

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 29/02/98

Further information on UA 367/97 (ASA 29/03/97, 25 November 1997 and ASA 29/01/98, 14 January 1998) - Denial of medical treatment / Deteriorating health conditions New concern: Fear of torture

13 March 1998

THE MALDIVES Ismail Saadiq (38), businessman

Ismail Saadiq, who has reportedly been held in incommunicado detention since early February 1998, could be at serious risk of torture. He is reportedly being denied access to adequate medical treatment although his medical condition is understood to be deteriorating.

Ismail Saadiq has been in detention or under house arrest without trial intermittently for 19 months on allegations of business irregularities. Amnesty International is concerned that his detention could be linked to his peaceful opposition to the government.

In early February he was held for two weeks in Male' Police Headquarters before being transferred to Dhoonidhoo Island Prison. Authorities have blocked all attempts by his relatives to contact him, and it is understood that he does not have access to a lawyer.

Amnesty International has received several reports regarding the practice of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatments or punishments at Dhoonidhoo Island Prison. Ismail Saadiq was reportedly subjected to long periods of sleep deprivation and denial of adequate food and medicine when he was previously held there during various periods of 1996 and 1997.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Ismail Saadiq has been held in incommunicado detention and that he is at risk of being tortured;
- urging the Maldives government to immediately allow him access to relatives, legal counsel and to medical treatment;
- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely;
- requesting clarification of the reasons and legal basis for his arrest;
- expressing concern that he has been detained or under house arrest intermittently without trial for the last 19 months, in contravention of international human rights standards.

APPEALS TO:

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom

The President's Office

Marine Drive (North)

Male', Republic of Maldives

Fax: + 960 32 55 00

Telegrams: President Gayoom, Male', Maldives

Salutation: Dear President

Lt Colonel Adam Zahir

Officer in Charge, Police Headquarters

C/O Ministry of Defence and National Security

Bandeyrige, Ahmed Magu, Male', Republic of Maldives

Fax: + 960 32 55 25

Telegrams: Lt Colonel Zahir, Police Headquarters, Male', Maldives

Salutation: Dear Lt Colonel

COPIES TO:

Abdulla Hameed
Speaker, Office of the Citizens' Majlis
Naadi
Ameer Ahmed Magu
Male'
Republic of Maldives

and to diplomatic representatives of The Maldives accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 29 April 1998.