

UA 87/99

Incommunicado detention/Fear of Torture/Medical C

ISRAEL/OCCUPIED TERRITORIES Amin Muhammad Ghazi al-Aghbar, Palestinian, aged  
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Amin Muhammad Ghazi al-Aghbar has been held incommunicado and forbidden to meet with a lawyer since his arrest on 16 March 1999. Amnesty International is concerned that he is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment under interrogation.

He suffered a stroke a month before his arrest, and his lawyer, who saw him in court but was forbidden to speak to him, described his appearance as "awful, he was extremely pale and could not move properly."

After his arrest, on the Allenby Bridge (the crossing between Jordan and the Occupied Territories), he was taken to Jelemeh Prison (also known as Kishon Prison) and then, on 30 March, to Megiddo Prison, a military detention centre. Torture or ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees under interrogation is systematic at both prisons. He is apparently accused of having links with *Hamas*, an Islamist movement opposing Israeli rule. He is believed to be sharing a cell with Palestinians working for the Israeli authorities, who put pressure on other Palestinians to confess.

A neurosurgeon who examined his medical file stated that a brain scan showed that Amin al-Aghbar suffered a stroke in February and that part of his brain has been damaged. It appears that Amin al-Aghbar is under medical supervision in detention; however Amnesty International has frequently expressed its concern that Israeli doctors and other health professionals working with the GSS are used to check the health of detainees who are then tortured or ill-treatment under interrogation.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

For years, secret Israeli guidelines, authorized by the 1987 Landau Report, have allowed the use of torture or ill-treatment, which the report calls "moderate physical pressure". Officers of the General Security Service (GSS) have admitted in court to subjecting detainees to prolonged sleep deprivation and forcing them to sit, stand or squat in painful positions for long periods of time. Violent shaking (*tiltul*), which may cause brain damage, has also been used, but must be authorized by the head of the GSS. The Committee against Torture and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture have both stated that these practices constitute torture.

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

- asking the Israeli authorities to allow Amin al-Aghbar immediate access to his lawyer, reminding them that international standards such as the UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment require detaining authorities to allow prompt, regular and confidential communication with legal counsel;
- asking that Amin al-Aghbar should also be allowed immediate access to his family and an independent doctor, and urging that he is provided with adequate medical care;
- asking that the use of any interrogation methods which constitute torture or ill-treatment cease immediately.

**APPEALS TO:**

Mr Binyamin Netanyahu  
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Office of the Prime Minister  
3 Kaplan Street  
Jerusalem 91919, Israel

**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Telexes: 25279 mpres il**

**Faxes: + 972 2 566 4838**

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Mr Tzahi Hanegbi  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
29 Salah al-Din Street  
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**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Faxes: + 972 2 6285 438**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Mr Avigdor Kahalani  
Minister of Internal Security  
Ministry of Internal Security  
PO Box 18182, 3 Sheikh Jarrah  
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Jerusalem 91181, Israel

**Telegrams: Internal Security Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Faxes: + 972 2 582 6769**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

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and 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 3 June 1999.