

PUBLIC

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UA 44/06 "Disappearance"/ Fear of torture or ill-treatment

IRAQ **Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani (m), aged 42, oil technician  
And 15 other men**

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Sixteen men, including Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani, have not been heard from since their arrest in Baghdad on 21 December 2005. Amnesty International fears that they may be at risk of serious human rights violations, including torture.

At 7am on the morning of 21 December 2005, Iraqi security forces stormed a house in the suburb of Hay al-Jihad, West Baghdad, and arrested Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani and his brother-in-law Ahmad 'Abbas Naji Khurshid al-Salihi. The security forces also searched the house and took jewellery and mobile phones. They reportedly had a list of names and arrested more people living in the same street as Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani. A total of 18 people were arrested, blindfolded, handcuffed and taken to an unknown location where they were interrogated. They were said to have been kicked and beaten with metal bars and subjected to suffocation with pillows. The reasons for the arrests are not known but all those arrested were reportedly Sunni Muslims and were accused of membership of armed groups opposed to the Iraqi government. One of the 18 men was released soon thereafter.

Later the same day, Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani, Ahmad 'Abbas Naji Khurshid al-Salihi and a third man, whose name is not known to Amnesty International, were taken while blindfolded to another unknown location, which was apparently the roof of a private house. The other 14 men arrested with them were also believed to have been separated into groups and taken to unknown locations.

The three men were reportedly detained on the roof of the house for 13 days with no food and little water, and suffered further beatings. Members of the Iraqi security forces reportedly telephoned Ahmad 'Abbas Naji Khurshid al-Salihi's family and demanded US\$60,000 for his and Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani's release. If the money was not paid, the security forces reportedly claimed that the two would be charged with "membership of the insurgency". The family allegedly refused to pay the amount of money demanded.

On 3 January 2006, the three men were returned to the place where they had been detained immediately after their arrest on 21 December. The next day Ahmad 'Abbas Naji Khurshid al-Salihi was released without charge but his brother-in-law and the 15 other men arrested at the same time have not yet been accounted for.

Ahmad 'Abbas Khurshid al-Salihi resides in a European country and was on a visit to Baghdad when he was arrested. As a result of his arrest and torture, he suffered a fractured nose and shoulder and has been psychologically traumatised by his ordeal. When he returned to his country of residence he was admitted to hospital and given medical treatment for his injuries.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The use of torture by Iraqi security forces is said to be widespread and reportedly includes severe beatings to various parts of the body with cables, as well as cigarette burns, electric shocks to the genitals and the use of electric drills on the arms and legs. The victims have included those suspected of involvement with armed opposition groups and in "terrorist activities". Since the Shi'a dominated government, led by Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Ja'afari, came to power in May 2005, serious allegations of torture have been made against security forces controlled by the Ministry of Interior, such as the Wolf Brigade. Militia linked to Shi'a political groups, including the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), and members of

the Mahdi Army, supporters of Moqtada al-Sadr, a Shi'a cleric influential in the district of al-Sadr City in Baghdad and in southern Iraq, have also allegedly been involved in the kidnappings and killings which mostly target Sunni Muslims. On 13 November 2005 US troops raided a secret detention facility controlled by the Ministry of Interior in the al-Jadiriya district of Baghdad and found more than 170 detainees held in appalling conditions, many of whom alleged that they had been tortured.

Armed groups opposed to the Iraqi government and the international Multinational Force (MNF) have carried out indiscriminate bomb and suicide attacks resulting in the killing of hundreds of civilians. Amnesty International has regularly condemned these attacks as crimes against humanity.

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

- expressing concern at reports of the torture of 17 people from Hay al-Jihad in Baghdad after their arrest on 21 December 2005, among them Nazim Mohammad Isma'il al-'Ani and Ahmad 'Abbas Naji Khurshid al-Salihi;
- expressing concern that 16 of them have remained in incommunicado detention and may be at risk of further torture or ill-treatment;
- seeking clarification of the reasons for their arrest as well as details of their full names;
- requesting information of their current whereabouts and urging their immediate release unless they are to be charged with recognizably criminal offences;
- calling for allegations of torture against the 17 men to be promptly and fully investigated and for anyone found responsible for abuse to be brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**

**Fax numbers and e-mail addresses for the Iraqi Prime Minister are not available. Please send appeals via the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country, asking them to forward your appeals to:**

Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, Dr. Ibrahim al-Ja'afari

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Appeals can also be sent directly to:**

His Excellency, Baqir Jabr Solagh, Minister of Interior

**Fax: + 964 1 7180305 (Please keep trying; if you cannot get through please send appeals via the Iraqi diplomatic representative in your country)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

Ask for the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country to send copies to the Acting Human Rights Minister, Nasreen Barwari.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 April 2006.