

Web Action WA 05/05; AI Index MDE 24/076/2005

Start date: 01/09/05

Syria: A culture oppressed - the torture and imprisonment of Syrian Kurds - Closing text (see report on Syrian Kurds, MDE 24/002/2005).

Thank you to those who responded to our appeal for action on "Syria: A culture oppressed – the torture and imprisonment of Syrian Kurds. This action called on the Syrian government to investigate the events of March 2004 and all allegations of torture and abuse in custody

Although most of the over two thousand detained have been released, tens including children, are said to have been referred for trial.

In June the Ba'ath Party Congress recommended permitting new political parties with the exception of those constituted on religious or ethnic grounds thereby excluding Kurdish groups, amongst others, and ordered a review of the 1962 census that led to thousands of Kurds being deprived of Syrian nationality.

No official investigation has been conducted by the Syrian authorities into the mass arbitrary arrests, torture and deaths in custody of Kurds following clashes that led to the killing of at least 30 Kurds.

Syrian Kurds continue to be subjected to serious human rights violations including identity-based discrimination, being denied nationality, and restrictions on the use of their language and culture.

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE240022005>