PUBLIC AI Index: MDE 24/059/2004

1 September 2004

Further Information on UA 155/04 (MDE 24/038/2004, 26 April 2004, and follow-up (MDE 24/040/2004, 17 May 2004) - <u>Prisoners of conscience/fear of torture</u> and new concern: <u>Fear of unfair trial</u>

SYRIA Muhannad al-Dabas (m) ] university students

Muhammad 'Arab (m)

The two men named above are now facing an unfair trial on charges that carry a sentence of up to 15 years' imprisonment.

On 29 August the Supreme State Security Court (SSSC) charged Muhannad al-Dabas and Muhammad 'Arab with "opposing the objectives of the revolution". The first hearing before the SSSC will be held on 26 September 2004. Amnesty International considers trials before the SSSC to be grossly unfair. It is believed that the men are still detained incommunicado at the Department of Political Security in Damascus, where a number of the other student demonstrators who have now released say they were tortured and ill-treated.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic, French or your own language:

- calling for Mohammad 'Arab and Mohammad al-Dabas to be released immediately and unconditionally, as they are prisoners of conscience held solely for the peaceful expression of their opinions;
- seeking assurances that Mohammad 'Arab and Mohammad al-Dabas will be well treated, and not tortured or ill-treated, while they are in custody;
- urging the authorities to allow Mohammad 'Arab and Mohammad al-Dabas immediate and unrestricted access to their families and lawyers, and also any medical treatment they may need.

## **APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Bashar al-Assad President Presidential Palace Abu Rummaneh al-Rashid Street Damascus Syrian Arab Republic

Fax: + 963 11 332 3410 Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Major General 'Ali Hammud Minister of the Interior Ministry of Interior Merjeh Circle Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Fax: + 963 11 222 3428 Salutation: Your Excellency **COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 October 2004.