

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 15/13/98

UA 45/98

Fear of Torture / Legal Concern

11 February 1998

ISRAEL/SOUTH LEBANON

Maher Ahmad Hamdan, aged 23

Baligh Qa'dan, aged 20

Ayman Luqais, aged 20

Tai' Abu Rashid, aged 25

Khuza'i Barakat

Khaled Abu Sari

Manal Ibrahim (f)

The seven above-named residents of Israel's self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon have reportedly been arrested in recent days. They are believed to be held at Khiam Detention Centre. Amnesty International fears they may face torture or ill-treatment and prolonged detention without trial.

Maher Ahmad Hamdan and Baligh Qa'dan, residents of Shab'a, Tai' Abu Rashid, a resident of Ghardis, and Khuza'i Barakat, a resident of Habariya, were arrested on 3 February 1998. Ayman Luqais, from Hasbiya, was arrested on 4 February. Khaled Abu Sari, a resident of Firdays, was arrested on 7 February and Manal Ibrahim, a resident of 'Idaysa, was arrested the following day.

Khiam Detention Centre is the main SLA detention and interrogation centre in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon. More than 150 detainees are presently believed to be held in Khiam, some of whom have been held without charge or trial for up to 12 years. Former detainees have described systematic torture and ill-treatment including beating, whipping, application of electric shocks and dousing with hot and cold water. Detainees are routinely denied access to their lawyers.

From 1987 to 1995, detainees in Khiam Detention Centre were denied visits from both the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and their families.

They have again been denied visits since 10 September 1997, heightening concern for their well-being.

Although Israel asserts that it is not responsible for Khiam Detention Centre and directs all inquiries to the SLA it is, nevertheless, the occupying power in South Lebanon and therefore has ultimate responsibility.

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

- urging that Maher Ahmad Hamdan, Baligh Qa'dan, Ayman Luqais, Tai' Abu Rashid, Khuza'i Barakat, Khaled Abu Sari and Manal Ibrahim be granted immediate and continuing access to their families, lawyers and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
- seeking assurances that they will not be subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment;
- calling for their immediate and unconditional release if they are not charged with criminal offences and tried according to international standards for a fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

Binyamin Netanyahu
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street

Hakirya, Jerusalem 91007, Israel
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel
Faxes: + 972 3 691 7915
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

General Yitzhak Mordechai
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
7 'A' Street, Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel
Telegrams: Defence Minister, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faxes: + 972 3 697 6218
Salutation: Dear Minister

General Antoine Lahad
South Lebanon Army
c/o Lieutenant-General Amnon Shahak
Chief of General Staff
7 'A' Street
Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel
Telegrams: General Lahad, c/o Chief General Staff, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faxes: + 972 3 691 6940 (write c/o Lieutenant-General Amnon Shakak, Chief of General Staff)
Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Israel accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals 25 March 1998.