

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 21/11/98

8 May 1998

Further information on UA 116/98 (MDE 21/08/98, 16 April 1998) - Fear of torture / Legal concern

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY Ghassan al-Adassi, 19, detained in Jericho
Dr 'Abd al-'Aziz Rantissi, 51 } detained in Gaza

New Names: Ibrahim al-Maqadmeh }
Ahmad al-Shaykh Qasem, 31 } detained in Jericho
Amjad 'Abd al-Rahman Awdeh, 30 }
'Imad Awadallah, 29 }
'Amer 'Awadallah, 25 }
Fayez Isma'il Wardeh, 40 }
Maher Ahmad Danun }
Ahmad Sa'id }

and around 50 others

At least 70 suspected members of the Islamist movement *Hamas* are now known to have been detained in various detention centres since 29 March 1998. The majority of those detained in Ramallah and Jericho by the Palestinian Preventive Security Service (PSS) have been tortured whilst in incommunicado detention. There are fears that they may continue to be tortured and held for prolonged periods in solitary confinement.

About twelve people, who were among 30 individuals arrested in Ramallah and detained there and in Jericho, have since been released. Their reports indicate that most were tortured whilst held in incommunicado detention. It was not until 1 May that most of those detained in Ramallah were granted access to their families.

PSS torture methods reportedly include suspension by the wrists from the ceiling for several hours over a period of many days; severe beating all over the body; prolonged sleep deprivation of up to four days in painful positions (*shabeh*) and threats, such as being labelled a "collaborator" with Israel.

The wife of one detainee managed to gain access to her husband, who had been held incommunicado for more than 20 days, only by refusing to leave the prison. He was reportedly so weak that he had to be carried in to see her by two guards.

Dr 'Abd al-'Aziz Rantissi and Ibrahim al-Maqadmeh, leaders of *Hamas*, remain in Tel al-Hawa' Prison in Gaza without access to their families or lawyers. They have apparently not been tortured but have been kept in prolonged solitary confinement.

Although lawyers and human rights activists have been granted permission by the Palestinian Authority Attorney Generals' office to visit detainees, this has consistently been refused by the PSS and other security services. The Attorney General resigned in protest at the erosion of the powers of the judiciary on 2 May.

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

- expressing profound concern at reports of systematic torture of suspected supporters of *Hamas* arrested in Ramallah since 29 March 1998;

- demanding that all torture or ill-treatment of detainees should cease and that those involved in ordering or administering torture be brought to justice;
- asking President Arafat and Justice Minister Freih Abu Middein to ensure that the PSS and other Palestinian security forces be placed under the control of the Attorney General and the judiciary, and that families and lawyers be given prompt access to detainees according to Palestinian law and international human rights standards;
- welcoming the reaffirmation of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights made by President Arafat and Justice Minister Freih Abu Middein and asking that they act urgently to ensure that torture, banned under Article 5 of the UDHR, is ended;
- urging an investigation by the Palestinian Legislative Council into the use of torture and ill-treatment of those arrested.

APPEALS TO:

President Yasser Arafat

Palestinian Authority, Al-Muntada, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: President Arafat, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Faxes: + 972-7-822365 (ask to send a fax)

Salutation: Dear President Arafat

Mr Freih Abu Meddein

Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, Abu Khadra Building

Omar al-Mukhtar Street, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Faxes: + 972-7-867109

Salutation: Dear Minister

Colonel Jibril Rajoub

Head of Preventive Security, Jericho, Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: Rajoub, Preventive Security, Jericho

Faxes: + 972-2-992-1273 (ask to send a fax)

Salutation: Dear Colonel Rajoub

Brigadier General Ghazi Jabali

Head of Civilian Police (Gaza Strip), Police Headquarters, Gaza City Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: Brigadier General, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Faxes: + 972-7-822 335

Salutation: Dear Brigadier General Jabali

COPIES TO:

Dr Kamal Sharafi

Chairman, Human Rights and Monitoring Committee of the Legislative Council
Shawa Centre, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Faxes: + 972-7-855 040

Salutation: Dear Dr Sharafi

and to Palestinian Authority representatives accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 June 1998.