

URGENT ACTION

MAN JAILED AFTER UNFAIR TRIAL

Walid Yunis Ahmad has been sentenced to five years in prison, after an unfair trial.

Walid Yunis Ahmad, also known as Abu Khubeib, was arrested on 6 February 2000 in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. He was held without charge or trial for more than 10 years. Charges were finally brought against him in 2010, and on 17 March 2011 he was tried and convicted by the Criminal Court in Dohuk, in the Kurdistan Region of northern Iraq, and sentenced to five years in prison.

He was convicted of "sending orders and instructions from prison to his followers in Kirkuk and Mosul to carry out terrorist attacks in Dohuk in 2009", which Amnesty International believes to be a fabricated charge brought in an attempt to justify his long detention without trial, which was unlawful. The charge was based on information said to have been provided by "secret informants" who have not been identified and who did not appear in court to give evidence or to be questioned by Walid Yunus Ahmad's defence lawyer. No evidence was produced of the letters that Walid Yunis Ahmad supposedly sent from prison.

When sentencing Walid Yunis Ahmad the court only took account of the last year that he had spent in prison, meaning that he is still to serve four years of the five-year sentence, because for the first 10 years he was unlawfully detained. Those responsible for his unlawful detention, during which he was subjected to enforced disappearance for three years and is alleged to have been tortured, have not been held to account.

Walid Yunis Ahmad's lawyer has told Amnesty International that he will appeal the verdict, but if this fails, Walid Yunis Ahmad faces the prospect of spending four more years of his life in prison.

Amnesty international believes that the charges against Walid Yunis Ahmad were fabricated and that he has received an unfair trial.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Kurdish or Arabic:

- Calling on the authorities to release Walid Yunis Ahmad immediately and unconditionally, and to drop the charges against him;
- Calling on them to provide reparation to Walid Yunis Ahmad and his family for the more than 10 years that he was detained without charge or trial and for the torture and other ill-treatment to which he was subjected.
- Calling for an independent investigation into his prolonged detention and the apparent fabrication of serious charges against him, and for those responsible to be held accountable.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 APRIL 2011 to the KRG representatives in your country, addressed to:

<u>President</u>	<u>Prime Minister</u>	<u>Minister of Interior</u>	<u>Minister of Justice</u>
Mas'ud Barzani	Barhim Salih	Karim Sinjari	Raouf Rashid Abdulrahman
President	Prime Minister	Minister for the Interior	Minister of Justice
Kurdistan Regional	Kurdistan Regional	Kurdistan Regional	Kurdistan Regional
Government	government	Government	Government
Erbil	Erbil	Erbil	Erbil
Republic of Iraq	Republic of Iraq	Republic of Iraq	Republic of Iraq
Salutation: Your	Salutation: Your	Salutation: Your	Salutation: Your
Excellency	Excellency	Excellency	Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of the KRG accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 70/11. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/010/2011/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Walid Yunis Ahmad was arrested on 6 February 2000 in Erbil, capital of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region of Iraq, by members of, the Kurdish security police, the Asayish. For the next three years his family did not know where he was or even whether he was alive.

Walid Yunis Ahmad alleges that he was tortured during these three years. After he went on hunger strike in protest, he was kept in solitary confinement. He was then moved between prisons without explanation. He is now held in prison in Dohuk, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Walid Yunis Ahmad belongs to the minority Turkmen ethnic group in Iraq. Before his arrest he was working as a translator and programme organizer for a local radio and TV station apparently affiliated to an Islamist opposition party, the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan. Shortly before his arrest, he had attended a meeting of the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan. Afterwards, he was given a lift in a car which was stopped and searched by the police. The police claimed they found some explosive material and arrested Walid Yunis Ahmad, who denied any knowledge of the explosives. The driver, who was also arrested, was released three months later.

An Amnesty international delegation visited Walid Yunis Ahmad in prison in June 2010.

Amnesty International has been campaigning on behalf of Walid Yunis Ahmad for more than two years. Walid Yunis Ahmad was included in the 2010 Letter Writing marathon.

Further information on UA: 70/11 Index: MDE 14/011/2011 Issue Date: 18 March 2011

