

UA 21/00 Fear of torture and ill-treatment /Legal con

## ISRAEL/SOUTH LEBANON

Hussein 'Atawi, cook, aged 38  
Abbas 'Awada, aged 22  
Zeinab 'Abd al-Majid al-Surur (f)  
Hussein 'Ali Qasem

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the four people named above who were arrested over the past few days. All are now believed to be held at the Khiam Detention Centre (see below), where torture and ill-treatment of detainees is systematic and where many detainees have been held for years without charge or trial.

The South Lebanon Army (SLA) arrested Hussein 'Atawi and Abbas 'Awada in their home village of Naqura, in the far west of south Lebanon, on 24 and 25 January respectively. Hussein 'Atawi has five children and works as a cook for the United Nations peacekeeping force - the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Zeinab 'Abd al-Majid al-Surur was arrested in the village of 'Ayta al-Sha'b, close to the border with Israel on 25 January. Hussein 'Ali Qasem was arrested in the same village on the night of 25 January or early on 26 January.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Khiam Detention Centre is the main SLA detention and interrogation centre in Israeli-occupied south Lebanon. At least 150 detainees are presently believed to be held there. Prisoners have been held without charge or trial for up to 14 years. Former detainees have described systematic torture and ill-treatment, including beating, whipping, torture with electric shocks and dousing with hot and cold water. Detainees are routinely denied access to lawyers.

Israel asserts that it is not responsible for Khiam Detention Centre and directs all inquiries about it to the SLA, but there are clear links between Israeli forces in south Lebanon and the Khiam administration. In September 1999, the head of the Israeli army's Operations Division admitted to Israel's High Court that members of Israel's internal security service, the General Security Service (GSS), "cooperate with members of the SLA, and even assist them by means of professional guidance and training... and hold meetings several times annually with SLA interrogators at Khiam prison." According to the officer, in the first seven months of 1999, the GSS visited the prison three times. The officer also admitted that the salaries of the interrogators at Khiam Detention Centre were paid directly by the Israeli army. The officer stated that the Israeli army intended to stop paying the interrogators.

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

- seeking assurances that Hussein 'Atawi, Abbas 'Awada, Zeinab 'Abd al-Majid al-Surur and Hussein 'Ali Qasem, who were arrested by the South Lebanon Army on 24 and 25/26 January 2000, will not be tortured or ill-treated in any way during their detention;
- calling for their immediate release if they are not charged with recognizably criminal offences and tried according to international standards for fair trial;

- urging the Israeli government to respect its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 5: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

**APPEALS TO:**

Ehud Barak  
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence  
Office of the Prime Minister  
3 Kaplan Street  
Hakirya, Jerusalem 91007, Israel  
**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**  
**Faxes: + 972 2 566 4838**  
**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Major General (Res.) Uri Lubrani  
Coordinator of Government Activities in Lebanon  
Ministry of Defence  
7 'A' Street  
Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel  
**Telegrams: Uri Lubrani, Tel Aviv, Israel**  
**Faxes: + 972 3 697 7358**  
**Salutation: Dear Major General**

General Antoine Lahad  
South Lebanon Army  
c/o Lieutenant-General Shaul Mufaz  
Chief of General Staff  
7 'A' Street  
Hakirya, Tel Aviv, Israel  
**Telegrams: General Lahad, c/o Chief General Staff, Tel Aviv, Israel**  
**Faxes: + 972 3 691 6940 (write c/o Lieutenant-General Shaul Mufaz, Chief of General Staff)**  
**Salutation: Dear General**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Israel accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 9 March 2000.