

AI Index: PRE 01/143/2011  
17 March 2011

## **Iraqi man jailed for five years on spurious terror charges**

Walid Yunis Ahmad, who had already been detained without trial for 11 years, was convicted of "sending orders and instructions from prison to his followers in Kirkuk and Mosul to carry out terrorist attacks in Dohuk in 2009" by the criminal court in Dohuk on Thursday.

"Walid Yunis Ahmad has been sentenced after a one day trial in which his lawyer was not allowed to question "secret informants" whose testimony the court accepted and which provides the basis for the charges that appear to have been fabricated against him," said Malcolm Smart, director of Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa programme.

"The Kurdistan authorities must end this travesty of justice now, order his immediate release and drop all charges against him."

Although he has been held continuously since 2000, his detention was unlawful until 4 February 2010, leading the trial court to ignore those 10 years and decide that his five year sentence should be considered to start from the date when his detention became lawful, leaving him almost four years more to serve.

"Walid Yunis Ahmad is now being made to pay a further cost for having been detained unlawfully by the Kurdistan authorities, yet those who detained him unlawfully all those years have not been held to account."

"Instead of prolonging his imprisonment, the authorities should be compensating him for the years he has spent behind bars unlawfully and for no good reason, and for torture he endured in the first years of his detention."

Walid Yunis Ahmad's lawyer told Amnesty International that he will appeal the verdict.

Walid Yunis Ahmad was arrested on 6 February 2000 by the Asayish, the Kurdistan security police, in Erbil, capital of Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region, after he was given a lift in a car that allegedly contained explosives. He was on his way home from a meeting of the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan, a legal opposition party. He has always denied any knowledge of the explosives. The driver of the car was detained but later released without charge.

No charges were brought against Walid Yunus Ahmad until 2010 when he was accused of terrorism-related offences allegedly committed while he was in prison on the basis of information said to have been given to an investigative judge by "secret informants" whose identities have not been disclosed. They were not called to give evidence in court today.

According to these "secret informants", Walid Yunis Ahmad was linked to explosives that were discovered in Dohuk in 2009.

However, no other arrests have been made in relation to these explosives and those who reported them denied any knowledge of Walid Yunis Ahmad.

Following his arrest in February 2000, Walid Yunis Ahmad was subject to enforced disappearance for three years before his family found out where he was being detained and was tortured, kept in solitary confinement and moved from prison to prison.

He is now held at the Asayish prison in the city of Dohuk. Amnesty International delegates visited him in prison in Erbil in June 2010.