

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 25/001/2005

07 June 2005

Further Information on UA 57/05 (MDE 23/002/2005, 11 March 2005) Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture or ill-treatment

UNITED ARAB

EMIRATES (UAE)

Salem Abdul Rahman Nawab al-Baloushi (m), aged 32, UAE national

Amnesty International has learned that Salem al-Baloushi has been handed by the Saudi Arabian authorities to the custody of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). His current whereabouts are unknown and he still has not been given access to his family and lawyers. He is at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Salem al-Baloushi was detained in Saudi Arabia without charge or trial from February 2003 until being handed over to the authorities in the UAE, which is believed to have taken place in April 2005. The reason for his arrest is not known, but it may have been connected to the fact that he had travelled to Afghanistan in the 1980s. Since September 2001, the Saudi Arabian authorities have treated anyone who travelled to Afghanistan at that time as a potential "Islamist terrorist".

Salem al-Baloushi was previously detained by the UAE authorities for six years, from 1994 to 2000. His arrest and detention were also believed to be connected with his travel to Afghanistan in the 1980s, though he was released without charge. During his six-year detention in the UAE he was not allowed any family visits, was not given access to lawyers and was held in solitary confinement.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The practice of detaining political suspects incommunicado in undisclosed locations is common in the UAE. Members of *Amn al-Dawla* (State Security) are reportedly responsible for arresting political suspects.

In the report *The Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula: Human rights fall victim to the "War on Terror"* (AI Index: MDE 04/002/2004, 22 June 2004), Amnesty International reported that in the aftermath of the attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001, over 250 people were arrested and detained in the UAE. They had no access to lawyers or family and their legal status was unclear. Reports suggest that most have been released without charge. Little information is available on those arrested, as their relatives often do not want their cases reported because they fear reprisals by the federal security forces.

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

- expressing concern that Salem Abdul Rahman Nawab al-Baloushi is being held incommunicado in an unknown location and may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment;
- seeking clarification of the reasons for his arrest and detention, and urging the authorities to reveal his current whereabouts;
- calling for guarantees that he is being treated humanely, and not tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the authorities to give him immediate access to his family, lawyers of his own choosing, and any medical treatment he may require;
- calling for Salem Abdul Rahman Nawab al-Baloushi to be released immediately and unconditionally unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and given a prompt and fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
Major-General Shaikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
POB 398
Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates
Fax: + 971 2 4414938 / 4 3981119
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency
Muhammad Nukhaira Al-Dhahiri
Minister of Justice, Awqaf & Islamic Affairs
Ministry of Justice, Awqaf & Islamic Affairs
POB 753
Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates
Fax: + 971 2 6810680 / 4 2825121
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency
Rashid 'Abdullah Al-Nu'aimi
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
POB 1,
Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates
Fax: + 971 4 2280979
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of the United Arab Emirates accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 July 2005.