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Trade Unionists Action 1992



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Amnesty International
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1 Easton Street
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United Kingdom

February 1992

TRADE UNIONISTS ACTION 1992

Workers, peasants and trade unionists are among the thousands of prisoners of conscience and victims of torture and execution throughout the world today. Many have been imprisoned or ill-treated for the peaceful exercise of their human rights, including basic trade union rights.

Detained worldwide in countries of differing ideologies, many have neither been tried nor sentenced. They may endure long years of imprisonment not knowing from one day to the next whether they will be released - or in some cases taken for execution. Others suffer precisely because they do know when they are going to die: they have been sentenced to death and the state has told them the exact date and method of execution.

Many political prisoners are leading public figures, but the great majority are ordinary men and women who have no one who can speak up for them - either at home or abroad. Their deeply held convictions, their commitment to trade union ideals or their simple misfortune at being in the wrong place at the wrong time can lead to their arrest, torture, "disappearance" or death.

The Amnesty International (AI) movement was created 30 years ago to prevent these people and others like them becoming "forgotten" victims. Its membership bases its actions on accurate information gathered by the International Secretariat and encourages other individuals and organizations to take action on AI's concerns. AI has from the outset received the support of existing human rights and trade union organizations which have acted on AI appeals to defend imprisoned workers around the world.

Today, given the importance of international solidarity, our key task is to get even more people to work in their own way for these same victims. We believe that it is only by mobilizing mass support that we can hope to protect those individuals in need of help.

Amnesty International is urging its membership and the worldwide trade union movement to take action on these cases, particularly on the occasion of International Labour Day on 1 May 1992. Appeals sent to the authorities

will both help the individuals concerned and remind governments that no one is forgotten.

SUDAN

Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi
Muawia Umran

Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi, a foundry worker who is the president of the banned Sudan Mint Workers' trade union, was reportedly arrested for his political activities in the third week of November 1991 in Khartoum. He was previously detained as a prisoner of conscience between November 1989 and May 1991. Another worker, Mauwia Umran, and two other men were reportedly arrested around the same time, apparently in connection with the circulation of opposition pamphlets in Khartoum. In early 1992 all four men were believed to be held without charge or trial in secret detention centres, known in Sudan as "ghost houses".

There is serious concern that Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi and the other men are at risk of torture, which is routine in "ghost houses". By mid-1991 Amnesty International had been able to confirm the torture in "ghost houses" of more than 60 people arrested since November 1989 by members of a security service known as "the Security of the Revolution". One of their victims, Ali Fadul,

Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi

a medical doctor, died as a result of torture on 22 April 1990. There have been recent reports that prisoners arrested in late August 1991 in connection with an alleged coup attempt were hung by their wrists, routinely whipped and beaten with rubber truncheons. Many trade union activists have been held since 1989. Along with other political detainees many of them have suffered from ill health and have been denied adequate medical care. One prisoner, Abdel-Moneim Salman, who was the president of the Secondary School Teachers' Union, is reported to have died in Kober Prison in Khartoum on 23 January 1991. He was reportedly denied adequate medical treatment while detained in Shalla Prison near the town of al-Fasher in Darfur, where conditions are extremely harsh. He was later admitted to the Military Hospital in Omdurman and then returned to Kober Prison in Khartoum where he died.

The current Sudan Government came to power in a military coup on 30 June 1989. Following the submission of a memorandum to the new military government by trade unions and professional associations on 31 July 1989, a month after the take-over, the authorities arrested numerous prominent trade union activists. The memorandum protested against government infringements of trade union rights and asked the authorities to allow trade unions to help draft a new law on trade unions which was being prepared. Eight trade unionists were immediately arrested. The authorities later formed new government-controlled trade unions and created new "steering committees" to replace the former leaders

of the banned unions. Many members of these committees were National Islamic Front sympathisers and supporters of the government which seized power in June 1989.

Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi was previously arrested five months after the coup on 22 November 1989 and held without charge or trial until May 1991. In April 1991 the Sudan Government announced an amnesty for "all political prisoners". This led to the release of Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi and 298 other prisoners of conscience, many of whom had been detained without charge or trial since shortly after the 30 June 1989 coup. However, not all prisoners of conscience and political prisoners were in fact freed. Since April 1991 there have been new arrests of government opponents and a number of those released in the amnesty have been rearrested. In early 1992 at least 40 prisoners of conscience were in prison. In addition large numbers of people have been held incommunicado for short periods of time in "ghost houses" where they have been tortured.

