

PUBLIC

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UA 85/08 Torture and other ill-treatment

SAUDI ARABIA Jamal Muhammad Tijani (m), aged 38, father of three, Chadian national

Chadian national Jamal Muhammad Tijani, who was arrested in October 2006 and charged with forging money, is now known to have been severely beaten in custody in an attempt to make him confess. He has no legal representation, and is at risk of further torture.

His trial is known to have been underway in 2007, but it is not clear whether it has now completely finished. He had no legal assistance or representation, and could not fully understand the proceeding as he had no interpreter.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Saudi Arabian authorities regularly hold detainees incommunicado, when they are frequently tortured. Defendants are often denied the right to formal representation by a lawyer and in many cases they and their families are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. When people are charged and brought to trial, the proceedings invariably fail to meet the most basic international standards of trial fairness. Court hearings are often held in secret and defendants are permitted little or no formal legal representation. They may be convicted solely on the basis of confessions obtained under duress, torture or deception. In many cases defendants and their families are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic, English or your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that Chadian national Jamal Muhammad Tijani has been tortured in custody, and calling for an urgent, independent investigation and for any officials responsible for torturing or ill-treating prisoners to be brought to justice ;
- urging the authorities to ensure that he is protected from further torture and other ill-treatment, and given regular access to consular representatives, lawyers of his choice and any medical attention he may require;
- stating that Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but when doing so governments must abide by their obligations under international human rights law;
- calling on the authorities to abide by Saudi Arabia's obligations as a state party to the Convention Against Torture and also Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

APPEALS TO:

King Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty The King
Royal Court
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 1185
+966 1 403 3614
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

His Excellency Dr Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
University Street
Riyadh 11137
Fax: +966 1 401 1741
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO:

Mr Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
The President
The Human Rights Commission
PO Box 58889
King Fahad Road
Building No.373
Riyadh 11515
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 April 2008.