

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 425/90 (MDE 18/01/90, 22 October 1990) -
Extrajudicial Executions

LEBANON: Further killings and arrests by Syrian forces

Amnesty International has received further details about the extrajudicial execution of both soldiers and civilian supporters of General Michel Aoun in mid-October by the Syrian army and pro-Syrian militias. Amnesty International is also concerned about the incommunicado detention of more than 150 supporters of General Aoun who were either taken captive in the course of fighting or arrested by the Syrian forces at the time of General Aoun's ousting from East Beirut.

Killings of civilians were reported in several villages in the Christian enclave in East Beirut. At least 14 men are reported to have been executed extrajudicially by Syrian soldiers in Bsouss after having been rounded up from their homes; 19 people, including three women, were reported to have been executed in Hadath; and two young priests, Father Albert Cherfan and Father Suleiman Abu Khalil, are reported to have been abducted by Syrian troops from the monastery of Deir al-Kalaat and subsequently killed.

An estimated 200 Christian supporters of General Aoun, the majority of them military personnel, were reported to have been arrested by the Syrian forces in East Beirut and its suburbs on 13-14 October. The majority of them were reportedly transferred to Syria and are believed to still be in detention in prisons there, among them five of Aoun's officers arrested from the Ministry of Defence in East Beirut on 13 October, who are reported to be held incommunicado in al-Mezze Military Prison in Damascus. Twenty-four of those arrested are reported to have been released after arrest. The whereabouts of the remainder are not known, but reports suggest that they may be held in 'Anjar detention centre in the Beka' Valley.

Amnesty International is also concerned at reports that a number of people were apparently deliberately killed for political reasons outside the immediate context of armed conflict in the wake of the events of 13-14 October. Among them was Dany Chamoun, chairman of the National Liberal Party, who was killed, along with his wife and two young sons, by unknown gunmen wearing military fatigues at their home in Baabda in East Beirut on 21 October. Chamoun also headed the New Lebanese Front, a coalition of groups which had supported General Aoun. No official investigation of these killings is known to have been carried out.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In October, Amnesty International urged both the Lebanese and Syrian Governments to establish a thorough, independent and impartial inquiry into the extrajudicial executions of soldiers and civilians by Syrian troops on 13-14 October. The organization also urged both governments to ensure the physical safety of all those in the custody of Lebanese and Syrian government forces, and to ensure that detainees were either given a fair and prompt trial or released. The Lebanese authorities responded in

November denying the allegations of extrajudicial executions and expressing regret at "the possible loss of life during military action", thereby implying that killings had only occurred in the course of armed conflict. This does not appear to have been the case. There has been no response from the Syrian authorities.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters:

(to be adapted according to whether you are writing to the Lebanese or Syrian authorities)

- repeating concern about reports of extrajudicial executions in East Beirut and its suburbs and referring to some of the cases mentioned above;
- urging both the Lebanese and Syrian Governments to investigate immediately and impartially these reports, and to make public the findings of such inquiries;
- calling for any persons found responsible for the killings to be brought to justice;
- seeking assurances that all prisoners held in Lebanon and Syria are fully protected from possible torture, ill-treatment or execution, and requesting information about the number of those held and their places of detention;
- calling on the authorities to publish a complete list of all those taken captive or arrested in mid-October 1990 and still imprisoned, and to allow them to receive visits from relatives and representatives of independent humanitarian organizations.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency President
Hafez al-Assad
Presidential Palace
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: PRESPL 419160 SY

His Excellency 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam
Vice President
Office of the President
Presidential Palace
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Vice-President Khaddam, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: PRESPL 419160 SY

His Excellency Lt Gen Mustafa Tlas
Deputy Premier and Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
Omayyad Square
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Telegrams: Defence Minister, Damascus, Syria
Telexes: 411082 SIGCOR SY; 411371 FERMOD SY; 411500 PADAR SY

His Excellency President Elias Hrawi

Office of the President
Beirut
The Lebanese Republic

Telegrams: President Hrawi, Beirut, Lebanon

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Syria and Lebanon in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 March 1991.