

2007

21 June

UA 159/07 **Fear of torture/medical concern/incommunicado detention**

SAUDI ARABIA **'Abdullah Abu Bakir Hassan (m), Libyan national**

Libyan national 'Abdullah Abu Bakir Hassan was arrested on 17 May, and has since been detained incommunicado, putting him at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. He has only one arm, and had recently suffered a stroke; he is apparently suffering from a stomach infection, which is causing him to vomit blood.

'Abdullah Abu Bakir Hassan lives in Ireland, and runs a company that arranges for Muslim pilgrims to travel to Mecca, mainly from Europe. He was arrested at the offices of the General Investigation (*al-Mabahith al-'Amma*) in Mecca. Later on 17 May, he called his family in Ireland and told them that he had been detained and would no longer be able to contact them.

He was previously arrested in November 2005 while on business in Saudi Arabia, and detained for nine months without charge or trial at a prison in Mecca. He was allegedly beaten repeatedly, and denied access to legal counsel. The security forces apparently suspected him of providing financial assistance to an "extremist organization", possibly because his work involved carrying a lot of money, but he was released without charge in July 2006.

The Ministry of Interior retained his passport when he was released, preventing him returning to his home in Ireland. In April 2007 he complained about the way he was being treated in an interview with Qatar-based Al-Jazeera satellite TV.

A colleague of his, British national 'Abdul Hakim Jellaini, was detained with him in November 2005, and also released without charge. His passport has not been returned to him.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Saudi Arabian authorities regularly hold detainees incommunicado, when they are frequently tortured and otherwise ill-treated. Critics of the state are routinely detained indefinitely without charge or trial. Defendants are often denied the right to formal representation by a lawyer and in many cases they and their families are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. Due to the secrecy of the Saudi Arabian justice system, trials are invariably held behind closed doors. In the rare instances when individuals are charged and brought to trial, the proceedings invariably fail to meet the most elementary standards of fairness.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic or English or your own language:

- expressing concern that 'Abdullah Abu Bakir Hassan was arrested on 17 May and is held incommunicado;
- urging the authorities to ensure that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and given regular access to his family, lawyers of his choice and any medical attention he may require;
- urging the authorities to either charge 'Abdullah Abu Bakir Hassan with a recognisably criminal offence and give him a fair trial or else release him immediately.

APPEALS TO:

King Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty The King
Royal Court
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Salutation: Your Majesty

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

Fax: +966 1 403 1185

Salutation: +966 1 403 3614
Your Royal Highness

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

Fax: +966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO:

Mr Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
The President
The Human Rights Commission
PO Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road
Building No.373
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

and 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 August 2007
