

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/002/2005

11 March 2005

UA 57/05 Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture or ill-treatment

SAUDI ARABIA Salem Abdul Rahman Nawab al Baloushi (m), aged 32, UAE national

Salem al Baloushi is reported to be held incommunicado at al-Dammam prison, in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. He does not have access to a lawyer or consular assistance, although he is a national of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). He is at grave risk of torture.

Salem al Baloushi has been detained without charge or trial since February 2003. The reason for his arrest is not known, but it may have been connected to the fact that he travelled to Afghanistan in the 1980s. Although he was less than 17 years old at the time, since September 2001 the Saudi Arabian authorities have treated anyone who travelled to Afghanistan at that time as a potential Islamist terrorist.

He was arrested in al-Dammam and taken to al-Jubayl prison, where he was held for several months, and was moved to al-Dammam prison a few months ago. He was allowed one short visit from his family one month after his arrest, but has not been permitted to see them since then.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The so called "war on terror" has had a profound and far-reaching impact on human rights in all the countries in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula. Governments in the region, such as that of Saudi Arabia, have treated nationals and residents of the Gulf region with a disturbing disregard for the rule of law and fundamental human rights standards. The results have been mass arrests, prolonged detention without charge or trial, incommunicado detention, torture and ill-treatment, strict secrecy surrounding the fate and whereabouts of some detainees, and apparent extrajudicial executions. These human rights violations have had profound effects not only on individual victims.

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

- expressing concern that Salem Abdul Rahman Nawab al Baloushi is detained incommunicado at al-Dammam prison, where he may be at risk of torture;
- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely, and not tortured or ill-treated;
- calling for him to be released immediately and unconditionally unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and given a prompt fair trial;
- calling for him to be given regular access to his family, lawyers and any medical attention he may require.

APPEALS TO:

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

Fax: + 966 1 403 1185 (it may be difficult to get through, please keep trying)

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

Fax: + 966 1 401 1741

Salutation: Your Excellency

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

Fax: + 966 1 403 0159 (it may be difficult to get through, please keep trying)

Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO: 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 23 April 2005.