

PUBLIC

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03 March 2004

Further Information on UA 50/04 (MDE 24/011/2004, 10 February 2004) Ill-treatment/Medical concern

SYRIA

Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu (f), aged 50- RELEASED

On 19 February, Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu was released without charge from the Military Intelligence Head Quarters in the capital, Damascus. She had been detained since 14 January following her arrest by Syrian military security officers as she re-entered the country, after 24 years as an exile in Jordan. She had apparently been granted a passport and given permission to return to Syria by its embassy in Amman, Jordan.

Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu is reported to have been held incommunicado throughout most of her detention. She was also reportedly interrogated at Syrian military intelligence branches in Damascus, Dar'a, Sweida, and Lattakia. She was reportedly insulted, threatened and physically abused whilst being interrogated. Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu suffers from ill-health including a heart condition which requires medication and a specific diet. Despite this, she was denied medical attention during her detention, though she is now reported to be in reasonably good health.

On her release, Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu apparently stayed with relatives in Lattakia for one week. Following this, she attempted to re-join her family in Jordan, but was once again detained at the Syrian-Jordanian border and taken for interrogation at the security branch in Lattakia. She was held for one day before finally being allowed to return to Jordan around 29 February.

Many thanks to all those who sent appeals. If possible please send a final round of appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic, English or your own language:

- acknowledging the release of Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu but expressing concern that she was held without charge for over six weeks and at the reports that she was subject to ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to explain the reason(s) for her detention;
- urging the authorities to carry out an independent and thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding Mu'eyna Muhammad Yusef Sa'adu's arrest and detention as well as into the reports that she was ill-treated.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency President Bashar al-Assad
President of the Republic
Presidential Palace
Abu Rummaneh, al-Rashid Street
Damascus, Syria Arab Republic
Telegram: President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria
Fax: + 963 11 332 3410
Telex: 419160 presply sy
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Major General Ali Hammud
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Merjeh Circle
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Telegram: Interior Minister, Damascus, Syria
Fax: + 963 11 222 3428
Telex: 411016 AFIRS SY
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.