

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 43/08 (MDE 14/003/2008, 19 February 2008) – Fear of torture or ill-treatment

IRAQ Ussama al-Mulla (m)]
 Ryadh al-Qaysi (m)] professors at Baghdad University's Faculty
 Fakhri 'Abd Fatlawi (m)] of Dentistry
 Four other Baghdad University staff members (names unknown)

Ryadh al-Qaysi and Fakhri 'Abd Fatlawi, professors at Baghdad University's Faculty of Dentistry, and four other Baghdad University staff members who were arrested on 17 February, have been released. However, one professor, Ussama al-Mulla, remains in the custody of the Iraqi security forces and is at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

On 17 February, armed men wearing Iraqi security uniforms entered the Faculty of Dentistry. They went to the office of the Dean of the Faculty and threatened him at gunpoint, telling him they had arrest warrants for 10 university staff. The three professors were arrested, along with four other staff members. The staff members were originally taken to al-Salihiya police station in Baghdad. The whereabouts of Ussama al-Mulla are currently unconfirmed.

The arrest warrants were apparently issued by an official body, and related to the investigation into the murder of the previous Dean of the Dentistry Faculty.

At the time of the arrests, a number of students who protested against the arrests were detained in a room within the faculty and beaten by the same security forces before being released.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Torture and ill-treatment of detainees is widespread throughout police stations and detention centres under the control of the Iraqi security forces. Amnesty International has received numerous reports about detainees being tortured by Iraqi security forces. Former prisoners who were held in police stations and pre-trial detention facilities controlled by the Ministry of Interior have reported torture such as routine beatings with hosepipes, cables and other implements, prolonged suspension from the limbs in contorted and painful positions for extended periods, electric shocks, the breaking of limbs and being forced to sit on sharp objects.

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

- welcoming the release of Ryadh al-Qaysi, Fakhri 'Abd Fatlawi and four others;
- calling for assurances that Ussama al-Mulla is being treated humanely in detention and is not subject to torture or other ill-treatment;
- seeking clarification of the reasons for Ussama al-Mulla's arrest and continuing detention, and asking if any charges have been brought against him;
- requesting assurances that he has access to his family, a lawyer of his own choosing and any necessary medical care;
- calling for his immediate release unless he is to be brought to trial promptly and fairly on recognizable criminal charges.

APPEALS TO: Email addresses for the Iraqi authorities are proving unreliable. If there is no email address given, or if your email bounces, please send appeals to the authorities via the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country, asking them to forward your appeals to:

President

Jalal Talabani

Salutation: Your Excellency

E-mail: questions@iraqipresidency.net

Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Safi al-Din al-Safi

Salutation: Your Excellency

E-mail: minister@iraqi-justice.org
deputy@iraqi-justice.org

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hoshyar Zebari

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Iraq accredited to your country. Ask them to send copies to the Human Rights Minister, Wajdan Mikhail.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 April 2008.