

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 19/01/96

UA 14/96

Fear of torture / Legal concern

25 January 1996

LIBYA'Adel Mohammad al-Khazni, aged 20
Salih Sulayman Haddoud, aged 19
Faraj Sulayman al-Du'ayki, aged 21
Sulayman Abu-Setta, aged 20
'Abdallah al-Mahdi Abu-Setta, aged 20
Salah al-Din 'Iyad al-Shibani, aged 21
Mohammad Hassan al-Barrani, aged 20
Mohammad al-Mahtout al-Si'ani, aged 20
and 16 other students

It is feared that the 24 students listed above, reportedly tortured before being summarily tried and sentenced to various prison terms in mid-December 1995, are at risk of further ill-treatment or torture. The 24 are currently believed to be held incommunicado in al-Jdayda Prison, in an area called al-Farnaj just outside Tripoli.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

According to reports, the 24 were among those arrested after a large number of students from a secondary school in Bani Walid, south-east Tripoli, demonstrated in early September 1995. The demonstrations were reportedly sparked by the local population being forced to attend a meeting in Bani Walid with members of the Revolutionary Committees and to sign a petition calling for the execution of nine people, including Colonel Miftah Qarrum al-Wirfali (see update to UA 113/94, MDE 19/03/95, 21 September 1995). It is not known whether the executions were carried out.

The demonstrators allegedly set fire to some buildings and threw stones at members of the security forces. A large number of students were arrested and interrogated under torture, methods of which included being beaten with fists, electric shocks on different parts of the body, *falaqa* (beatings on the soles of the feet) and being threatened with dogs. Some were released, but 24 were reportedly summarily tried, in secret and without access to lawyers, in mid-December 1995.

Charges allegedly included offending the Leader of the Revolution, committing acts against the 1 September 1969 Revolution, and committing acts of sabotage.

The first five students named above were sentenced to eight years' imprisonment, the following two to nine years' and the last one to five years'.

Of the other 16, whose names are unknown to Amnesty International, eight were sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and eight to prison terms of between two-and-a-half and five years.

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

- expressing serious concern at reports that the 24 students from Bani Walid were tortured and summarily tried in mid-December 1995;
- seeking assurances that they are currently being treated humanely in accordance with international law, and that they will be granted immediate access to lawyers, family members and medical care;
- urging that any of them alleged to have committed recognizably criminal offences be retried according to international standards for fair trial;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of anyone being held solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs.

APPEALS TO:

1) His Excellency Mu'ammara al-Gaddafi
Leader of the Revolution
Office of the Leader of the Revolution
Tripoli
Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Telegrams: Colonel al-Gaddafi, Tripoli, Libya
Telexes: 70 0901 20162 ALKHASU LY
Salutation: Your Excellency

2) His Excellency
'Umar Mustafa al-Muntasir
Secretary of the People's Committee
of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison
and International Cooperation
Tripoli
Great Socialist People's Arab Jamahiriya
Telegrams: Foreign Minister al-Muntasir, Tripoli, Libya
Salutation: Your Excellency

3) His Excellency
Zanati Mohammad al-Zanati
Secretary of the General People's Congress
Secretariat of the General People's Congress
Tripoli
Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Telegrams: Excellency al-Zanati, General People's Congress, Tripoli, Libya
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO diplomatic representatives of Libya accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 March 1996.