

URGENT ACTION

HEALTH OF ARRESTED SYRIAN MAN AT SERIOUS RISK

Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani has been held incommunicado since his arrest by General Intelligence, commonly referred to as State Security, on 18 August in the town of al-Zabadani, near Damascus, Syria. His family fear for his safety as he suffers from a serious medical condition. He is also at grave risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

According to a human rights activist from al-Zabadani, the whereabouts of 47-year-old **Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani** were unknown until the head of al-Zabadani's local council enquired about him with the town's State Security branch on 18 August. The head of the local council was informed that "Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani was wanted by Damascus State Security and is in their custody". However, he was not informed of the reason for his arrest.

Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani suffers from a pituitary tumour and, according to medical advice given to Amnesty International, his detention will place his health at serious risk if, as is likely, he does not have access to proper medical care and if he is not able to take necessary medication.

As far as Amnesty International is aware, the Syrian authorities have not disclosed Mohammed Hassan al-Labwani's legal status or wellbeing. However, according to a detainee who was held with him and released on 24 August, Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani was beaten on one occasion. The detainee did not know if Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani had been allowed to access his medication, which the family passed through contacts to Damascus State Security on 18 August.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- Expressing concern that Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani has been held incommunicado since 18 August and has allegedly been subjected to torture or other ill-treatment, and calling for these allegations to be investigated promptly and for anyone responsible to be brought to justice;
- Urging the Syrian authorities to ensure that Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani is protected against further torture and other ill-treatment, provided with any medical attention he requires and allowed immediate contact with his family and a lawyer of his choice;
- Calling for him to be released unless he is to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence and brought promptly to trial in accordance with international standards for fair trial.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 OCTOBER 2011 TO:

President

Bashar al-Assad
 Presidential Palace
 al-Rashid Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: +963 11 332 3410

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

His Excellency Major General Mohamad
 Ibrahim al-Shaar
 Ministry of Interior
 'Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: +963 113110554

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates

Walid al-Mu'allim
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
 Expatriates
 al-Rashid Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: +963 11 214 62512/3

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

HEALTH OF ARRESTED SYRIAN MAN AT SERIOUS RISK

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Pro-reform demonstrations began in Syria in February 2011 and evolved into mass protests in mid-March. Since then, the protests, which are generally calling for greater rights and freedom and an end to the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, have spread nationwide on an unprecedented scale and with a momentum that shows no sign of abating despite severe government repression which has seen many hundreds of people killed. The protests have been largely peaceful, yet the Syrian authorities have responded in the most brutal manner in their efforts to suppress them. The security forces have repeatedly used grossly excessive force, using snipers to shoot into crowds of peaceful protesters and deploying army tanks to shell residential areas while seeking to justify such force on the pretext that the government is under attack by armed gangs. Amnesty International has obtained the names of more than 1,900 people reported to have died or been killed during or in connection with the protests since mid-March; many are believed to have been shot by security forces using live ammunition while participating in peaceful protests or attending funerals of people killed in earlier protests.

Thousands of other people have been arrested, with many held incommunicado at unknown locations at which torture and other ill-treatment are reported to be rife. In and around al-Zabadani, according to a local human rights activist, at least 450 people, between the ages of 13 and 74, have been arrested since the outbreak of mass protests in mid-March. The activist told Amnesty International that those detained were arrested during house-to-house raids, at security checkpoints, individual arrests from places of work or randomly as part of sweeping arrests from the street.

According to the human rights activist, Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani had stopped participating in the pro-reform protests following his release on 12 May. He was previously held within the context of the popular protests by the State Security in Damascus for around 10 days, during which he was reportedly tortured (see UA 87/11 Index: MDE 24/019/2011 Syria and follow-up).

Name: Mohammed Hasan al-Labwani
Gender m/f: Male

UA: 266/11 Index: MDE 24/047/2011 Issue Date: 2 September 2011