

PUBLIC

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UA 243/02 Incommunicado detention/
fear of torture/
possible prisoner of conscience

SAUDI ARABIA Sa'd bin Sa'id Zua'ir (m), aged 28
Dr Sa'id bin Zua'ir (m), aged approx. 52, his father

Sa'd bin Sa'id Zua'ir was reportedly arrested by the General Intelligence al-Mabahith al-Amma police in the middle of July, and has since been held in incommunicado detention. He may be at risk of torture and ill-treatment. Amnesty International is also concerned that he may be detained as a prisoner of conscience.

According to information received by Amnesty International, Sa'd bin Sa'id Al Zua'ir was arrested at Riyadh airport. He was apparently planning to travel to Qatar to take part in one of Aljazeera television's current affairs programs in order to raise awareness of his father's detention in Saudi Arabia.

His father, Dr Sa'id bin Zua'ir, the former head of the Department of Information at Imam Muhammad Ibn Sa'ud university, was arrested for his criticism of the government in early 1995 and has since been held without charge or trial in al-Ha'ir Prison outside Riyadh. He is said to have rejected an offer of release in exchange for an undertaking to cease political activities. Amnesty International has been calling for his unconditional release if he is not charged with a recognizably criminal offence and given a fair trial, but has not received any response from the government.

Amnesty International is concerned that Sa'd bin Sa'id Zua'ir may have been detained solely for his campaigning activities on behalf of his father, and if so, it would consider him a prisoner of conscience.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Critics of the state in Saudi Arabia are often at risk of arbitrary arrest and indefinite detention without charge or trial. Such detainees are regularly subjected to torture. In the rare instances when they are charged and brought to trial, the proceedings invariably fail to meet the most elementary standards of fairness.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals in Arabic, English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the incommunicado detention of Sa'd bin Sa'id Zua'ir and seeking assurances that he is protected from torture and given regular access to family, lawyers and medical attention if necessary;
- urging the authorities to either charge Dr Sa'id bin Zua'ir, held without charge or trial for seven years, with a recognizably criminal offence, or release him immediately;
- calling on the authorities to release Sa'd bin Sa'id Zua'ir immediately if he is a prisoner of conscience detained solely for campaigning against the detention of his father.

APPEALS TO:

King and Prime Minister
The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines

His Majesty King Fahd bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud,
Office of H.M. The King, Royal Court,
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegram: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz,
Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior,
P.O. Box 2933, Airport Road,
Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegram: Minister of Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 1185
Telex: 404416
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Nasseriya Street,
Riyadh 11124, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 0159
Telex: 405000
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Dr. 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
University Street,
Riyadh 11137, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegram: Minister of Justice, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 401 1741
Telex: 405 980 MINJUS SJ
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 September 2002.