

EXTERNAL

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UA 258/97

"Disappearance" / Fear of torture

5 August 1997

SYRIA / LEBANON Ahmad Hamad, medical doctor

The whereabouts of Ahmad Hamad, a Lebanese medical doctor and a member of the Lebanese Medical Association, remains unknown several weeks after his reported abduction. There is serious concern for his safety.

Amnesty International has recently received confirmation that Ahmad Hamad is still missing after being abducted on 18 or 19 June 1997 in Akkar, North Lebanon.

It is believed that he was arrested by members of the Syrian military intelligence and initially held incommunicado at their headquarters in Halba, North Lebanon. His arrest is thought to relate to his alleged membership of an outlawed political party in Lebanon, the pro-Iraqi Ba'ath Party.

Amnesty International is concerned that he may subsequently have been taken to Syria where it is feared he could be facing ill-treatment and torture.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has previously received reports that detainees held at the detention facilities of the Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon have been subjected to ill-treatment, including beating and kicking. They are often then transferred to Syria for interrogation. Amnesty International has also received reports of torture from Lebanese and Arab prisoners transferred to Syria.

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

- calling for the disclosure of the whereabouts of Ahmad Hamad as a matter of urgency;
- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely, and urging that he be allowed immediate and continuing access to his family and a lawyer of his choice;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release or for him to be promptly charged with a recognized criminal offence and given a fair trial in accordance with international standards.

APPEALS TO:

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

Note: Faxes to the following Syrian authorities can be sent via the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, fax: +963 11 3327 620)

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

Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, Vice President
Abu Rummaneh, Al-Rashid Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Vice President, Damascus, Syria

Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Lt. General Mustafa Tlas
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
Ommayyad Square

Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: General Tlas, Damascus, Syria

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Mr 'Adnan 'Addoum
Prosecutor General
Palais de Justice, Beirut
Republic of Lebanon

and to diplomatic representatives of Syria and Lebanon accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 September 1997.