

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/001/2003

UA 80/03 Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture/  
Possible prisoner of conscience

19 March 2003

**SAUDI ARABIA** **Muhammad Rajkhan (m), Saudi Arabian national, aged 32**

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Possible prisoner of conscience, Muhammad Rajkhan was arrested by members of *al-Mahbahith al-'Amma* (General Investigations) on 8 February. He is reportedly being held in incommunicado detention at *al-Mabahith al-'Amma* prison in the capital Riyadh, where he is at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

Muhammad Rajkhan, a father of seven children, was arrested outside the grocery store he owned near his home city of Jeddah and taken to Riyadh. The exact reasons for his arrest are unknown. However, Amnesty International is concerned that he may have been detained solely for the peaceful expression of his consciously held religious and political beliefs, and if this is the case would consider him a prisoner of conscience.

He has not been formally charged with a recognizably criminal offence nor has he appeared before a judge. He has also been denied access to a lawyer and his family. Between 1 February and 15 March, two of his brothers were detained reportedly because they possess pilot's licences. They were held incommunicado until they were released without trial.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Critics of the state in Saudi Arabia are often at risk of indefinite detention without charge or trial. They are often ill-treated or tortured. In the rare instances when they are charged and brought to trial, the proceedings invariably fail to meet the most elementary standards of fairness.

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

- expressing concern at the incommunicado detention of Muhammad Rajkhan;
- seeking assurances that Muhammad Rajkhan is not being tortured or ill-treated and that he is given regular access to family, lawyers and medical attention if necessary;
- urging the authorities to release Muhammad Rajkhan immediately, if he is not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- if he is not to be released, ask for details of the charges against him and for information on any subsequent trial proceedings.

#### King and Prime Minister

#### The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines

His Majesty King Fahd bin >Abdul >Aziz Al-Saud,  
Office of H.M. The King, Royal Court,  
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Telegram: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**  
**Salutation: Your Majesty**

#### Minister of the Interior

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Minister of Justice

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**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 April 2003.