

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 18/07/96

30 December 1996

Further information on UA 300/96 (MDE 18/06/96, 23 December 1996) - Fear of Torture and new Legal concern

LEBANON Members of opposition groups - dozens of people arrested from 18 to 21 December 1996

names: Pierre ATTALLAH, 50, journalist

Antoine AZI

Ghassan BARDAWIL

Ghassan HADDAD

Samir GHAZAL

Joseph GHOSN

Zakhia AL-KOSSAIFI

Charles ROUSTUM

Joseph TOUQ

Obad ZWEIN

Ten people remain detained incommunicado, reportedly in the Ministry of Defence, after armed attacks on Syrian targets on 18 December. Pierre Attallah, an editor on the newspaper *al-Nahar*, was arrested at 11.30pm on 23 December; the others were reportedly arrested between 18 and 21 December.

Arrests were carried out by the military or military intelligence, without arrest warrant, contrary to the Lebanese Criminal Procedure Code. Their incommunicado detention also contravenes Article 73 of the Lebanese Criminal Procedure Code which states that a detainee's lawyer should be allowed unsupervised access at any time.

Amnesty International remains concerned that those detained incommunicado may be in danger of torture or ill-treatment. Some of those released earlier reported that they had suffered torture including electric shocks and suspension by the arms for many hours. None of those arrested is known to have been formally charged.

Most other detainees were released between 20 and 25 December. Wael Kheir, aged 50, a human rights defender who has been Executive Director of the Foundation of Human and Humanitarian Rights in Lebanon since 1988, was arrested on 24 December and released on 30 December (Amnesty International had issued a WARN action on his behalf).

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

- continuing to make it clear that you do not condone acts of violence and recognize the right and duty of every government to bring to justice those who have committed acts of violence; however this should be done according to international and Lebanese law which insists on prompt access of lawyers to those detained;
- expressing concern at allegations of torture during interrogation of those arrested and asking that they be promptly investigated;
- asking that the remaining detainees be humanely treated and be given immediate access to family, lawyers and medical treatment if necessary.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency President Elias Hirawi
Office of the President
Ba'abda Palace
Ba'abda, Beirut
Republic of Lebanon
Fax: +961 1 425 393
Telegrams: President Hirwai, Beirut, Lebanon
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Rafiq al-Hariri
Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and
Minister of Post and Telecommunications
Office of the Prime Minister
Grand Serail
Rue des Arts et Metiers
Sanayeh, Beirut
Republic of Lebanon
Fax: +961 1 200 469
+961 1 354 318
Telegrams: Prime Minister al-Hariri, Beirut, Lebanon
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Bahij Tabbara
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Palais de Justice, Beirut
Republic of Lebanon
Fax: +961 1 422 957 (say fax please)
Telegrams: Minister of Justice, Beirut, Lebanon
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Michel Murr
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior
Office of the Prime Minister
Grand Serail
Rue des Arts et Metiers
Sanayeh, Beirut
Republic of Lebanon
Fax: +961 1 869 813
Telegrams: Minister of Interior, Beirut, Lebanon
Salutation: Your Excellency

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 February 1997.