

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/082/2005

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Further Information on UA 185/03 (MDE 24/020/2003, 24 June 2003) and follow-ups (MDE 24/026/2003, 23 July 2003; MDE 24/039/2003, 5 November 2003; MDE 24/022/2004, 18 March 2004; and MDE 24/046/2004, 21 June 2004) - Prisoner of conscience/legal concern

SYRIA

'Abdel Rahman al-Shaghouri (m)

'Abdel Rahman al-Shaghouri was released on 31 August, one week after the end of his sentence. He has returned home to his family and is said to be in good health.

'Abdel Rahman al-Shaghouri was arrested on 23 February 2003 in relation to articles which he distributed by e-mail mainly from the *Akhbar al-Sharq* internet site, (www.thisissyria.net). The Syrian authorities have been quoted as saying that material on the site is "detrimental to the reputation and security of the nation" and "full of ideas and views opposed to the system of government in Syria".

'Abdel Rahman al-Shaghouri was sentenced following an unfair trial before the Supreme State Security Court (SSSC) on 20 June 2004. He was charged with "disseminating false information" and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. This was immediately reduced to two and a half years. He spent most of his imprisonment in Sednaya Prison on the outskirts of Damascus.

'Abdel Rahman al-Shaghouri is one of several people detained in Syria for exercising their right to freedom of expression through the internet (see AI Public Statement Syria: Imprisonment of internet users is a gross violation of human rights, MDE 24/052/2004, 26 July 2004, and the case of Mas'oud Hamid, in FU UA 188/03, MDE 24/050/2005, 15 July 2005).

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