

UA 03/98

Fear of Torture/Legal Concern

7 January 1998

ISRAEL/SOUTH LEBANON
Nebil Hasan Jum'a, arrested 10 December
Shadi Sa'id Sabeq, arrested 12 December
'Abbas 'Ali Sekkini, arrested 18 December
Nassar Husayn Nassar, arrested 24 December
Bassam Ghader, arrested 29 December
Marwan Kan'an, 29, arrested 24 December
Huda Marquis, wife of above, arrested 24 December
Kamel Marquis, 65, father of Huda, arrested 4
January
Zayd Saryawi, arrested 3 January
Khaled Diab, arrested 3 January

The above-named people have been arrested during previous weeks by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon.

They are believed to have been taken to Khiam Detention Centre where torture or ill-treatment is widespread and detainees have been held for up to 13 years without trial.

Nebil Hassan Jum'a from Kfar Kala village, was arrested on 10 December 1997, Shadi Sa'id Sabeq from Hasbaya, close to the village of Shab'a, was arrested on 12 December and 'Abbas 'Ali Sekkini from Balata village was arrested on 18 December.

On 24 and 25 December the village of Shab'a was surrounded and cut off by the IDF and a number of residents arrested. These included Nassar Husayn Nassar, Bassam Ghader, Marwan Kan'an and his wife Huda Marquis. The two small children of Huda Marquis were reportedly taken into detention with her but released after two days. On 4 January 1998 her father was also arrested. Some residents were subsequently released. Villagers under 40 years of age have reportedly been banned from leaving the occupied strip.

On 3 January 1998, Zayd Saryawi, the commander of a Lebanese gendarmerie post in Hasbaya was arrested together with Khaled Diab who was travelling in the same car (the Lebanese government continues to employ around 800 staff in the occupied strip, the majority of them policemen and school teachers).

The "security zone" is policed by the South Lebanon Army (SLA) which is funded and supported by Israel. Other armed groups active in the area include *Hizbullah* and the *Amal* movement, both Shi'a based armed groups engaged in fighting Israel and the SLA. According to *Agence France Presse*, Israel has offered no explanation for the detentions in Shab'a which were made in an area where there have been no attacks by any groups.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Khiam Detention Centre is the main South Lebanon Army (SLA) detention and interrogation centre in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon.

More than 150 detainees, including minors, are presently believed to be held in Khiam, some of whom have been held without charge or trial for up to 12 years. Former detainees have described systematic torture and ill-treatment including beating, whipping, application of electric shocks and dousing with hot and cold water. Detainees are routinely denied access to their lawyers.

Although Israel denies any responsibility for Khiam Detention Centre and states that inquiries should be addressed to the SLA, Israel is ultimately responsible for what happens in Khiam Detention Centre as it is the occupying power in South Lebanon.

For eight years, from 1987 until 1995, detainees in Khiam Detention Centre were not even allowed visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or their families. Visits to Khiam Detention Centre from the ICRC or families of detainees have been prohibited again since 10 September 1997, heightening concern for the detainees' well-being.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- urging that these detainees be granted immediate and continuing access to their families, lawyers and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
- seeking assurances that the detainees will not be subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the detainees if they are not charged with criminal offences and tried according to international standards for a fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

Binyamin Netanyahu
 Prime Minister
 Office of the Prime Minister
 3 Kaplan Street, Hakiryia, Jerusalem 91007, Israel
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel
Faxes: + 972 3 691 7915
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

General Yitzhak Mordechai
 Minister of Defence, Ministry of Defence
 7 'A' Street, Hakiryia, Tel Aviv, Israel
Telegrams: Defence Minister, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faxes: + 972 3 697 6218
Salutation: Dear Minister

General Antoine Lahad
 South Lebanon Army
 c/o Lieutenant-General Amnon Shahak
 Chief of General Staff, 7 'A' Street
 Hakiryia, Tel Aviv, Israel
Telegrams: General Lahad, c/o Chief General Staff, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faxes: + 972 3 691 6940 (write c/o Lieutenant-General Amnon Shakak, Chief of General Staff)
Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO:

Follow-Up Committee for the Support of
 Lebanese Detainees in the Israeli Prisons, Beirut, Lebanon
Faxes: + 961 1 340150

and to diplomatic representatives of ISRAEL accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 February 1998.