

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 13/92 (MDE 24/01/92, 9 January 1992)

-Torture/Incommunicado Detention

17 January 1992

SYRIA: Aktham Nu'aysa
and six others

Amnesty International has received further reports indicating that five of the six detainees arrested with Aktham Nu'aysa are being held in the Military Interrogation Centre in Damascus and that they have been tortured. The sixth detainee has been released. Aktham Nu'aysa is reportedly still held incommunicado in Harasta Military Hospital. The other five, including Muhammad 'Ali Habib and Amjad Bahbuha, are also said to continue to be held incommunicado. Amnesty International does not have the names and details of the other three.

None of the six detainees is known to have used or advocated violence and all may be held solely for having peacefully exercised their right to freedom of expression.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing grave concern over reports of Aktham Nu'aysa and the other five having been tortured;
- requesting that this allegation be immediately investigated, that the findings be made public and if the reports are confirmed, those found responsible for the torture be brought to justice;
- seeking information about the names and personal details of the three people not known to Amnesty International and any others arrested in the same connection, and the reasons for their arrest;
- asking for their immediate release unless they are to be charged with an internationally recognized criminal offence;
- requesting that all detainees be given prompt access to their families and lawyers, and that all necessary medical care be provided.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
President Hafez al-Assad
Presidential Palace
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Telegrams: President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: 419160 munjed sy
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Muhammad Harba
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Damascus, Syria
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Khaled al-Ansari
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Nasr Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Damascus, Syria
Salutation: Your Excellency

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His Excellency Faruq al-Shar'a
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Al-Rashid Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: 411922
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Dr. Iyad al-Shatti
Minister of Health
Ministry of Health
al-Majlis al-Niyabi Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Health Minister, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: health 412655 sy
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Dr. M. Cherif Bakle
Ordre des Medecins Syriens
Place de l'Etoile
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

and to diplomatic representatives of Syria in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 February 1992.