

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 45/92 (MDE 24/04/92, 11 February 1992) - and follow-ups MDE 24/05/92 of 24 February 1992 and MDE 24/09/92 of 7 May 1992 - Incommunicado Detention/Fear of Torture and new concern - Unfair Trial

SYRIA: 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khayyir

Bahjat Sha'bu

'Abdallah Fadil

Muhammad Ghanim

Mahmud Khadhur

Nadim Mazlum

Munzir Jum'a

Mahmud al-Khatib

Amjad Kallas - businessman

Jamal Salih Sa'id

'Abd al-Karim Darwish - engineer

Jaffan Humsi

Salama George Kila - writer and journalist

Amnesty International has received reports suggesting that 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khayyir and Amjad Kallas have recently been tried by the Supreme State Security Court. This court is not bound by rules and procedures followed by ordinary courts and its decisions are not subject to appeal. 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khayyir is said to have been sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. Amnesty International has no details about the charges against him or the trial proceedings. The organization does not know whether the other seven detained with 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khayyir in connection with the PCA have also been tried. The seven are: Bahjat Sha'bu, 'Abdullah Fadil, Muhammad Ghanim, Mahmud Khadur, Nadim Mazlum, Munzir Jum'a and Mahmud al-Khatib.

Amjad Kallas is said to have been sentenced to two or three years' imprisonment. Amnesty International does not know whether the other four detained at about the same time as Amjad Kallas, reportedly for their political activity, have also been tried. The four are: Jamal Salih Sa'id, 'Abd al-Karim Darwish, Jaffan Humsi and Salama George Kila.

All twelve prisoners reportedly continue to be held incommunicado and their exact whereabouts are unknown to Amnesty International, although some were thought to be detained in Fara' al-Tahqiq al-'Askari, Military Interrogation Branch and Fara' Falastin, Palestine Branch, detention centres in Damascus.

Amnesty International calls on the Syrian government to immediately clarify the status and the whereabouts of the twelve prisoners. In addition, the

organization calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all those who may be held solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs, and for those who may have been charged with a recognizably criminal offence to be guaranteed a prompt and fair hearing as required by international standards for fair trial. Further, Amnesty International reiterates its request for assurances that the prisoners are treated humanely, given immediate and regular access to families, lawyers and doctors.

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FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/airmail letters

- calling on the Syrian authorities to clarify the legal status and whereabouts of all 13 prisoners named above and to allow them immediate access to families lawyers and doctors;

- seeking confirmation of reports that 'Abd al-Aziz al-Khayyir and Amjad Kallas have been tried and asking to be informed of the charges brought against them as well as details about the trial proceedings such as the date of the trial, articles of the law under which they were charged, whether they were defended by lawyers of their own choosing and whether they were allowed appeal against their sentences;

- calling for the immediate release of all those held as prisoners of conscience (held solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs) and for prompt and fair trial for the other political prisoners.

APPEALS TO :

1. His Excellency
President Hafez al-Assad
Presidential Palace
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Telegrams: President al-Assad, Damascus Syria
Telexes: 419160 munjed sy

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) His Excellency Muhammad Harba
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Damascus, Syria

Salutation: Your Excellency

3) His Excellency Khaled al-Ansari
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Nasr Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Damascus, Syria

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

diplomatic representatives of Syria in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 July 1992.