

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/012/2005

09 August 2005

Further Information on UA 112/04 (MDE 23/003/2004, 17 March 2004) and follow-ups (MDE 23/005/2004, 30 April 2004; MDE 23/009/2004, 2 July 2004; MDE 23/006/2005, 17 May 2005) - Fear of Torture and Ill Treatment/Prisoners of conscience

SAUDI ARABIA **Dr Matrouk al-Falih, (m), aged 54, Professor of Political Science at King Sa'ud University, Riyadh**
Dr Abdullah al-Hamid, (m), aged 56, former professor of contemporary literature at Imam Muhammad bin Sa'ud University, Riyadh
Ali al Deminy, (m), aged 56, writer
Abdel Rahman al-Lahem, (m), lawyer

Prisoners of conscience Dr Matrouk al Falih, Dr Abdullah al-Hamid, Ali al Deminy and Abdel Rahman al-Lahem, were granted a royal pardon by the new King Abdullah on 8 August. They are expected to be released on 9 August.

The academics had been sentenced to between six and nine years' imprisonment by a closed court in Riyadh on charges that included "sowing dissent and disobeying the ruler" on 15 May. Their lawyer, Abdel Rahman al-Lahem, who had been in custody since November 2004, was also released. He had first been arrested earlier in March 2004, but released two months later after signing a pledge agreeing not to carry out "political activity".

No further action is required from the UA networks. Many thanks to all those who sent appeals.