

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST AT RISK OF UNFAIR TRIAL AT SECRET COURT

Syrian peaceful political activist Mohamed Saleh was arrested on 23 October by Syrian Air Force Intelligence. Information received suggests he could soon be subjected to an unfair trial before a military court. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

A local contact has informed Amnesty International that members of Syrian Air Force Intelligence arrived at the home of **Mohamed Saleh** on the afternoon of 23 October 2015 and asked him to accompany them to their local branch for a short period of time. They also confiscated some items from his home. They did not provide any reason for his arrest. Mohamed Saleh has been held in secret detention ever since. It is not known if he is still at the Air Force Intelligence branch in Homs, or has since been moved. Amnesty International is concerned about his wellbeing, as research shows torture and other ill-treatment is rife in the detention facilities of the Syrian security forces and many detainees die in their custody.

The same contact told Amnesty International that they have received information that suggests he may be facing a trial before a Military Field Court but the charges against him are not known. Amnesty International opposes trials of civilians before military courts, as well as of members of the military and security forces for human rights violations or crimes under international law. In addition, procedures before Military Field Courts fall far short of international fair trial standards. Defendants have no legal representation and the courts' decisions are binding and not subject to appeal.

Mohamed Saleh is a former prisoner of conscience. He was detained in the 1980s and spent 12 years in prison due to his work with one of the unauthorized communist parties in Syria. He was detained again very briefly in October 2011 after the start of the crisis in Syria. During this time, he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated. Prior to his most recent arrest, he had been working towards facilitating communication between the warring parties in the Homs area in order to protect the civilian population.

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

- Expressing concern that Mohamed Saleh has been held in secret detention at an unknown location since 23 October, and urging the Syrian authorities to grant him immediate access to his family, a lawyer of his choice, and any medical attention he may require;
- Calling on them to release Mohamed Saleh if he has been detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Calling on them to ensure that Mohamed Saleh is protected from torture and other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 DECEMBER 2015 TO:

Permanent Representative to the UN

Bashar Ja'afari, Ambassador
Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
820 Second Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA
Fax: +1 212 983 4439
E-mail: exesec.syria@gmail.com
Salutation: Your Excellency

President

Bashar al-Assad
Fax: +963 11 332 3410 (keep trying)
(If fax does not go through, please
include your message to the president in
an email to the Ambassador, asking for it
to be forwarded)
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Defence

General Fahd Jassem al-Frej
Fax: +963 11 223 7842 (keep trying)
+963 11 666 2460 (keep trying)
(If fax does not go through, please
include your message to the Minister of
Defence in an email to the Ambassador,
asking for it to be forwarded)
Salutation: Your Excellency

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

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Former detainees who have recounted their experience to Amnesty International have spoken of catastrophic conditions inside Syria's unofficial detention facilities. Detainees are regularly subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, including through beatings, often in stress positions and with or without objects, sleep deprivation, as well as electro shocks and sexual violence. Conditions are additionally extremely poor: cells are overcrowded, detainees are not provided with enough food and water, the access to sanitation facilities is inadequate and there is hardly any medical care available. As a result, diseases are spread widely and thousands have died in the custody of the security forces since the current crisis began in 2011.

For additional information, please refer to Amnesty International's November 2015 report '*Between prison and the grave*': *Enforced disappearances in Syria*, accessible at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/2579/2015/en/>

Amnesty International's campaign for access for independent international monitors to all persons deprived of their liberty can also be found here: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/11/mass-abductions-in-syria/>

Activists may also wish to send the following tweets:

#missing since 23 October @Presidency_Sy where is peaceful activist Mohamed Saleh? #syria
.@Presidency_Sy whereabouts of peaceful activist Mohamed Saleh must be made known #syria

Name: Mohamed Saleh

Gender m/f: M

Further information on 256/15 Index: MDE 24/2862/2015 Issue Date: 13 November 2015

