

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 15/062/2001

4 July 2001

Further information on UA 132/01 (MDE 15/047/2001, 31 May 2001) and follow-up (MDE 15/051/2001, 7 June 2001, (MDE 15/053/2001), 13 June 2001 - Prisoner of conscience/detention without charge or trial/torture/ill-treatment

ISRAEL/OT 'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar, aged 32, human rights defender

'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar is now the subject of a six-month administrative detention order, which allows the Israeli authorities to detain him without charge or trial until February 2002. The order is renewable indefinitely. He is now in Megiddo prison, in Israel. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience.

'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar, who works for the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group (PHRMG), was arrested and beaten by the Israeli General Security Service (GSS) on 24 May. His arrest appears to be part of a pattern of attacks on human rights defenders: at least four have been imprisoned over the last two months.

'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar was tortured while he was held at the Moskobiyya Detention Centre in Jerusalem. At one point he was kept shackled to a sloping chair by his wrists and ankles for over nine hours.

The PHRMG and the Public Committee Against Torture In Israel (PCATI) believe that this administrative detention order has been issued simply because there is no "incriminating evidence against" 'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Previously 'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar was held under administrative detention orders for two years up until May 1998 and was continually tortured between February and April 1996. He suffers from a hiatal hernia and back problems which were caused or worsened by this torture.

The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has said that administrative detention as used in Israel constitutes arbitrary detention and has stated that "individual liberty cannot be sacrificed for the government's inability either to collect evidence or to present it in an appropriate form".

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

- asking for 'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar to be released immediately and unconditionally, as he appears to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested for his work in defence of human rights;
- expressing concern that he is being held without charge or trial;
- expressing concern at reports that 'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar has been tortured or otherwise ill-treated during interrogation, and calling for an independent and impartial investigation into these allegations;
- reminding the authorities that while he is in custody 'Abed al-Rahman al-Ahmar has the right to communicate with his lawyer, to see a doctor of his choice and to receive visits from his family.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street, PO Box 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91919, via Israel
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel
Fax: + 972 2 651 2631
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Uzi Landau
Minister of Public Security
Ministry of Public Security (Police)
Kiryat Hamemshala
PO Box 18182
Jerusalem 91181, via Israel
Fax: + 972 2 584 7872
Salutation: Dear Minister of Public Security

Meir Shetrit
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
29 Salah al-Din Street
Jerusalem 91010, via Israel
Fax: + 972 2 628 8618
Salutation: Dear Minister of Justice

Eli Yishai
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of Interior
2 Kaplan Street
PO Box 6158
Kiryat Ben Gurion
Jerusalem 91061, via Israel
Fax: + 972 2 670 1628
Salutation: Dear Minister of the Interior

Elyakim Rubinstein
Attorney-General
Ministry of Justice
29 Salah al-Din Street
Jerusalem 91010, via Israel
Fax: + 972 2 628 5438
Salutation: Dear Attorney-General

COPIES TO:

Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group
PO Box 19918
East Jerusalem 91198, via Israel
Fax: + 972 2 582 3385

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 15 August 2001.