

URGENT ACTION

DEMAND MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR PROTESTOR

A Jordanian man, detained after peacefully protesting against fuel subsidy cuts, is being denied specialized medical care he urgently needs. His family say that he lost the sight in his left eye after an injury sustained during the protest.

Adnan al-Howeish participated peacefully in a demonstration against a government decision to cut fuel price subsidies, in Zeiban, northern Jordan on 16 November. He suffered a serious injury to his left eye resulting in a cut in the centre of the eye with the eyeball protruding from the socket after he was hit with a stone during the protest. Witnesses claimed that masked government supporters threw stones at the protestors. Adnan al-Howeish was placed in police custody on 17 November at al-Bashir hospital, Amman, where he was handcuffed to the hospital bed. Following an appeal by the official National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) he was allowed surgery on 18 November to repair the cut and restore the eyeball to its original position. His doctor recommended treatment for his eye injury in a centre specialising in eye injuries.

On 21 November the police transferred him to a cell in a State Security Court (SSC) building, and his detention was extended by 14 days for questioning on 22 November. He was then taken to al-Balqa' prison in Salt, where prison authorities only agreed to admit him after police apparently obtained another medical report from the Salt Government Hospital saying he was fit for detention. He is now in Ramemeen prison in al-Barqa'a. His family's requests for him to see eye specialists for urgent treatment appear to have gone unheeded.

Some 300 people were [arrested](#) following widespread protests against the proposed fuel subsidy cuts. Many were held solely for participation in peaceful protests. Dozens were beaten at the protests and in police detention, and were denied immediate access to legal representation, relatives and medical treatment as required. As of 13 December 47 people were still held, despite a Royal Decree ordering the release of all but 13 of them. It appears that charges against those released have not been dropped. They were charged with offences under articles of the Penal Code prohibiting individuals from "engag[ing] in... activity... to destroy the political system ... or encouraging resistance" carrying a sentence of up to 15 years (Article 149) or prohibiting gatherings aimed at "disrupting public order". They face trial by the SSC whose proceedings fall far short of international standards of fair trial.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling for Adnan al-Howeish to promptly be given all necessary specialized medical treatment in a civilian hospital, and not to be subjected to cruel or inhuman treatment;
- Calling for him and others held solely for peacefully exercising their right to protest to be released immediately and unconditionally.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JANUARY 2013 TO:

Minister of Interior

His Excellency Awad Khleifat
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 100
Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Fax: +962 6 560 6908
Email: info@moi.gov.jo
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Ghaleb Zu'bi
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 6040
Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Fax: +962 6 464 3197
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
His Excellency Nasser Judeh
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 35217
Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Fax: +962 6 573 5163
Email: mofa@fm.gov.jo

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Widespread protests took place in November throughout Jordan particularly in Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, Salt, Tafileh and Ma'an in connection with the government's announcement to cut fuel subsidies. The authorities say they arrested people for carrying out criminal offences during demonstrations including damaging and destroying private and public property and calling for "regime change". While individuals at some demonstrations apparently carried out violent acts, which in some instances resulted in damage or destruction of private and public buildings, Jordanian activists and lawyers say that security forces, some in plain clothes violently dispersed many peaceful demonstrations, firing tear gas and beating protestors. One civilian and two police officers were killed in the context of the protests.

According to the NCHR, the Public Security Directorate (PSD) has acknowledged that 50 children were arrested in connection with the protests, 12 of whom appeared before the SSC prosecutor and were released on bail days after their arrests. One lawyer told Amnesty International that at least nine children, released on 19 November 2012, reportedly made statements to the police without the presence of a lawyer, parent or other appropriate adult. Cases of detainees being denied adequate medical treatment include Mahdi al-Saafin, a pro-reform activist who went on hunger strike on 28 November in protest at his detention and was consequently placed in solitary confinement in al-Hashimiyeh prison, south east of Amman. An independent doctor who visited him on 10 December confirmed Mahdi al-Saafin's complaint that a prison doctor withheld salt from him for several days. He had also complained that he was denied water for two days. He was arrested on 16 November from a peaceful protest in Jabal al-Hussein Square, Amman by plain clothes police. He and many protestors were taken in a police van to the Central Amman Public Security Directorate during which time they were kicked, hit and whipped with cables while their hands were tied behind their backs and they were forced to hold their ID cards in their mouths. The protestors were beaten for the first three days of their detention and denied access to lawyers and relatives.

Amnesty International acknowledges the government's responsibility to protect public safety, including by arresting and trying in fair proceedings individuals reasonably suspected of acts of violence or destruction of property. However, they must do so in a way which ensures the full respect to life, liberty and security. Jordan has an obligation to uphold the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Peaceful criticism of the government, including calls to change the system of government by peaceful means expressed during peaceful gatherings or demonstrations are forms of expression protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Jordan is a state party. The government's apparent use of Article 149 of the Penal Code in order to criminalize – at least in some cases - peaceful political dissent and to silence political opponents and critics of government policy is incompatible with its obligations under international human rights law.

A worrying pattern has emerged over almost two years in Jordan. During 2012 alone hundreds have been arrested and faced criminal charges and unfair trial before the SSC for participating in peaceful protests calling for prompt and effective implementation of political and economic reforms. Dozens arrested this year for peaceful protests have been released under instructions from the King weeks later.

Name: Adnan al-Howeish

Gender m/f: m

UA: 357/12 Index: MDE 16/004/2012 Issue Date: 13 December 2012