

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/62/00

UA 226/00

Fear of torture/Incommunicado detention

Possible

**SAUDI ARABIA George Thomas, Indian national, aged 38-40**

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George Thomas, an Indian national working in Saudi Arabia, was reportedly arrested outside his home, as he returned from a Catholic worship service. Amnesty International is concerned that he may have been arrested solely for his religious beliefs, and if so would consider him a prisoner of conscience.

His whereabouts are now unknown to Amnesty International and are also said to be unknown to his relatives and friends. As he is detained incommunicado, he is at risk of torture.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Members of faiths other than Sunni Islam are not permitted to practice their religions in public, and risk arrest even if they do so in private. Several Christians were arrested in June 1998, possibly solely because of their religious beliefs. They were eventually deported. (See UA 184/98, MDE 23/05/98, 26 June 1998 and follow-up MDE 23/10/98, 11 September 1998)

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

- asking to know where George Thomas is held, and seeking assurances that he is treated humanely, protected from torture, and given prompt and regular access to his relatives, lawyers and medical attention as necessary;
- expressing concern that George Thomas may be detained solely for his religious beliefs, and, if so, calling for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience;
- otherwise, asking why he was arrested, whether he has been charged with any recognizably criminal offence, and asking whether any trial proceedings are underway.

**APPEALS TO: (please note that Saudi fax numbers can be very unreliable):**

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

**Telegrams: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud

Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior

P.O. Box 2933

Airport Road, Riyadh 11134

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Fax: + 966 1 403 1185**

**Telegram: Minister of Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

**Telexes: 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  
**Telegrams: Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**  
**Fax: + 966 1 403 0159**  
**Telexes: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  
**Fax: + 966 1 401 1741**  
**Telegram: 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 8 September 2000.