

URGENT ACTION

DETAINEES STRIPPED AND BEATEN IN LIBYA PRISON

On 14 May, 20 detainees were stripped and beaten in Ain Zara Prison, Libya, then left for two days on a concrete floor without mattresses or blankets. The detainees have not yet been examined by forensic pathologists. One of the guards allegedly responsible may still be working at the prison.

On the evening of 14 May, a group of guards in military dress carried out a search of Block 3B in Ain Zara Prison. Shortly afterwards, guards took 20 men to a separate block, including **Abdel Latif Ali Tawil, Abdel Ati Mohamed Mosbah, Mohamed Sherif** and **Abdel Nasser al-Din Taher**. The guards stripped the men down to their underwear and beat them with hoses and batons. The beatings reportedly lasted until about midnight. When detainees lost consciousness, the guards poured water on them to revive them so they could keep beating them. After the beatings, the prison authorities left the detainees undressed on the concrete floor without mattresses or blankets for a further two days.

When Amnesty International visited Ain Zara Prison on 24 May, many of the detainees still had visible injuries; one prisoner had a cut on his head and another had visible scars on his back. Ain Zara Prison administrators acknowledged that the incident had occurred and condemned the severity of the beatings, but told Amnesty International that they were a reaction to the discovery of illegal drugs and knives in the cells, as well as the detainees' violent behaviour towards the guards. International law absolutely prohibits torture.

The Ain Zara Prison and the Directorate of the Judicial Police are reportedly conducting internal investigations into the torture of the detainees. Relatives of victims have also submitted complaints to the Public Prosecution. On 23 May, a committee from Libya's ruling National Transitional Council visited the Ain Zara Prison and questioned some of the victims. However, the detainees have yet to be referred to forensic pathologists for medical examination, despite repeated requests by their relatives. Amnesty International has also obtained information that at least one guard who is alleged to have carried out the beatings remains in Ain Zara Prison.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the Libyan authorities to ensure all the allegations of torture against the 20 detainees in Ain Zara Prison are fully, impartially and independently investigated and that the results are made public;
- Calling on the Libyan authorities to immediately refer the detainees to forensic pathologists for medical examination;
- Urging the Libyan authorities to bring those responsible for the torture of detainees to justice in a fair trial, and to remove those reasonably suspected of perpetrating such abuses from their posts pending investigations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 JULY 2012 TO:

Minister of Justice and Human Rights

H.E. Ali Hamida Ashour

Ministry of Justice and Human Rights

Fax: +218 2 1480 5427 (fax/phone line –

say "Fax") (Fax is the only reliable

communication method so please do not

send letters)

Minister of Foreign Affairs and

International Co-operation

H.E. Ashour Ben Khayil

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

International Co-operation

Fax: +218 2 1340 7469

(Fax is the only reliable communication

method so please do not send letters)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 26 May 2012, the families of the detainees who had been stripped and beaten in Ain Zara Prison protested in front of the National Transitional Council.

Amnesty International has received information regarding the torture and other ill-treatment of scores of detainees in Libya since the end of the armed conflict in October 2011. Most of the abuses are carried out by armed militias. The organization sent a letter to the Minister of Justice and Human Rights on 25 May 2012 expressing its concern at the reports of torture in Ain Zara Prison and requesting that the authorities investigate the incident.

As a state party to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Libya has an obligation to investigate all allegations of torture, bring those responsible to justice, and provide victims with reparations.

Name: Abdel Latif Ali Tawil, Abdel Ati Mohamed Mosbah, Mohamed Sherif and Abdel Nasser al-Din Taher and 16 others (names known to Amnesty International)

Gender m/f: m

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