

PUBLIC

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05 September 2006

Further Information on UA 208/05 (AMR 51/123/2005, 09 August 2005) and follow-ups (AMR 51/137/2005, 05 September 2005; AMR 51/083/2006, 23 May 2006) - Prisoner of Conscience

USA

Kevin Benderman (m)

Kevin Benderman was released from Fort Lewis Military Corrections Facility on 18 August 2006, after serving over 12 months of a 15-month sentence imposed for refusing to fight for the US Army in Iraq. He is continuing to appeal against his conviction.

Kevin Benderman had been imprisoned as a prisoner of conscience since 1 August 2005. He had served as an army mechanic for 10 years when his religious studies of both the Bible and the Qur'an, coupled with his military experiences, led him to develop objections to the war in Iraq. After his application for conscientious objector status was turned down he was court-martialled and sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

In an email to Amnesty International on 5 September, Kevin and his wife Monica wrote,

"For Amnesty International Members...Kevin and Monica would like to thank you all for the tremendous support you have given to them throughout the past two years. This has been an amazing experience - difficult, challenging, frustrating yet quite rewarding and enlightening...THANK YOU for your support - you have made a difference and it is appreciated."

Many thanks to all who sent appeals. No further action is required.