3 691 6940 (write c/o Lieutenant-General Shaul Mufaz, Chief of General Staff)
Salutation:Dear General

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Israel accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 May 2000.