

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 128/99

Fear of t

ISRAEL/SOUTH LEBANON
Cosette Elias Ibrahim (f), aged 24, freelance journalist
De Gaulle Butros Bou Taleb, aged 40
Samir George Khiami, aged 22

Freelance journalist Cosette Elias Ibrahim was arrested, reportedly by members of Israeli Military Intelligence, on 7 September 1999, together with her brother-in-law De Gaulle Butros Bou Taleb and Samir George Khiami. All three are believed to be held at the Khiam Detention Centre, where Amnesty International fears that they may be tortured.

They were arrested in Rmeish, a village in Israeli-occupied south Lebanon. All three are originally from the village. Cosette Elias Ibrahim was reportedly arrested for refusing to cooperate with the South Lebanon Army (SLA), an Israeli proxy militia. She was allegedly physically and psychologically ill-treated during interrogation on arrival at Khiam.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Khiam Detention Centre is the main SLA detention and interrogation centre in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" of south Lebanon. Around 130 detainees are presently believed to be held there, of whom some have been held without charge or trial for up to 13 years. Former detainees have described systematic torture and ill-treatment, including beating, whipping, torture with electric shocks and dousing with hot and cold water. Detainees are routinely denied access to their lawyers.

Although Israel asserts that it is not responsible for Khiam Detention Centre, and directs all inquiries to the SLA, it is the occupying power in south Lebanon and therefore responsible in international law for what occurs in the area.

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

- seeking assurances that Cosette Elias Ibrahim, De Gaulle Butros Bou Taleb and Samir George Khiami will not be tortured or ill-treated in any way during their detention;
- calling for their immediate release if they are not charged with recognizably criminal offences and tried according to international standards for fair trial;
- urging the Israeli government to respect its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

APPEALS TO:

Ehud Barak
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street
Hakiryia, Jerusalem 91007, Israel
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel
Faxes: + 972 2 566 4838 / 691 7915
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Brigadier General Uri Shoham
Judge Advocate General
6 David Elazar Street

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Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel

Telegrams: Judge Advocate General, Tel Aviv, Israel

Faxes: + 972 3 569 4370

Salutation: Dear Brigadier General

General Antoine Lahad

South Lebanon Army

c/o Lieutenant-General Shaul Mufaz

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 Shaul Mufaz, 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 after 7 October 1999.