

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/014/2003

04 December 2003

UA 355/03 Fear of torture or ill-treatment/Incommunicado detention

SAUDI ARABIA Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi (m), Iraqi national, aged about 30

Iraqi national Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi has allegedly been tortured at Rafha General Prison in Saudi Arabia. He is held in incommunicado detention and remains at risk of further torture and ill-treatment.

Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi, from Sammawa in southern Iraq, was arrested in October or November in the Saudi Arabian desert region of Ar'ar, near the Iraqi-Saudi Arabian border. He was arrested by Saudi Arabian security forces and taken to Rafha General Prison in the same area, where some 200 other Iraqis arrested since the recent war in Iraq are also held. The charges against Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi are not clear. According to reports, he has been beaten and hit with sticks by prison guards.

He is said to have travelled to the Saudi Arabian desert in search of two of his brothers, Ali and Hussein, who have reportedly been missing since the recent war in Iraq. Ali and Hussein Muhawish al-Tawbi apparently served in the Iraqi army during the war. Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi reportedly received information that his brothers had either escaped to Saudi Arabia or that they had been killed and their bodies were in the desert in Saudi Arabia.

All the Iraqi detainees at Rafha General Prison are said to be held incommunicado. Some or all of them have reportedly started a hunger strike five days ago in protest at the lack of clarity of their legal status and fate. Some of them are said to have been in detention for nearly seven months. Amnesty International has no further information on any charges against them.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Iraqi detainee Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi has been tortured in detention at Rafha General Prison;
- seeking assurances that Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi is treated humanely in detention, protected from torture and ill-treatment and granted regular access to legal assistance, family and medical assistance if necessary;
- calling for an investigation into the allegations of torture and ill-treatment, with the findings made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- seeking clarification of the legal status of Faris Muhawish al-Tawbi and the other Iraqis held with him, in particular any charges and legal proceedings against them.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin >Abdul >Aziz,

Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior

P.O. Box 2933, Airport Road,

Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Minister of Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Fax: + 966 1 403 1185 (it may be difficult to get through, please keep trying)

Telex: 404416

Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin >Abdul >Aziz Al-Saud,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Nasseriya Street,
Riyadh 11124, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 0159 (it may be difficult to get through, please keep trying)
Telex: 405000
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Dr. >Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
University Street,
Riyadh 11137, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Minister of Justice, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 401 1741
Telex: 405 980 MINJUS SJ
Salutation: Your Excellency

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

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 15 January 2004.