

PUBLIC

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**IRAQ/IRAQI KURDISTAN Hiwa Ahmad, aged about 36**

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An opposition activist who apparently criticised the authorities' human rights record has been arrested and is at risk of torture, in the region of Iraqi Kurdistan controlled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

Hiwa Ahmad is a member of the executive committee of the Iraqi Workers' Communist Party (IWCP). He had reportedly written an article in an IWCP newspaper or magazine criticizing the PUK leader's record on human rights. He was arrested on 16 October by the PUK security and intelligence service, *Dezgay Zanyari*, in the city of Sulaimaniya. He is reportedly detained incommunicado at the Security Directorate in Sulaimaniya.

He was apparently released on 30 October and rearrested later that day, for reasons unknown.

On 26 October Amnesty International wrote to the PUK leader asking why Hiwa Ahmad had been arrested. We have received no reply.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since the end of the Gulf War in 1991 Iraqi Kurdistan has been under the control of the two main Kurdish political parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the PUK, who control two distinct areas and have established their own "governments".

The IWCP was formed in 1993 from a merger of four small communist groups. Its activities remained limited, under pressure from both the KDP and the PUK.

In July and August this year there were widespread arrests of IWCP members, and others, in Sulaimaniya, following protests against alleged PUK persecution. Four armed IWCP members were killed, reportedly when their car came under fire from PUK security forces. By the end of September all those arrested in connection with anti-PUK demonstrations had been released.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Arabic, Kurdish or your own language:**

- asking why Hiwa Ahmad was arrested;
- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely and has access to lawyers of his own choosing, his family and any medical care he may require;
- calling for him to be released immediately and unconditionally if he is being held solely for the expression of his beliefs.

**APPEALS TO:**

Jalal Talabani  
c/o PUK United Kingdom  
First Floor, 5 Glasshouse Walk,  
Vauxhall  
London SE11 5ES  
UK

**Faxes: + 44 20 7840 0630**

**Salutation: Dear Mr Talabani**

Jalal Talabani

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Washington D. C. 20001  
USA

**Faxes: + 1 202 6372723**

**Salutation: Dear Mr Talabani**

**COPIES TO:** Office of the PUK, if there is one in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 December 2000.