

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/019/2006

17 February 2006

UA 41/06 Fear of torture / incommunicado detention/ prisoners of conscience

SYRIA 'Ali Nazeer Mustafa (m), aged 21, student
Husam 'Ali Mulhim (m), aged 21, student

University students 'Ali Nazeer Mustafa and Husam 'Ali Mulhim have been held incommunicado without charge since they were arrested by Air Force Intelligence officers in the capital Damascus, on 26 January. They are at risk of torture or ill-treatment. The students were reportedly participants in peaceful pro-democracy discussions. Amnesty International considers them prisoners of conscience, held solely for their peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression and association.

It is believed that 'Ali Nazeer Mustafa and Husam 'Ali Mulhim are held at the Air Force Intelligence Branch in Harasta, near Damascus. Security officers also raided the houses of two other students, who were not at home at the time and who have since gone into hiding. A further two students were arrested for several hours on 14 February and are now obliged to present themselves twice a day for questioning at the Air Force Intelligence Branch in Harasta. All the students had reportedly been part of the same pro-democracy discussions.

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

- expressing concern at the arrests of Ali Nazeer Mustafa and Husam 'Ali Mulhim, and the harassment of at least four other students, all on apparent account of their involvement in peaceful activities;
- calling for 'Ali Nazeer Mustafa and Husam 'Ali Mulhim to be released immediately and unconditionally, as they appear to be prisoners of conscience held solely for the peaceful expression of their opinions;
- seeking assurances that 'Ali Nazeer Mustafa and Husam 'Ali Mulhim will be well treated, and not tortured or ill-treated, while they are in custody;
- urging the authorities to allow 'Ali Nazeer Mustafa and Husam 'Ali Mulhim immediate and unrestricted access to their families and lawyers, and also any medical treatment they may need.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Bashar al-Assad
President
Presidential Palace
al-Rashid Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: + 963 11 332 3410
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency General Hassan Ali Turkmani
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
Omayyad Square
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: +963 11 223 7842
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Walid Mu'allim
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
al-Rashid Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: + 963 11 3327620
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 March 2006.