

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 15/76/98

20 August 1998

Further information on EXTRA 04/98 (MDE 15/03/98, 9 January 1998) and follow-ups (MDE 15/04/98, 12 January 1998; MDE 15/08/98, 5 February 1998; MDE 15/18/98, 3 March 98; MDE 15/19/98, 5 March 1998 and MDE 15/74/98, 11 August 1998) - Torture and new concern: Health concern

**ISRAEL/OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**

'Abd al-Rahman Isma'il Ghanimat, 27

Amira Isma'il Ghanimat (f), 25, sister of above (released)

Rasmiya Isma'il Ghanimat (f), 22, sister of above, (all from Surif village)

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Amira Ghanimat was released on 20 August 1998 after spending just over two weeks in incommunicado detention in the General Security service (GSS) wing of the Moscobiyya Detention Centre.

Also on the same day the lawyer of Rasmiya Ghanimat was allowed to visit her in detention. This follows a period of incommunicado detention of 16 days, in violation of international human rights standards ratified by Israel. She reported to her lawyer that her interrogation had been difficult and humiliating. She also reported that, in protest, she had gone on hunger-strike but that, after six days, she had been taken to hospital and fed, against her will, by intravenous drip. Her condition is reportedly very poor.

'Abd al-Rahman Ghanimat's interrogation was extended today for a further 15 days during which time it is likely he will be tortured. His lawyer is still not permitted to visit him. His sister, who saw him the previous week in the prison hospital, said that his hands were very swollen from being handcuffed. He is also apparently limping. He is believed to have been on hunger-strike for at least two weeks, but since no one has been allowed to visit him it is not known if this is still the case. 'Abd al-Rahman Ghanimat has been in detention since 13 November 1997 charged with offences which include aiding a suicide bombing and murder. Much of this time he has spent in interrogation.

On 13 August 1998 the Israeli High Court of Justice, which was hearing two petitions on the case submitted by the lawyer, Allegra Pacheco, imposed a total information blackout, banning the mentioning of names, the existence of the petitions and any other identifying details of the case. On 18 August the High Court rejected petitions to visit the detainees and maintained its ban on mentioning their names or place of residence.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Torture is effectively legalised in Israel and the Occupied Territories where secret guidelines attached to the 1987 Landau report on the General Security Service (GSS) allow the use of "moderate physical pressure" in interrogation.

Since October 1994 a special ministerial committee has allowed "increased physical pressure". The Israeli Supreme Court has consistently accepted arguments by the GSS that physical pressure on detainees is required due to the threat to Israel's security. Israeli methods of torture include, in combination, systematic hooding with filthy sacks, sleep deprivation for up to six days while the detainee is held in a painful position, raucous music blaring out for 24 hours a day, being forced to squat like a frog and extremely violent shaking.

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

- demanding immediate access to lawyers and family for Rasmiya Ghanimat and 'Abd al-Rahman Ghanimat in accordance with international standards such as the UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment which states that "*communication of the detained person with the outside world, and in particular his family or counsel, shall not be denied for more than a matter of days*";
- demanding that all torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment should cease;
- pointing out that the interrogation methods used on 'Abd al-Rahman Ghanimat, admitted by the Israeli authorities, constitute torture and are forbidden under the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which states, in Article 2(2) that: "*No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture*";
- asking the Israeli High Court to fulfil its obligation to protect the basic human rights of all those under Israeli jurisdiction;
- expressing concern at the poor state of health of both detainees and requesting they have access to necessary medical care they require.

**APPEALS TO:**

Mr Binyamin Netanyahu  
Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
3 Kaplan Street  
Jerusalem 91919, Israel

**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Telexes: 25279 mpres il**

**Faxes: + 972-2-566-4838**

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Mr Tzahi Hanegbi  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
29 Salah al-Din Street  
Jerusalem 91029, Israel

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Faxes: + 972-2-6285-438**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Judge Aharon Barak  
President of the Supreme Court of Israel  
Supreme Court of Israel  
Shaarey Mishapt Street  
Qiryat David Ben-Gurion  
Jerusalem 91909, Israel

**Telegrams: President Supreme Court, Jerusalem, Israel**

**Faxes: + 972-2-675-9648**

**Salutation: Dear Judge Barak**

Mr Ami Ayalon  
Head of the General Security Service  
C/o the Office of the Prime Minister  
3 Kaplan Street

Jerusalem 91919, Israel

**Telegrams:** Ayalon, Head GSS, Prime Minister's Office, Jerusalem, Israel

**Telexes:** 25279 mpres il

**Faxes:** + 972-2-566-4838

**Salutation:** Dear Mr Ayalon

**COPIES TO:**

The Public Committee against Torture in Israel

**Faxes:** + 972-2-563 0073

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 1 October 1998.