

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: MDE 18/02/93

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UA 102/93 Legal concern/Fear of torture

7 April 1993

LEBANON:Sarkis Fouad 'Abboud
Nehme Ka'wah Karam
Michel al-Haje
Antoine Khairallah
Rony Khairallah
Pierre Najm
'Imad Shahin
Georges Za'anni

Amnesty International is concerned that the above eight men may be prisoners of conscience and at reports that they are being held incommunicado putting them at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

These eight men are believed to have been arrested in connection with the distribution of leaflets opposing current Lebanese Government policies and the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon. Sarkis 'Abboud and Nehme Karam were reportedly arrested on 18 and 19 March 1993 in Zghorta in north Lebanon by plain-clothes people believed to be members of the Lebanese security forces.

Some 40 others are said to have been arrested with them at the same time, but have since been released. The two detainees may be held in military barracks near Tripoli in north Lebanon or at the Ministry of Defence in Yarzeh near Beirut. The remaining six named above appear to have been arrested in Beirut also at about the same time, and may be held at the Ministry of Defence in Yarzeh.

All eight are reported to be held incommunicado with families and lawyers having been denied access to them.

Amnesty International is seeking information on the reasons for the arrest of these detainees. It calls for them to be released immediately and unconditionally if they are held solely for the peaceful expression of their political views. Otherwise they should be given access to lawyers and families, be protected against any form of ill-treatment, and given a fair and prompt trial.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/airmail letters either in English, French or your own language:

- asking for the reasons for these arrests and the legal status of the detainees;
- calling on them to be released immediately and unconditionally if they are held solely for the peaceful expressions of their political beliefs;
- seeking assurances that they are not being ill-treated;
- urging that they be given prompt and regular access to their lawyers and families in accordance with international standards for the treatment of detainees.

APPEALS TO:

1) President Elias Hrawi **Salutation: His Excellency**
Presidential Palace
Ba'abda
Lebanon
Telegrams: President Hrawi, Beirut, Lebanon
Telexes: 21000

2) Rafik Hariri **Salutation: His Excellency**
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
Beirut
Lebanon
Telegrams: Prime Minister Hariri, Beirut, Lebanon

3) Mohsen Dalloul **Salutation: His Excellency**
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
Yarzeh, Beirut
Lebanon
Telegrams: Defence Minister Dalloul, Beirut, Lebanon
Telexes: 20901

4) Bahij Tabbara **Salutation: His Excellency**
Minister of Justice
rue Sami Solh
Beirut
Lebanon
Telegrams: Justice Minister Tabbara, Beirut, Lebanon

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: diplomatic representatives of LEBANON accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 May 1993.