

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/049/2004

29 June 2004

**Further Information on UA 188/03 (MDE 24/021/2003, 26 June 2003), and follow-up (MDE 24/035/2003 18 September 2003) - Possible prisoners of conscience/torture and ill-treatment/incommunicado detention/unfair trial/medical concern**

**SYRIA**

**Muhammed Mustafa (m), lawyer**  
**Khaled Ahmed 'Ali (m)**  
**Sherif Ramadhan (m)**  
**'Amr Mourad (m)**  
**Salar Saleh (m)**  
**Hosam Muhammed Amin (m)**  
**Hussayn Ramadhan (m)**  
**Mas'oud Hamid (m)**

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Seven of the Syrian Kurdish men named above were sentenced to prison terms by the Supreme State Security Court (SSSC) on 27 June. Four were released immediately, as their sentences were equal to the time they had already spent in prison. Three others remain in prison in inhumane conditions, at risk of torture, as does the eighth member of the group.

Muhammed Mustafa, Sherif Ramadhan and Khaled Ahmad 'Ali were sentenced to five years in prison, reduced immediately to two years.

'Amr Mourad, Salar Saleh, Hosam Muhammed Amin and Hussayn Ramadhan were sentenced to five years' imprisonment, reduced immediately to one year, and therefore ordered to be released immediately. All seven men had reportedly been beaten up and otherwise ill-treated in detention.

They still face torture and ill-treatment in 'Adra Prison, and are at particular risk since they remain in solitary confinement. Sherif Ramadhan and Khaled Ahmad 'Ali are believed to be in cells measuring 1m x 1.5m, while Muhammed Mustafa's cell is said to be a toilet measuring 80cm x 80cm. During the trial one of the detainees complained of the ill-treatment he had suffered in prison, while another said he intended to sue the prison authorities and General Intelligence for the torture he had suffered and whose effects remain visible on his body. The chief of the court rejected the complaints and ordered the detainees to be removed to the court's holding room. (See *Syria: Kurdish prisoners of conscience must be immediately released*, MDE 24/002/2004, 9 January 2004; and *Syria: Unfair trial of Kurdish prisoners of conscience and torture of children is totally unacceptable*, MDE 24/048/2004, 29 June 2004)

Amnesty International has learned that the eighth Syrian Kurd, student Mas'oud Hamid, who was arrested on charges linked to the 25 June 2003 demonstration at which the other seven were detained, remains in solitary confinement in 'Adra Prison but is being tried separately from the others. He is charged with "membership of a secret organisation" and "attempting to sever part of Syrian territory and hand it to a foreign state", charges commonly used against Kurdish activists. The charges reportedly relate to his taking photos of the demonstration, which was calling for civil and political rights for Syria's Kurdish population, and sending them to several Internet sites including the German-based Kurdish site [www.amude.com](http://www.amude.com). Mas'oud Hamid is therefore still facing torture and ill-treatment, particularly as he is in solitary confinement. Amnesty

International considers him also to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful expression of his views. (See *Syria: Amnesty International repeats its call for the release of five prisoners of conscience held for their peaceful use of the Internet*, MDE 24/045/2004, 17 June 2004)

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

- welcoming the release of 'Amr Mourad, Salar Saleh, Hosam Muhammed Amin and Hussayn Ramadhan, but expressing concern that they have spent over a year as prisoners of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression, during which they were reportedly tortured;
- expressing concern that Muhammed Mustafa, Sherif Ramadhan, Khaled Ahmad 'Ali have been sentenced to prison terms, and remain in solitary confinement, and have reportedly been tortured;
- expressing concern that Mas'oud Hamid remains in solitary confinement, at risk of torture;
- asking that these four men be released immediately and unconditionally, as they are prisoners of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to free expression;
- requesting that they be treated humanely while in detention, and that they be granted access to their families, lawyers, and any medical attention they may require.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency President Bashar al-Assad  
President of the Republic  
Presidential Palace  
Abu Rummaneh, Al-Rashid Street  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegram: President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax: + 963 11 332 3410**  
**Telex: 419160 prespl sy**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

His Excellency Major General Ali Hammud  
Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of Interior  
Merjeh Circle  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegram: Interior Minister, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax: + 963 11 222 3428**  
**Telex: 411016 AFIRS SY**  
**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 10 August 2004.