

PUBLIC

AI Index:EUR 45/015/2002

1 August 2002

Further information on UA 198/02 (EUR 45/010/2002, 28 June 2002) and follow-up (EUR 45/013/2002, 22 July 2002) - Health Concern/ Cruel, inhuman treatment

UNITED KINGDOM Mahmoud Abu Rideh (m) aged 31 - Palestinian refugee

On 24 July, Mahmoud Abu Rideh, a Palestinian refugee and torture victim, was transferred from Belmarsh high security prison in London to Broadmoor Psychiatric Hospital in the South of England. This move was ordered by the UK Home Secretary David Blunkett, against expert medical advice.

Mahmoud Abu Rideh has been detained since December 2001 without charge under the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA). Broadmoor Psychiatric Hospital is one of three high security mental hospitals in the UK, and holds some of the most dangerous and violent detainees.

Mahmoud Abu Rideh's health has reportedly improved slightly at Broadmoor. However, Amnesty International remains concerned that his detention in a high-security mental hospital is inappropriate and has been brought about entirely as a result of his original arrest under the ATCSA and subsequent detention in conditions amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Mahmoud Abu Rideh is suicidal and has a long history of psychiatric treatment, having been diagnosed with severe Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He had been granted refugee status in the UK as a torture victim. The conditions in which he was held at Belmarsh prison reportedly caused him to experience flashbacks of his torture. According to expert medical evidence, he is not a threat to anyone except himself.

Many thanks to all who have sent appeals. Amnesty International will continue to monitor Mahmoud Abu Rideh's case, and campaign on his behalf. Please send a final round of appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern that Mahmoud Abu Rideh's detention in a high-security mental hospital could still be detrimental to his mental health; and that as a result of this, his life may still be at risk;
- calling for his transfer from Broadmoor hospital to a low-level secure mental hospital near his family in London;
- expressing concern that Mahmoud Abu Rideh, a Palestinian refugee and a torture victim, has been detained without charge or trial since his arrest on 19 December 2001.

APPEALS TO:

Rt Hon David Blunkett MP
Secretary of State for Home Affairs
The Home Office
50 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AT
United Kingdom

Telegrams: Home Secretary, London, United Kingdom

Fax: + 44 20 7219 5903

Salutation: Dear Home Secretary

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of the United Kingdom accredited in your own country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 September 2002.