

PRIORITY

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UA 333/91 Fear of Torture/Execution 10 October 1991

Saudi Arabia Muhammad al-Fasi

On 2 October 1991 Muhammad al-Fasi, a Saudi Arabian businessman, was detained by Jordanian security forces at the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman, Jordan. Jordanian officials have been quoted in press reports saying that he was subsequently handed over to the Saudi Arabian authorities, who had asked for his extradition. Unconfirmed reports suggest that this took place at al-Haditha crossing on the Saudi-Jordanian frontier. In press interviews, officials of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Jordan have denied knowledge of his forcible return. According to reports received by Amnesty International, Muhammad al-Fasi is currently detained at a secret location in Riyadh. It is feared that he is at risk of being tortured and also at risk of execution.

During the Gulf crisis, Muhammad al-Fasi was critical of the Saudi Arabian Government. He broadcast his views from a radio station, the "Voice of the People of Najd and Hijaz", which was transmitting from Baghdad. He also issued press releases and made public statements calling for reforms and democracy in Saudi Arabia. In the aftermath of the Gulf war, he established a fund to send humanitarian aid to Iraq.

Muhammad al-Fasi was in Amman on a visit with his family. He is 38 years old and has seven children. He is related to the ruling al-Saud family through the marriage of one of his sisters to Prince Turki bin 'Abd al-'Aziz, brother of King Fahd bin 'Abd al-'Aziz. However, the Saudi Arabian Government has apparently been seeking to arrest him because of his political activities.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned at the apparent unacknowledged detention of Muhammad al-Fasi in Saudi Arabia. The organization believes he may be at risk of torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, and is calling on the Saudi Arabian authorities to clarify his fate and whereabouts, and provide assurances that he will not be ill-treated or executed. Amnesty International opposes the ill-treatment of prisoners and the death penalty in all circumstances.

Amnesty International is also seeking clarification from the Jordanian authorities as to the reasons for their apparent summary expulsion of Muhammad al-Fasi to Saudi Arabia. It is also asking the Jordanian authorities what assurances they sought or obtained from the Saudi Arabian authorities that he would not be subjected to human rights violations in Saudi Arabia. Amnesty International opposes the expulsion of people to countries where they may be at risk of being imprisoned as prisoners of conscience or subjected to torture, "disappearance" or execution.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

-expressing concern at reports that Muhammad al-Fasi is held in unacknowledged detention in Saudi Arabia following his forcible return from Jordan and seeking clarification of his current whereabouts;

- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely and that he will not be executed;

-urging that he be allowed immediate and regular access to a lawyer, family members and an independent doctor;

-requesting clarification of the legal basis of his apparent detention and urging that he be freed unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

The Custodian **Custodian of the Two Holy** of the Two Holy Shrines
Shrines
King Fahd bin 'Abd al-'Aziz
Head of State, Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines and Prime Minister
Office of His Majesty the King
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: King Fahd bin 'Abd al-'Aziz, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Telexes: 403370 GUESTP SJ or 403260 NASRIA SJ
405000 MFA SJ; 405920 DIPLO SJ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

Faxes: + 966 1 402 3707 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

His Royal Highness **Your Royal Highness**
Prince Naif bin 'Abd al-'Aziz
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: Minister Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Telexes: 404416 DMMOI SJ (Riyadh)
603788 AMN SJ (Jeddah)**

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia and Jordan in your country.

SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 November 1991.