

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 02/02/98

UA 77/98

"Disappearance" / Fear of torture or  
ill-treatment

11 March 1998

SYRIA/LEBANON Tony Michael Zakkour, aged 44, supplier of agricultural material

Tony Michael Zakkour was reportedly abducted by Syrian military intelligence officers in Lebanon on 20 February 1998. There is grave concern that he may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment whilst held in incommunicado detention and that he could be held for some time without charge or trial.

Tony Michael Zakkour, married with two children, "disappeared" in Hammana in the upper Matn region of Lebanon. His whereabouts are unknown and there is the possibility that he may be being held in a Syrian military intelligence detention centre in Lebanon or transferred to Syria. The reason for his abduction is not known.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The abduction, arrest and detention of Lebanese citizens by Syrian military intelligence operating in Lebanon is routine. Despite recent releases, scores of Lebanese citizens remain detained in Syrian prisons without charge or trial, after having been abducted by the Syrian military intelligence or handed over to them by the Lebanese security forces.

Reports received by Amnesty international in the past showed that Lebanese citizens held in detention centres operated by the Syrian military intelligence have been tortured and ill-treated.

The organization is not aware of any measures taken by the Lebanese authorities to prevent the arrest and arbitrary detention of Lebanese citizens by the Syrian forces operating in Lebanon.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Arabic, French or your own language:**

- expressing concern at the "disappearance" of Tony Michael Zakkour on 20 February 1998 and calling on the Syrian authorities to disclose his whereabouts;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release unless he is charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- seeking assurances that he is being humanely treated and urging that he be allowed immediate access to his family and lawyer;
- calling on the Lebanese authorities to take measures to prevent the arrest and detention of Lebanese citizens by the Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon.

#### APPEALS TO:

**Note: Faxes to the Syrian president can also be sent via the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, faxes: + 963 11 3327 620**

His Excellency President Hafez al-Assad  
Presidential Palace  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegrams: President, Damascus, Syria**  
**Telexes: 419160 prespl sy**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

His Excellency President Elias al-Hrawi  
Office of President  
Ba'abda Palace  
Ba'abda, Beirut  
Republic of Lebanon  
**Telegrams: President al-Hrawi, Beirut, Lebanon**  
**Faxes: + 961 1 425 393**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

His Excellency Nasser Qaddur  
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Al-Rashid Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic  
**Faxes: + 963 11 224 5747**

Judge 'Adnan 'Addoum  
Prosecutor General  
Palais de Justice, Beirut  
Republic of Lebanon  
**Faxes: + 961 1 422 957**

and to diplomatic representatives of Lebanon/Syria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 April 1998.