

USA/Yemen/Jordan

Secret detention and torture

CASE SHEET 2

August 2005
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Full name: **Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali**

Nationality: Yemeni

Age: 27

Family status: married, with a two-year-old daughter he has never seen

"I couldn't bear it any longer...even if I was an animal I couldn't put up with it."
Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali speaking about his detention by US authorities in secret places of detention

Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali, a 27-year-old Yemeni, was arrested in August 2003 while shopping in Indonesia where he lived with his Indonesian wife. He says he was flown to Jordan where he was held for four days and tortured. He was interrogated but never told why he had been arrested.

Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali says he was blindfolded and shackled by US guards, then transported in a small military plane to a secret location. There, for between six and eight months, he was held in solitary confinement in what he describes as an old-style underground facility with high walls.

Again, he was shackled and blindfolded and put on a small military aircraft, then a helicopter, before arriving at the next, unknown place of detention. Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali describes it as a modern purpose-built detention facility run by US officials, probably underground.

In May 2005, without explanation, Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali was released from secret detention and flown to Yemen, where he remains in prison, still without charge. Yemeni officials say he is being detained at the request of US authorities.

Torture in Jordan

Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali says that he was tortured continuously for four days. He says that Jordanian officials:

- beat him
- spat on him
- verbally abused him
- threatened him with sexual abuse and electric shocks
- beat the soles of his feet with sticks

- tied him so that he was suspended upside down, hands and feet tied, whilst the guards beat his feet
- surrounded him with 15 guards in a circle, forced him to run around in the circle until he was exhausted, then beat him with a stick.
- tried to force him to sit on a bottle so that it would penetrate his anus.

Salah Nasser Salim ‘Ali says that he was only interrogated at the beginning of his detention in Jordan and then only asked questions about his time in Afghanistan. At no point was he told why he had been arrested, offered contact with lawyers or allowed to make telephone calls.

Secret prisons

Salah Nasser Salim ‘Ali was detained in an unknown location, in total isolation, for more than a year and a half. His wife, family and friends did not know where he was – he had “disappeared”.

Saleh Nasser Salim ‘Ali says he was transported from Jordan by US guards to an old-style underground prison with high walls, where he was held in solitary confinement. His tiny cell had a bucket for a toilet. Western music was piped into the cell 24 hours a day. He was given no reason for his detention. He says he was interrogated by US officials about people he might have known and about his activities in Afghanistan and Indonesia. He had no idea where he was – not even which country he was in.

After six to eight months he was moved again to another unknown location, this time a modern purpose-built detention facility run by US officials. He thought the facility was underground because he entered it down stairs and climbed stairs when he left. It was fully air-conditioned with modern toilets and surveillance cameras in the cells. He was given Islamic books and copies of the Qur’an as well as watches and prayer schedules, and was allowed to watch Arabic and Western films. A doctor came to check on him once a fortnight. However, he was still held in solitary confinement, always shackled and handcuffed, and never allowed even a glimpse of the sky. Worst of all, he was still not allowed to contact his wife and family.

Still no freedom

On or around 5 May 2005, without explanation, Salah Nasser Salim ‘Ali was released from secret detention and transferred back to Yemen. He is still detained in the central prison of Aden, even though he has never been charged or tried with any offence, and the Yemeni authorities admit they have no reason to hold him. Yemeni officials have told Amnesty International delegates that he is held at the request of US authorities.

Salah Nasser Salim ‘Ali has a two-year-old daughter who he has never seen. His wife is struggling to bring up her daughter alone.

TAKE ACTION FOR

Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali

Write to the Yemeni authorities:

- Appeal for the immediate release of Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali, unless he is to be promptly charged with a recognizable criminal offence and given a fair trial;
- Call for all detainees to have prompt access to lawyers and to be allowed to challenge the legality of their detention; UN human rights monitoring bodies, Amnesty International and other human rights organizations should be given regular access to detainees.

Write to the Jordanian authorities:

- Demand an immediate end to all acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- Call for a prompt and impartial investigation into the allegations of torture and ill-treatment against Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali; anyone found responsible should be brought to justice.

Write to the US authorities:

- Ask the US authorities to clarify where Salah Nasser Salim 'Ali was held;
- Urge them to withdraw all requests to the Yemeni government to detain people released from US custody, unless they are to be prosecuted in accordance with international standards;
- Demand an end to incommunicado and secret detention; detainees should be held only in officially recognized places of detention with access to family, lawyers and courts;
- All detainees held in US custody in undisclosed locations should either be charged and given a fair trial without recourse to the death penalty, or else they should be released.
- Demand an immediate end to all acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Call for human rights laws and standards to be strictly adhered to in cooperation between US security forces and those of other countries, ensuring that torture and ill-treatment, incommunicado detentions and "disappearance" play no part in such cooperation;

Write to:

His Excellency General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
President
Office of The President
Sana'a

Republic of Yemen
Faxes: + 967 127 4147

His Majesty King ‘Abdallah bin Hussein
Office of H.M. the King
Royal Palace
Amman
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Fax + 962 6 462 7421
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Ambassador John Negroponte
Director of National Intelligence
New Executive Office Building
Washington DC 20511

If you want to take further action on this case, please contact your national AI office

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www.amnesty.org