

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/74/00

22 September 2000

Further information on 253/00 (MDE 23 68/00, 24 August 2000) - Fear of Torture / Possible Prisoner of Conscience

SAUDI ARABIA Sheikh 'Ali bin 'Ali al-Ghanim

On 18 September Sheikh 'Ali bin 'Ali al-Ghanim was allowed a first visit from his family. This reportedly took place in the presence of prison guards and lasted for 10 minutes.

Amnesty International continues to be concerned that unless Sheikh al-Ghanim is granted regular and adequate access to family and lawyers, he remains at risk of torture or ill-treatment. The Saudi Arabian authorities have not clarified whether he will face charges and trial proceedings, and Amnesty International is concerned that he may be held solely for his religious beliefs or peaceful political activities.

The 39-year-old father of five was initially arrested on 11 August when returning from a holiday in Syria. Prior to his arrest, he was reportedly summoned to the headquarters of the *al-Mabahith al-'amma* (General Investigations), and asked to write a detailed report about countries he had visited and suspected political opponents he may have known.

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

- seeking assurances that Sheikh 'Ali bin 'Ali al-Ghanim is treated humanely, protected from torture and given regular access to family, lawyers and medical attention;
- requesting information regarding his arrest, including the reason for this and whether he has been charged with a criminal offence;
- expressing concern that he may have been arrested solely for the peaceful expression of his religious or political beliefs, and, if so, calling for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience.

APPEALS TO: (please note that Saudi fax numbers can be very unreliable)

King and Prime Minister

The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines

His Majesty King Fahd bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud,
Office of H.M. The King, Royal Court,
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz,
Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior,
P.O. Box 2933, Airport Road,
Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Minister of Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Fax: + 966 1 403 1185

Telex: 404416

Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Nasseriya Street,
Riyadh 11124, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Fax: + 966 1 403 0159

Telex:405000

Salutation:Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Dr. 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
University Street,
Riyadh 11137, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Minister of Justice, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Fax: + 966 1 401 1741

Telex:405 980 MINJUS SJ

Salutation:Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 November 2000.