

21 March 1996

Further information on UA 65/96 (MDE 15/16/96, 6 March 1996) - Fear of extrajudicial execution / House destruction / Legal Concern and new concerns - Fear of Deportation / Fear of Torture

**ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES** Concern over state response to suicide bombings

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Amnesty International remains concerned at the Israeli Government's response to recent suicide bombings: the authorities have threatened that individuals may be deported; scores of recent detainees are at risk of torture or ill-treatment, and so far eight houses have been destroyed or made uninhabitable as a punishment.

These measures or projected measures have been taken since 62 people, including the bombers, were killed and over 200 wounded in four suicide bomb attacks between 25 February and 4 March 1996. The suicide-bombs, which were exploded on buses, a busy shopping mall and at a bus stop used by army personnel, were claimed by two Islamist movements, the Islamic Resistance Movement (*Hamas*) and Islamic *Jihad*. Since then at least 200 people have been arrested by Israel and the Gaza Strip and much of the West Bank have been closed to almost all movement of people and goods.

**Fear of Deportations**

As one of its responses to the suicide-bombings, the Israeli Government has threatened to deport suspected supporters of *Hamas* and families of the suicide bombers. Prime Minister Shimon Peres is reported to have said that a list of those to be deported is now being studied by military and legal experts. Officials from the Prime Minister's office are reported to have said on 21 March that up to 10 "militants" were to be deported.

Amnesty International opposes the use of forcible exile which is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (Article 49). Anyone suspected of committing an offence should either be charged and given a prompt and fair trial or be released.

**Torture and House Destruction**

Amnesty International has continued to receive reports of torture or ill-treatment of detainees held by the General Security Service (GSS). For example, 'Adnan Yunis 'Abd al-Majid Abu Tabaneh, from Hebron, was arrested on 3 March and interrogated between 10 and 13 March in Hashikma Prison in Ashkelon. He reportedly was held in painful positions and deprived of sleep for 64 hours, violently shaken on two occasions and threatened that he would meet the same end as 'Abd al-Samed Harizat (a prisoner who died from being violently shaken) or that he would leave the prison in a wheelchair. Amnesty International has frequently reported on systematic torture or ill-treatment of detainees suspected of Islamist sympathies by the Israeli authorities.

At least eight houses have been destroyed or made uninhabitable since 14 March. These houses belong to the families of those who have died carrying out suicide bombings in 1995 or 1996 or of those accused of having helped to organize the bombings. Houses are demolished by placing explosive charges in the house or by bulldozer; surrounding houses are said frequently also suffer damage.

Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits destruction of property except where absolutely necessary for military operations. No one should be punished for offences committed by others.

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

- while recognizing the revulsion caused by the deliberate and arbitrary killing of civilians, emphasise that no level of abuse by armed opposition groups can be an excuse for committing human rights violations;
- strongly oppose the use of deportation as a punishment, stressing that those detained should be brought to trial on recognizably criminal charges or else released;
- call on the Israeli authorities to ensure that, in accordance with the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ratified by Israel in 1991, no one should suffer physical or psychological torture or ill-treatment while in detention;
- call on the Israeli authorities to halt immediately all destruction or sealing of houses as a punishment.

**APPEALS TO:**

1. Shimon Peres

Prime Minister and Minister of Defence  
Office of the Prime Minister

3 Kaplan Street, Jerusalem 91007, Israel

**Telegrams: Prime Minister Peres, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Telexes: 25279 MPRES IL**

**Faxes: +972 2 664 838; +972 2 6513 950**

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

2. David Liba'i

Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice

29 Salah al-Din Street, Jerusalem 91010, Israel

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Faxes: +972 2 285 438**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

3. Ehud Barak

Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Hakirya, Romema, Jerusalem 91999, Israel

**Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Telexes: 25223**

**Faxes: +972 2 303 506**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

4. Lieutenant-General Amnon Shahak

Chief of General Staff  
c/o Ministry of Defence

7 'A' Street, Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel

**Faxes: +972 3 691 6940**

**Telegrams: Chief of Staff Shahak, Tel Aviv, Israel**

**Salutation: Daer Lieutenant-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 after 6 May 1996.