

URGENT ACTION

IRAQI WOMEN HELD WITHOUT CHARGE

Two women employed by Iraq's Vice-President's Office were arrested on 1 January 2012. Their current whereabouts are not known. The Iraqi authorities issued an arrest warrant against the Vice-President and it is believed they have been arrested in relation to this. Amnesty International fears they are at risk of torture and ill-treatment

One of the employees, **Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain**, was arrested from her parents' house in Baghdad's al-Zayuna district on 1 January without a warrant. Security forces claimed they were taking her away for questioning and that she would return two hours later. Since her arrest, her family have not been informed of her whereabouts. Prior to Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain's arrest, security forces had visited her parent's home searching for her. When they found that she was not there, they threatened to take two of her sisters as a way to force her to give herself up. Following the threat, Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain's father signed a paper confirming that his daughter would be in the house when the security officers returned.

The other employee, **Bassima Saleem Kiryakos**, was arrested on the same day after her house in the Green Zone in Baghdad was raided by over 15 armed security men wearing military uniform. The officers did not have an arrest warrant. Bassima Saleem Kiryakos's family were also not informed of her whereabouts immediately following her arrest, however her husband received a phone call from her on 20 January in which she said she was fine and that she would be released that day. She did not give any information on her whereabouts. She has not been heard from since. Bassima Saleem Kiryakos had already been arrested previously shortly before this arrest. She was beaten and released without charge after three days in detention.

Amnesty International fears both women may be at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. It is believed their arrest is in connection with an arrest warrant against the Iraqi Vice-President, Tareq al-Hashemi, who has been wanted by the authorities since December 2011. He is accused of terrorism related offences, an accusation which he has publically said is politically-motivated. He is currently in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, a semi-autonomous area controlled by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Amnesty International fears both women may be at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Please write immediately in English or Arabic:

- Urging the Iraqi authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain and Bassima Saleem Kiryakos and grant them immediate access to their family and lawyers;
- Urging the authorities to release both women unless they are charged with a recognisable criminal offence;
- Urge the authorities to protect both women from torture or other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 MARCH 2012 TO DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ IN YOUR COUNTRY AND ADDRESSED TO:

Prime Minister and Acting Minister of

Defence and Interior

His Excellency Nuri Kamil al-Maliki,

Prime Minister

Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)

Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

His Excellency Mohammad Shayaa

al-Sudani

Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)

Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Hassan al-Shammari

Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)

Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Name: Rasha Nameer Jaafer al-Hussain and Bassima Saleem Kiryakos

Gender m/f: Both female

UA: 27/12 Index: MDE 14/003/2012 Issue Date: 27 January 2012

