

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 15/098/2001

24 October 2001

Further information on UA 234/01 (MDE 15/082/2001, 14 September 2001) and follow-up (MDE 15/084/2001, 18 September) - Legal concern/possible prisoner of conscience

ISRAEL/OTDaoud al-Dir'awi (m), human rights defender, aged 27

A judge has ordered that Daoud al-Dir'awi be released on bail, but the army has responded by issuing a six-month administrative detention order, renewable indefinitely. He is now held in Megiddo Prison, in Israel.

On 18 October he was brought before the Israeli Military Court and charged with membership of, and involvement in running, an "unlawful association". As a student, Daoud al-Dir'awi had been an active member of the Student Workers' Front (SWF), a university student committee. The Israeli authorities contend that this committee is linked to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which is outlawed in Israel. Daoud al-Dir'awi's lawyer was not present at this hearing, as the time of the hearing was changed at the last moment.

He was brought before the Military Court again on 23 October, and the judge ruled that the case should proceed, but Daoud al-Dir'awi should be released within 72 hours on bail of 25,000 Israeli shekels (approx US\$5800), on the condition that he report to the nearest Israeli police station every Sunday.

The prosecutor asked for 36 hours' delay to file an appeal. On 25 October, the appeal judge upheld the decision that Daoud al-Dir'awi be released, but raised the bail sum to 60,000 shekels (approx US\$13,930). The Military Commander for the West Bank immediately issued a six-month administrative detention order against him. Administrative detention orders allow the Israeli authorities to detain without charge or trial and are renewable indefinitely.

It appears that Daoud al-Dir'awi may have been detained not for his former membership of the SWF but rather for his work as a human rights activist for the Ramallah office of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights. Amnesty International therefore considers him a prisoner of conscience.

His family cannot visit him because they live in the West Bank and do not have permits to go to Israel. His wife, who is from Jerusalem, has only seen him in court.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Hebrew or your own language:

- asking for Daoud al-Dir'awi to be released immediately and unconditionally, as he appears to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested solely for his work in defence of human rights;
- expressing concern at reports that Daoud al-Dir'awi has been tortured during interrogation and calling for an independent and impartial investigation into these allegations;
- expressing concern that his family is not able to visit him, and asking the Israeli authorities to ensure that all detainees have access to their families.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street, PO Box 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91919, Israel
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 651 2631
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Uzi Landau
Minister of Public Security
Ministry of Public Security (Police)
Kiryat Hamemshala
PO Box 18182
Jerusalem 91181, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 584 7872
Salutation: Dear Minister of Public Security

Meir Shetrit
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
29 Salah al-Din Street
Jerusalem 91010, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 628 8618
Salutation: Dear Minister of Justice

Eli Yishai
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of Interior
2 Kaplan Street
PO Box 6158
Kiryat Ben Gurion
Jerusalem 91061, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 670 1628
Salutation: Dear Minister of Interior

Elyakim Rubinstein
Attorney-General
Ministry of Justice
29 Salah al-Din Street
Jerusalem 91010, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 628 5438
Salutation: Dear Attorney-General

COPIES TO:

PICCR, Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights
Al-Isral St
Mukhmas Trading Center
6th Floor, PO B 2264
Jerusalem, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 298 7211

and 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 December 2001.