

URGENT ACTION

ONE OF TWO ARRESTED WOMEN RELEASED

One of the two women working for the Iraqi Vice-President's Office who were arrested on 1 January has been released. The other woman's whereabouts are still unknown.

Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain, who was working at the Iraqi Vice-President's Office, was arrested without a warrant at her parents' house in Baghdad's al-Zayuna district on 1 January 2012. The security forces claimed they were taking her away for questioning and that she would return two hours later. Since her arrest her family have not known her whereabouts. However, the Iraqi media reported on 30 January that a Human Rights Parliamentary Committee had visited several of the Iraqi Vice-President's employees, including both arrested women, who claimed they had been tortured in detention. It is believed she was arrested in connection with a warrant for the arrest of the Iraqi Vice-President, Tareq al-Hashemi, who has been wanted by the authorities since December 2011. He is accused of terrorism-related offences, an accusation which he has publicly said is politically motivated.

The second woman, **Bassima Saleem Kiryakos**, was released, apparently without charge, on around 10 April. She was arrested after her house in the Green Zone in Baghdad was raided by over 15 armed security men in military uniform. The men did not have an arrest warrant.

On 20 March, the body of one of the Vice-President's bodyguards, 'Amer al-Battawi, who had been in detention for three months, was returned to his family. His body apparently showed marks of possible torture. Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain may be at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Please write immediately in English or Arabic:

- Urging the authorities to disclose the whereabouts of Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain immediately and grant her immediate access to her family and lawyers;
- Urging them to release her unless she is charged with a recognizably criminal offence, and to protect her from torture or other ill-treatment;
- Calling on them to set up an independent and impartial investigation into the death of 'Amer al-Battawi, which apparently resulted from torture, and bring anyone responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 JUNE 2012 TO DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ IN YOUR COUNTRY, ADDRESSED TO:

Prime Minister and Acting Minister of
Defence and Interior

His Excellency Nuri Kamil al-Maliki,
Prime Minister
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

His Excellency Mohammad Shayaa
al-Sudani
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Hassan al-Shammari
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
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. This is the second update of UA 27/12. Further information:
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/003/2012/en

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 19 December 2011 the Iraqi judicial authorities issued an arrest warrant for Vice-President Tareq al-Hashemi, a Sunni Muslim, shortly after his Sunni-backed al-Iraqiya bloc announced it would boycott Parliament, accusing Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's government of being sectarian. The current Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, belongs to the Shi'a community.

Since that date Tareq al-Hashemi has been based in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, a semi-autonomous area controlled by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), with frequent travel to other countries such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Dozens of his bodyguards were arrested in Iraq. In December, state-run TV channel Al-Iraqiya broadcast "confessions" by men said to be al-Hashemi's bodyguards saying that they had killed police officers and officials from ministries in exchange for pay-offs from al-Hashemi. In addition to the death in custody of 'Amer al-Battawi, there have been reports of other bodyguards of al-Hashemi being tortured in detention.

The arrests of his bodyguards were followed by a wave of arrests of Sunni politicians. On 19 January, the Iraqi authorities reported they had arrested Ghadban al-Khazraji, the deputy governor in charge of investment in Diyala province and a member of the Islamic Iraqi Party. Several of al-Khazraji's bodyguards were also arrested.

In the last few years, hundreds of detainees have been shown on the Al-Iraqiya TV channel making "confessions" admitting responsibility for various terrorism related offences. These confessions have invariably been extracted under torture and other ill-treatment. Many people were convicted by the Central Criminal Court of Iraq on the basis of these confessions.

Name: Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain

Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 27/12 Index: MDE 14/004/2012 Issue Date: 26 April 2012