

URGENT ACTION

TORTURE FEARS FOR DETAINED SYRIAN MAN

'Awad Jassim 'Abbas has been held incommunicado since his arrest on 14 May. Reports suggest he has been tortured or otherwise ill-treated by Syrian security forces.

'Awad 'Abbas was arrested at his home in al-Dumayr, north-east of the capital Damascus, during a raid by a reportedly large number of armed members of Syrian Air Force Security. The security forces were searching for his brother Hussein Jassim 'Abbas, who had gone into hiding due to fears of being arrested because of his peaceful activities during the current protests calling for political reform. 'Awad 'Abbas also attended pro-reform protests, and Amnesty International believes his arrest and subsequent detention may be in connection with this.

A former detainee at the Air Force Security branch in Harasta, near Damascus, has said that 'Awad 'Abbas was held in the cell next to his and told him that he was taken there following his arrest. Later his relatives were informed by the security forces that, although 'Awad 'Abbas had not been charged, he would not be released until his brother Hussein 'Abbas turned himself in. They were also told that 'Awad 'Abbas had been moved from the Air Force Security branch in Harasta to the State Security branch on Baghdad Street in Damascus, where he is believed to be still held.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned about 'Awad 'Abbas' safety after the former detainee at the Air Force Security branch in Harasta reported that 'Awad 'Abbas told him that he had been tortured during his detention. A separate source in Syria has told Amnesty International that 'Awad 'Abbas also suffered from leg injuries and internal bleeding that required urgent treatment, but did not know whether he was receiving adequate medical attention.

Amnesty International believes that 'Awad 'Abbas may be a prisoner of conscience, as he has apparently been detained on account of his family relationship with his brother Hussein 'Abbas and legitimately exercising his rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

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

- Expressing concern that 'Awad 'Abbas has been held incommunicado since 14 May and has allegedly been subjected to torture or other ill-treatment in detention, and calling for these allegations to be investigated promptly and for anyone responsible to be brought to justice;
- Urging the Syrian authorities to ensure 'Awad 'Abbas that is protected against further torture and other ill-treatment and provided with any medical attention he may require;
- Expressing concern that 'Awad 'Abbas may be held solely because of his relationship with his brother Hussein 'Abbas and his attendance of popular pro-reform demonstrations and noting that, if this is the case, Amnesty International would consider him a prisoners of conscience and call for his immediate and unconditional release.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:

President

Bashar al-Assad
 Presidential Palace
 al-Rashid Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: +963 11 332 3410

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Walid al-Mu'allim
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 al-Rashid Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: +963 11 214 6251

Salutation: Your Excellency

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

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

TORTURE FEARS FOR DETAINED SYRIAN MAN

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Air Force Security is one of the four main intelligence agencies in Syria. They have a history of arbitrarily arresting and detaining people on suspicion of dissent and are widely reported to practise torture and other ill-treatment with impunity.

Syrian security forces have been carrying out widespread arrests in response to mass protests calling for political reform and increasingly for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to step down, which began in mid-March. The arrests have targeted people perceived to have organized or openly supported those protests, whether orally in public gatherings, in the media, on the internet or elsewhere. They include political and human rights activists, mosque imams and journalists. The wave of arrests has forced a number of political and human rights activists into hiding.

Amnesty International has previously documented cases of Syrian security forces arresting persons solely based on their family relations with people perceived as activists by the Syrian government. These include 'Abd al-Rahman Hammada and his brother Wa'el Hammada (Index: MDE 24/033/2011), as well as 'Ali al-'Abdullah (*Torture fear for dozens arrested in Damascus suburb*, 18 July 2011, www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/syria-dozens-held-during-siege-damascus-suburb-2011-07-18).

Name: 'Awad Jassim 'Abbas

Gender m/f: male

UA: 232/11 Index: MDE 24/037/2011 Issue Date: 28 July 2011

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

