

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/036/2003

7 October 2003

**Further Information on UA 314/02 (AMR 51/159/2002, 21 October 2002) and follow-ups (AMR 51/161/2002, 25 October; AMR 51/019/2003, 10 February 2003; AMR 51/040/2003, 14 March 2003; and MDE 24/029/2003, 8 August 2003) - Forcible return/Fear of torture/Prolonged detention without trial/Incommunicado detention**

**SYRIA**                      **Maher Arar (m), Canadian/Syrian national**

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On 5 October 2003, Maher Arar was released by the Syrian authorities, after being held in detention without charge for a year. He was handed over to the Canadian Consulate in Damascus, before being flown home to Canada on 6 October, where he was reunited with his family.

Maher Arar, who holds dual Syrian and Canadian nationality, was deported from the US via Jordan in October 2002 reportedly accused of having links with alleged terrorist groups. He was then held at a secret location in Syria and reportedly tortured and ill-treated, whilst being denied access to his family and lawyers.

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

- acknowledging the release of Maher Arar, but expressing concern at his detention without charge, at a secret location for over a year;
- calling on the authorities to explain the reason(s) for his detention;
- asking for an independent and thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding his arrest and into the reports that he was tortured and ill-treated.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency  
President Bashar al-Assad  
Presidential Palace  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegrams:     President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax:             +963 11 332 3410**  
**Telexes:       419160 prespl sy**  
**Salutation:    Your Excellency**

His Excellency  
Maj-Gen Ali Hammud  
Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of the Interior  
Merjeh Circle  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegrams:     Interior Minister, Damascus, Syria**  
**Fax:             +963 11 222 3428**  
**Telexes:       411016 AFIRS SY**  
**Salutation:    Your Excellency**

and to diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**