

Public

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To: Health professional coordinators
From: Health and Human Rights Team
Date: 6 September 2005

**Further information on
MEDICAL ACTION
Six imprisoned human rights defenders
Syria**

(Update on medical action: **Mamun al-Humsi, Riad Seif, ‘Aref Dalilah, Muhammad Ra’dun, Nizar Ristnawi, and Mas’oud Hamid**, human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience in Syria, 25 July 2005, MDE 24/054/2005 and update MDE 24/057/2005)

Summary

On 25 July 2005 and 3 August 2005, AI issued medical actions on behalf of Mamun al-Humsi, Riad Seif, ‘Aref Dalilah, Muhammad Ra’dun, Nizar Ristnawi, and Mas’oud Hamid. AI was concerned at the state of health of the six human rights defenders most of whom had recently been on hunger strike. All six remain in prison though AI has received further information on two of the men. AI regards all six men as prisoners of conscience.

Update

Riad Seif’s health continues to deteriorate. He is reported to be seriously ill and remains in need of heart surgery. In addition, he and **Mamun al-Humsi** are being kept in separate windowless cells, each with criminal prisoners who seem to have been placed there deliberately to worsen the two men’s quality of life. Reportedly, Riad Seif and Mamun al-Humsi’s cell-mates continually provoke them. AI is concerned that heavy smoking by those held with the prisoners of conscience may have a harmful effect on their health.

The authorities are reported to be making it increasingly difficult for Riad Seif’s lawyer to visit him. Mamun al-Humsi continues to be held incommunicado.

Recommended action

Please continue to campaign on behalf of these six men **paying particular attention to the cases of Riad Seif and Mamun al-Humsi** by writing to the authorities below:

- Introducing yourself as a health professional interested in human rights;
- Expressing concern for the health of Mamun al-Humsi, Riad Seif, Muhammad Ra'dun, Nizar Ristnawi, 'Aref Dalilah and Mas'oud Hamid;
- Expressing concern in particular at reports of the deteriorating health of Mamun al-Humsi and Riad Seif;
- Expressing concern at the conditions in which Riad Seif and Mamun al-Humsi are being held;
- Expressing concern that Mamun al-Humsi continues to be held in incommunicado detention and urging that he be given immediate access to visits from his family members and his lawyer;
- Calling for an end to the practice of incommunicado detention;
- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of these six men who have been imprisoned solely for the peaceful expression of their beliefs;
- Calling for access to appropriate medical care for these men;
- Asking for assurances that they are not being subjected to torture and/or other ill-treatment;
- Inviting a response to your letter.

Addresses

His Excellency Bashar al-Assad
 President
 Presidential Palace
 Abu Rummaneh
 al-Rashid Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: + 963 11 332 3410

His Excellency General Ghazi Kan'an
 Minister of Interior
 Ministry of Interior
 Merjeh Circle
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax + 963 11 222 3428
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His Excellency Dr Maher al-Husami
 Minister of Health
 Ministry of Health
 Majlis ash-Sha'b
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: + 963 11 331 1114

His Excellency Muhammad al-Ghafari
 Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
 Al-Nasr Street
 Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
 Fax: + 963 11 222 3428

Please also write to diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country. If you receive no reply within six weeks of sending your letter, please send a follow-up letter seeking a response. Please send copies of any letters you receive to the International Secretariat, attention of Health and Human Rights Team.