

EXTERNAL

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From: Medical Office / Research Department - Middle East  
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*FURTHER INFORMATION OF MEDICAL LETTER-WRITING ACTION*

**@Seven prisoners in need of medical care**  
(See MDE 24/06/91 - 15 October 1991)

**£SYRIA**

**Keywords**

Theme: ill-health/medical care/POCs/detention without charge or trial/ill-treatment and torture/release

In October 1991, appeals were sent on behalf of seven prisoners in Syria who were reported to be in ill-health and in need of medical care. They had all been arrested on suspicion of having links with the banned Party for Communist Action (PCA), *Hizb al-'Amal al-Shuyu'i*. None of the prisoners had been brought to trial although they had been imprisoned for periods of between four and ten years and had very little access to medical attention or to outside contact.

Amnesty International has now learned that two of these prisoners, Lina al-Mir and May al-Hafez, have been released after having spent over four years in prison without charge or trial. Both were adopted as prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International. They had been permitted very limited contact with their families during their imprisonment. Lina al-Mir and May al-Hafez are among 60 female prisoners of conscience recently released in Syria.

Lina al-Mir is a 30-year-old medical student who was in her fifth year of studies at the time of her arrest in August 1987. (She had previously spent some months in prison in 1984, also on suspicion of having links with the PCA, but had been released for medical reasons.) Lina al-Mir is reported to have long-standing heart problems which necessitated her admission to al-Mezze military hospital on more than one occasion during her imprisonment.

May al-HAFEZ is a 36-year-old lecturer of engineering who was teaching at Aleppo University at the time of her arrest. She was first arrested on 27 August 1987 in Aleppo and detained until 2 October of the same year when she was released, apparently due to ill-health. She is reported to have received hospital treatment following her release in October 1987 but to have been re-arrested a few weeks later. May al-Hafez is reported to suffer from sickle cell anaemia.

**Thank you to all those who appealed on behalf of Lina al-Mir and May al-Hafez.**