

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 23/10/96

9 September 1996

Further information (1) on EXTRA 111/96 (MDE 23/08/96, 19 July 1996) - Fear of torture / Possible prisoners of conscience

SAUDI ARABIA Abdullah Abbas al-Ahmad, aged 40, employee of Aramco
Kamil Abbas al-Ahmad, aged 25, university student
Muhammad Ibrahim al-Ibrahim, aged 40, employee of Aramco
Nasser 'Ali Rahim, aged 39, employee of Aramco
Ali Hassan al-Dawood, aged 32, employee of Aramco
and others

Amnesty International has learned that Nasser 'Ali Rahim was released without charge on 20 July 1996. The others all reportedly remain without charge in incommunicado detention. Their families have not been allowed to visit them, and have still not been informed of the reasons for their arrest.

Reports indicate that large numbers of arrests have taken place since the bombing of the King Abdul Aziz air base in al-Khobar on 25 June 1996, and it is thought that hundreds of individuals are currently detained. These arrests are reportedly of suspected political or religious opponents of the government, although some members of the police and army have also been detained. Information indicates that from the Shi'a community alone, more than two hundred individuals have been detained. Although their families have approached the authorities, they have not been given the reason for the arrests, or been allowed to visit them. Amnesty International fears that these detainees, at least some of whom may be prisoners of conscience, may be at risk of torture.

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

- seeking clarification of the reasons for the continued detention of the above individuals, and calling for their immediate and unconditional release unless they are promptly charged with recognizable criminal offences and given fair trials in accordance with international standards;
- asking for details - place of detention and reason for arrest - of all those who have been detained in connection with the al-Khobar bombing;
- seeking assurances that all detainees are being treated humanely, and urging that they be given immediate access to family, lawyers and medical care if necessary.

APPEALS TO:

The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines
His Majesty King Fahd bin 'Abdul-'Aziz
Office of H.M. The King
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of Interior
His Royal Highness
Prince Naif bin 'Abdul-'Aziz
Ministry of the Interior
PO Box 2833
Airport Road, Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: Minister of the Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Telexes: 404416
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Royal Highness
Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz
Nasseriya Street, Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Telexes: 405000
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice

His Excellency
Dr. Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Ministry of Justice
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: Minister of Justice, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Telexes: 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 7 October 1996.