

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 16/05/95

*This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 15 per Section.*

UA 277/95 Legal Concern / Possible prisoner of conscience 29 December 1995

JORDAN Leith Shubeilat, head of the Engineers' Union

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Amnesty International is seriously concerned at the arrest and continued detention of Leith Shubeilat, the head of the Engineers' Union and a leading member of the opposition in Jordan. Amnesty International is concerned that he may be detained solely on account of his non-violent opposition to government policies.

Leith Shubeilat was arrested on 9 December 1995 and has since been detained in Jwaideh Prison. His house and office were searched. He has been mainly charged with *lèse majesté* against King Hussein bin Talal and distributing communiques against the King.

A former deputy in the Jordanian Parliament and a leader of the Muslim Brothers, Leith Shubeilat has been a strong critic of the peace agreement signed between Israel and Jordan in 1994. The professional associations in Jordan, including the Engineers' Union headed by Leith Shubeilat, have been campaigning vigorously against closer relations with Israel. The particular accusations against Leith Shubeilat stem from a speech he made at Irbid in Jordan on 7 November 1995 during which he repeated his outspoken criticisms of the Jordanian monarchy and government for making peace and moving to closer relations with Israel. He condemned, in very strong language, King Hussein's words of praise and expressions of friendship for Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel assassinated on 4 November.

Leith Shubeilat's lawyers were not allowed to be present during his first interrogation, but have been allowed to be present since. However, although they have been allowed to meet him three times within the prison, they have never been allowed to meet him alone, without the presence of a guard. Leith Shubeilat is reportedly not being allowed newspapers or radio and he has not seen his wife and family since he was arrested. On 26 December his family were informed they would be allowed to see him, but refused to do so on learning that they could not see him in private.

From 19 to 25 December Leith Shubeilat went on hunger-strike in protest against his detention, which he described as "punishment without trial".

Leith Shubeilat has not, apparently, been interrogated about any act apart from the expression of his opinions. Nevertheless, bail continues to be refused. The offences under which he is charged carry a possible penalty of five years' imprisonment.

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

- asking for clarification as to the basis of the accusations against Leith Shubeilat and urging that he be immediately released if he is being held solely on account of his peaceful political activities;
- urging that Leith Shubeilat be allowed access to his lawyer in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment which state, in Principle 18(3), that the "right of a detained or imprisoned person to be visited by and to consult and communicate, without delay, censorship and in full

confidentiality, with his legal counsel may not be suspended or restricted save in exceptional circumstances" and in Principle 18(4) that "Communications between a detained or imprisoned person and his legal counsel may be within, sight, but not within the hearing, of a law enforcement official".

**APPEALS TO:**

1) His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal  
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
The Royal Palace  
Amman

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Faxes: +962-6-634-755**

**Telegrams: King Hussein, Amman, Jordan**

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

2) Sharif Zayd bin Shakir  
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence  
Office of the Prime Minister  
PO Box 80

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Faxes: +962-6-642-520**

**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Amman, Jordan**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

3) His Excellency Hisham al-Tall  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
PO Box 6040

Amman

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Amman, Jordan**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

4) His Excellency Salamah Hammad  
Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of the Interior  
Amman

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Faxes: +962-6-606-908**

**Telegrams: Interior Minister, Amman, Jordan**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

to diplomatic representatives of Jordan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 February 1996.