

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "disappearance"

17 August 1994

YEMEN 'Ali Muhammad Qassim al-Mefalhi, engineer, trade union leader

'Ali Muhammad Qassim al-Mefalhi was arrested by Political Security forces on the night of 15 August 1994 in Ta'iz and has since been held in incommunicado detention at an unknown location. Political Security have since denied any knowledge of his current whereabouts and Amnesty International fears that he may "disappear". The organization believes that he is a prisoner of conscience.

'Ali Muhammad Qassim al-Mefalhi, president of the Engineers Union in Ta'iz, is also a member of the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party in Ta'iz. He had previously been summoned by Political Security and questioned for a few hours. Before arriving home he was taken by Political Security forces to an unknown location.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following the outbreak of war in Yemen on 4 May 1994 between the governmental forces and forces loyal to the Yemeni Socialist Party in southern provinces of Yemen, thousands of political opponents were arrested. The majority were released following a general amnesty decree by the Presidential Council, however hundreds of suspected political opponents remain in detention throughout the Republic of Yemen. Amnesty International is gravely concerned that some of them may be subjected to torture or may "disappear".

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

- urging the authorities to reveal the current whereabouts of 'Ali Muhammad Qassim al-Mefalhi, arrested by Political Security forces on 15 August 1994;
- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely, in accordance with international standards;
- urging that he be given immediate access to his family and his lawyer;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of 'Ali Muhammad Qassim al-Mefalhi whom Amnesty International believes to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely on account of his conscientiously held beliefs.

APPEALS TO

His Excellency
General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
Chairman of the Presidential Council
Presidential Council
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Telegrams: President 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh, Sana'a, YEMEN

Faxes: +967 1 262017

Telexes: 2422 RIASAH YE

Salutations: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 September 1994.