

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 16/09/96

13 November 1996

**Further information on UA 277/95 (MDE 16/05/95, 29 December 1995) - Legal Concern
/ Possible prisoner of conscience**

JORDAN Leith Shubeilat, head of the Engineers' Union

Leith Shubeilat, the head of the Engineers' Union, was freed under a special amnesty on 8 November 1996.

Leith Shubeilat had been arrested on 9 December 1995 and been charged with *lèse majesté* against King Hussein bin Talal. He had condemned King Hussein's words of praise and expressions of friendship for Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, assassinated on 4 November 1995. Leith Shubeilat was brought to trial before the State Security Court and sentenced to three years' imprisonment in March 1996. This sentence was upheld by the Court of Cassation in May.

On 8 November King Hussein bin Talal drove to Swaqa Prison, 80 kilometres south of Amman and personally informed Leith Shubeilat of his release. He was informed that 200 other prisoners, including political prisoners, would also be freed by amnesty. King Hussein then drove Leith Shubeilat back to his mother's house in Amman.

Amnesty International welcomes the release of Leith Shubeilat. The organization considered him to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely because of his opposition to the peace agreement with Israel and his other peaceful political activities.

On 12 November King Hussein sent a letter to the Prime Minister ordering that charges be dropped against 253 people facing trial after riots against rises in the price of bread in August. The King's amnesty was said to extend to other prisoners not considered a threat to public security or whose term already served was considered sufficient punishment.

The list of those included in the amnesty is apparently being drawn up by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice.

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

- welcoming the release of prisoner of conscience Leith Shubeilat;
- urging that the announced amnesty include all other prisoners held solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously-held beliefs.

APPEALS TO:

1) His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
The Royal Palace
Amman
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Faxes: +962-6-634-755
Telegrams: King Hussein, Amman, Jordan
Salutation: Your Majesty

2) His Excellency 'Abd al-Karim Kabariti

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Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
PO Box 80
Amman, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Faxes: +962 6 642 520
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Amman, Jordan
Salutation: Your Excellency

3) His Excellency 'Abd al-Karim al-Dughmi
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Amman, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Amman, Jordan
Salutation: Your Excellency

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 December 1996.