

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/009/2008

19 February 2008

Further information on UA 214/07 (MDE 24/041/2007, 20 August 2007) Fear of torture and other ill treatment/detention without charge

SYRIA Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed (m) aged 54, leading member of the Kurdish Yeketi Party

Kurdish activist Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed has been detained without charge in Branch 285 of State Security (*Amn al-Dawla*), in the Syrian capital, Damascus, since August 2007. He continues to be interrogated, although the reason for this interrogation is not clear. He is still at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. He may be a prisoner of conscience, held for his peaceful political activities.

Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed was arrested on 12 August 2007, while travelling by bus to Lebanon, to visit friends. He was asked to leave the bus at a Syrian checkpoint controlled by *Amn al-Dawla*, Syrian security police, at the Syrian – Lebanese border. He is a leading member of the unauthorized Kurdish Yeketi Party in Syria. The Kurdish Yeketi Party calls for improved rights for Syria's Kurdish community, many of whose members are denied citizenship and other basic rights.

Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed has had no access to a lawyer. Every 40 days, he is allowed a 10-15 minute visit from his family, in the presence of a police officer. During these visits Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed and his family are only permitted to communicate in Arabic, not in his native Kurdish, which is not recognised as an official language in Syria.

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

- calling on the authorities to release Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed immediately and unconditionally unless he is charged with a recognizable criminal offence and brought to trial promptly and fairly, as he has been held without charge since August 2007;
- urging the authorities to ensure that Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- urging the authorities to allow Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed more frequent visits from his family, immediate access to a lawyer of his choosing, and any medical treatment he may require;
- expressing concern that Ma'rouf Mulla Ahmed may be a prisoner of conscience, arrested solely for the peaceful expression of his opinions.

APPEALS TO:

President

His Excellency Bashar al-Assad
Presidential Palace
al-Rashid Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Fax: +963 11 332 3410

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Excellency Walid Mu'allim
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Syrian Arab Republic

Fax: + 963 11 332 7620
Salutation: Your Excellency

Ministry of Interior
General Bassam Abdel Majid
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Email: somi@net.sy
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 April 2008.