

1 December 1998

Further information on UA 295/98 (ASA 28/40/98, 16 November 1998) - Fear of ill-treatment/prisoners of conscience/possible prisoners of conscience

MALAYSIA Lokman Noor bin Haji Adam, member of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), Johore division
Mohamad Khair Mohamad Noor, 38, UMNO member
Abdullah Rashid bin Ahmad, UMNO member
New name: Zulkifli Othman

There are fears that Zulkifli Othman, who was arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA) on 20 November 1998, may be subjected to ill-treatment in detention.

Since September 1998 at least 22 people have been detained under the Internal Security Act in Malaysia in connection with the arrest of Anwar Ibrahim. For further information please refer to AI document *Malaysia: The arrest of Anwar Ibrahim and his political associates - an update* (AI Index ASA 28/39/98, 9 November 1998), Urgent Actions 271/98 and 256/98 and updates.

Detainees recently held under the ISA are known to have been held incommunicado, to have been beaten and placed in conditions of aggravated mental distress, induced by sleep deprivation and other forms of harassment. Anwar Ibrahim was allegedly beaten while detained under the ISA in September 1998. Other individuals arrested under the ISA in September 1998, including Dr. Munawar Anees, Anwar Ibrahim's speech-writer, have reported ill-treatment during their detention, as well as inadequate access to medical treatment.

Amnesty International is concerned about the continued use of the ISA to silence freedom of expression in Malaysia. The organization is also concerned that the law fails to meet internationally recognised standards of detention and fair trial. Despite repeated calls from domestic human rights groups for its repeal, the government continues to assert that the ISA is necessary in order to maintain stability. Under the ISA, individuals considered to be acting "in a manner prejudicial to the security of Malaysia" may be detained without charge for up to 60 days. The Minister of Home Affairs may then authorize, in writing, further indefinite detention without judicial review or the filing of formal charges for periods of up to 2 years. Those released before the end of their detention period may be subject to restrictions limiting free association, expression and travel.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the detention under the Internal Security Act (ISA) of Lokman Noor bin Haji Adam and Mohamad Khair Mohamad Noor, as prisoners of conscience detained solely for their non-violent political activities and calling for their immediate and unconditional release;
- expressing concern at the detention of Abdullah Rashid bin Ahmad and Zulkifli Othman under the ISA, and calling for them either to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence or released immediately;
- urging that, pending their release, the group is granted immediate access to family members, independent lawyers and medical personnel;
- urging that they are not subjected to ill-treatment in detention;

- reminding the government of Malaysia of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 19: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression".

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs

Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad

Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs

Jalan Dato' Onn

50502 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Faxes: + 60 3 238 3784

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

COPIES TO:

Deputy Minister of Home Affairs

Dato' Tajol Rosli Ghazali

Deputy Minister of Home Affairs

Jalan Dato' Onn

50502 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Faxes: + 60 3 230 1051

and to diplomatic representatives of Malaysia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 January 1999.

"[relevant UDHR article repeated]"

Article

, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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