



**amnesty  
international**

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT  
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United Kingdom

COUNTRY DOSSIER	SECTION 7
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**URGENT  
ACTION**

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: MDE 24/04/88  
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UA 57/88

Death in custody/Torture

29 February 1988

SYRIA: Muhammad al-'ARRAJ, born in Lataqiyya, teacher  
Trad KHALIL, born in Amuda, theatre actor  
Na'man ABDO, born in Salamiyya, single, volunteer in Fatah  
Nizar MARADNI, born 1956 in Damascus, engineer, married with  
two children; wife also detained  
May al-HAFEZ (female), born 1957 in al-Nairab refugee camp,  
Aleppo, postgraduate student in engineering, single  
Na'man JIB, born in Lataqiyya, single, army major  
Sahar al-BUNNI (female), born 1957 in Hama, civil engineer,  
married with one child; two brothers also detained  
Ghassan MARADNI, born 1950 in Damascus, architect, married  
with two children; brother arrested earlier as a hostage

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Amnesty International is deeply concerned at reports it has received of the death in custody as a result of torture of Muhammad al-'Arraj and the torture of seven other members of Hizb al-Amal al-Shuyu'i, Party for Communist Action (PCA).

According to Amnesty International's information, Muhammad al-'Arraj was arrested on 3 October 1987 by members of al-Amn al-Askari (Military Security). He was initially detained in Lataqiyya and then transferred to Fara' Falastin (Palestine Branch) in Damascus. He is said to have died in custody under torture in late December 1987/early January 1988. Following his death, his body was taken to al-Mezze Military Hospital, where it remains. Amnesty International understands that the Syrian authorities refused to return the body to his family.

Seven other PCA members are reported to have been tortured in recent months. Their condition is said to be critical. All were arrested by al-Amn al-Askari between 7 September and 12 December 1987 and are held in Lataqiyya, Aleppo and Damascus. Trad Khalil was arrested on 9 September; he was released after his condition deteriorated as a result of torture and was then rearrested. Nizar Maradni is reported to be suffering from a fractured pelvis as a result of torture. May al-Hafez was initially arrested on 27 August 1987, released on 2 October and then rearrested. She suffers from anaemia and is reported to be in a poor condition. Na'man Jib is reported to be suffering from paralysis of the hands as a result of torture.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters:

- urging that a public enquiry be set up into the death of Muhammad al-'Arraj and that the findings be made public;

**Telephone 01-833 1771    Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1    Telex: 28502**

Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the *release* of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed *prisoners of conscience*. It works for *fair and prompt trials* for all *political prisoners* and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the *death penalty* and *torture* or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of *all prisoners*.

- expressing concern at reports that the health of Trad Khalil, Na'man Abdo, Nizar Maradni, May al-Hafez, Na'man Jib, Sahar al-Bunni and Ghassan Maradni has deteriorated seriously as a result of torture and urging that they be given all necessary medical treatment;

- expressing concern that the seven detainees are being held without charge or trial and seeking further details regarding the legal basis for their detention.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency  
President Hafez al-Assad  
Office of the President  
Presidential Palace  
Abu Rummaneh  
al-Rashid Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

His Excellency Muhammad Harba  
Minister of the Interior  
Ministry of the Interior  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Interior Minister Harba,  
Damascus, Syria

Telegrams: President al-Assad,  
Damascus, Syria  
Telexes: 419160 munjed sy

His Excellency  
Dr Iyad al-Shatti  
Minister of Health  
al-Majlis al-Niyabi Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

His Excellency  
Mahmud al-Zu'bi  
Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
'Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Health Minister Iyad  
al-Shatti, Damascus, Syria  
Telex: health 412655 sy

Telegrams: Prime Minister  
al-Zu'bi, Damascus, Syria

COPIES TO:

Dr M. Cherif Bakle  
Ordre des Médecins Syriens  
Place de l'Etoile  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

and to diplomatic representatives of Syria in your country.

Please organize some appeals from MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 April 1988.

— Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended action. If possible, send a telegram or express letter immediately to one or more of the addresses given. Other letters can be sent afterwards.

— Telegrams and letters should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to relevant provisions in international law, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3 — "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Article 5 — "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 9 — "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

— The name of Amnesty International may be used, although letters written in a private or personal capacity may be more effective.

— Copies of appeals should be sent to relevant diplomatic representatives in your country.

— In Urgent Action cases, Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the ill-treatment of prisoners. An appeal is issued when Amnesty International believes it has received reliable and accurate information in such cases. It is not always possible to verify all details independently and in some instances the situation outlined in the appeal may change. Urgent Action participants are always notified of any significant new facts.

— Copies of any replies received from government authorities should be sent immediately to your section's Urgent Action coordinator or direct to the Campaign and Membership Department of the International Secretariat. If appropriate, thank the official who has replied and ask to be kept informed about the case.