

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 46/08 (EUR 42/001/2008, 21 February 2008) Deportation / Torture

SWEDEN

Jamil Mohammad Burhan (m), aged 24

The Swedish authorities are once again preparing to deport asylum-seeker Jamil Burhan to Eritrea, where he would be at risk of being detained and tortured. According to his lawyers, the Eritrean embassy in Sweden has now issued the necessary travel documents to allow Jamil Burhan to be sent to Eritrea. His lawyers fear that the deportation could go ahead as early as 15 April.

According to his lawyers, Jamil Burhan was born in Saudi Arabia to Eritrean parents. He grew up there, and his family still live there. It is not clear what nationality or citizenship he holds, but apparently he has no right of entry to Saudi Arabia, so cannot be sent there.

He came to Sweden in August 2002 and sought asylum. His application was rejected on 23 December 2003, and his appeal against that decision was rejected on 27 October 2004, on the grounds that, by his own account, he had never actually been to Eritrea, and so would be of no interest to the authorities there, and therefore in no danger.

The current advice from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to all governments is to "refrain from all forced returns of rejected asylum-seekers to Eritrea and grant them complementary forms of protection instead".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Thousands of people are detained incommunicado in Eritrea, in secret and indefinitely, without charge or trial, and are systematically tortured or otherwise ill-treated. They have been arrested for suspected opposition to the government, practising their religious faith as members of banned evangelical or other churches, evading military conscription or trying to flee the country. Rejected asylum-seekers returned to Eritrea face a real risk of being detained and subjected to torture or other ill-treatment simply for having applied for asylum, which the authorities regard as a betrayal of the country. A number of rejected asylum-seekers who have been forcibly returned to Eritrea remain in secret detention, among them asylum-seekers returned from Sudan in 2008.

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

- expressing alarm at reports that the deportation of Jamil Burhan to Eritrea is now imminent;
- urging the authorities to halt the deportation of Jamil Burhan immediately, in view of the real danger that he would face torture in Eritrea;
- reminding the authorities of their obligation, under the Convention against Torture and other international treaties, not to deport anyone to countries where they would be in danger of torture;
- noting that the UNHCR is currently advising governments not to forcibly return rejected asylum-seekers to Eritrea;
- calling on the authorities to make a firm public commitment to respect UNHCR guidelines against the forcible return of any rejected Eritrean asylum-seekers, arising from the serious and systematic ongoing violations of human rights in Eritrea.

APPEALS TO:

Tobias Billström
Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy
Ministry of Justice
Rosenbad 4
103 33 - Stockholm
SWEDEN

Fax: +46 8 723 11 76
Email: registrator@justice.ministry.se
Salutation: Dear Minister

County Police Commissioner
Länspolismästare Carin Götblad
Polismyndigheten i Stockholms län
106 75 Stockholm
SWEDEN

Fax: +46 (0) 8401 9990
Email: ck@stockholm.police.se
Salutation: Dear Commissioner Götblad

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Sweden accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.