

PUBLIC  
AI Index: MDE 24/14/99  
Distrib: PG/SC

To: Medical professionals  
From: Medical Office / Middle East Program  
Date: 20 July 1999

*Further information on*

***MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION***

**Doha ‘Ashur al-‘Askari (f)  
SYRIA**

**[also see: AI Index MDE 24/11/99, 1 July 1999]**

Theme: release of prisoner of conscience

**Summary**

Amnesty International has learned that Doha ‘Ashur al-‘Askari, a prisoner of conscience who had remained in detention in Syria beyond the expiry of her sentence, has been released last week.

Doha ‘Ashur al-‘Askari had begun a hunger strike in ‘Adra Prison on 10 June 1999 in protest at the fact that although her six-year prison sentence had expired on 10 February 1999, she remained in detention. Amnesty International in July 1999 expressed concern about her well-being and urged the authorities to provide her with medical care while she remained in prison. Doha ‘Ashur al-‘Askari has now been released together with another prisoner of conscience following a general amnesty issued by President Assad to celebrate his new term in office. Hundreds of political prisoners including supporters of the Party for Communist Action (PCA), the Moslem Brothers, the Kurdish Popular Union and other unauthorized political organisations are reported to have been set free as a result of the amnesty.

**No further action by the health professional network on the case of Doha ‘Ashur al-‘Askari is required.**

**Many thanks to all those who worked towards Doha ‘Ashur al-‘Askari’s release  
and sent appeals!**