PLEASE WRITE to the Sudan authorities

- expressing concern at the reported imprisonment of Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi and Muawia Umrans who Amnesty International believes may be prisoners of conscience;
- expressing concern at reports of their continuing detention without charge or trial in "ghost houses" and fear that they may be being tortured;
- seeking assurances that they are being humanely treated and that they have access to their families, lawyers and any necessary medical attention;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to trial.
- express concern about the way trade unionists have been selected as victims of human rights violations on account of their peaceful opposition to the government or their past political activities, and urging the release of all trade unionists imprisoned in Sudan on account of the peaceful expression of their opinions.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Lieutenant General
Omar Hassan al-Bashir
Head of State and Chairman of the NSRCC
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Your Excellency

Telegrams: Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan
Telex: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

Brigadier-General al-Zubeir Mohamed Saleh
Minister of the Interior
and Deputy Chairman of the NSRCC
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Dear Brigadier-General

Telegrams: Brig-Gen al-Zubeir Mohamed Saleh, Khartoum, Sudan
Telex: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Brigadier Ahmad Mahmoud Hassan
Minister of Justice and Attorney-General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan

Dear Brigadier

Telegrams: Brig Ahmad Mahmoud Hassan, Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Copies to:

Mr Jalal Ali Lutfi
Chief Justice
Law Courts
Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Ali Sahloul
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO BOX 873
Khartoum, Sudan

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan in your country.

COLOMBIA

Juan Alberto Garay

The body of teacher Juan Alberto Garay was found early in the morning of 24 October 1991 in the municipality of Belén de Umbría, Risaralda department. His hands were bound and his body showed signs of torture and gunshot wounds.

Juan Alberto Garay had last been seen alive on 20 October when according to eye-witnesses he was bound and taken from the community of Alegrías, Quinchía municipality by five unidentified individuals. A Chilean who had taken Colombian nationality, he had worked in Risaralda department since 1977. At the time of his death he was working as a teacher at the school "Colegio de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores" in Quichía. Before he was killed he had reportedly received death threats.

According to information received by Amnesty International from the Colombian Presidential Adviser on Human Rights, a preliminary investigation into the killing of Juan Alberto Garay has been initiated by the Criminal Instruction Court 16, Juzgado 16 de Instrucción Criminal of Belén de Umbría. As yet, no one has been charged.

In an unrelated incident, a week before Juan Alberto Garay's body was found, an envelope had been pushed under the door of the headquarters of the teachers' union of Santander department, Sindicato de Educadores de Santander (SES) in Bucaramanga, containing death threats against the union's General Secretary, David Florez Gonzalez, and three other members of the SES.

In the department of Arauca death threats in the form of sufragios, invitations to their own funeral mass, have reportedly been received by several teachers, including José Angel Lasso Sierra, President of the Arauca Teachers Association, Asociación de Educadores del Arauca (ASEDAR), union official Urbano Barreto Arenas and treasurer Enrique Pertuz.

According to the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights, the death threats against David Flórez González and the three other members of the SES, are being investigated by Criminal Instruction Court 11 of Arauca Juzgado 11 de Instrucción Criminal.

Since 1985 members of the teaching profession in Colombia have increasingly been targets for paramilitary "death squads" operating with the support or acquiescence of the Colombian armed forces. According to the national teachers' union Federación Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE), 53 teachers were killed in 1991 and approximately 250 received threats to their lives. FECODE expressed the concern that until now all investigations into killings of and threats against these teachers have been closed in the courts without convictions.

While Amnesty International welcomes the investigations, there is concern that although many such investigations are opened in Colombia, only exceptionally do they lead to the identification and prosecution of those responsible for the human rights violation.

PLEASE WRITE to the Colombian authorities,

- expressing concern at the killing of Juan Alberto Garay;
- welcoming the official investigation into the killing and urging that it be thorough and impartial and that the results be made public;
- welcoming the investigation into the death threats against David Flórez González and the other members of the SES and urging that this investigation also be thorough and impartial and the results made public;
- urging the authorities to take all possible measures to protect the lives of teachers and trade unionists to ensure that they are able to carry out their lawful activities in safety.

Appeals to:

President César Gaviria
Palacio de Nariño
Santa Fé de Bogotá
Colombia

Advocate for the People
Dr Jaime Córdoba Triviño
Defensor del Pueblo
Carrera 5, No. 15-80
Santa Fé de Bogotá
Colombia

Dr Orlando Melo
Consejero Presidencial para la Defensa,
Protección y Promoción de los Derechos
Humanos,
Calle 7, No 6-58
Santa Fé de Bogotá
Colombia

Copies to:

FECODE
AA 14373
Santa Fé de Bogotá
Colombia

and to diplomatic representatives of
Colombia in your country.

PERU

Marcela Valdez de la Cruz

Marcela Valdez de la Cruz, a 34-year-old mother of two children, and a teacher and member of the Sindicato Unitario de Trabajadores en la Educación del Perú (SUTEP), Educational Workers Trade Union of Peru, was reportedly detained by members of security forces on 17 May 1991 on leaving her home in the La Magdalena area of the city of Ayacucho, Ayacucho department. Reports indicated that she was transferred to Los Cabitos military barracks, but the armed forces denied that she was being held there. Her whereabouts remain unknown.

The teachers union of which Marcela Valdez de la Cruz is a member initiated a strike for wage increases on 8 May 1991. The Minister of Labour decreed the strike illegal and all applications to hold public demonstrations were denied.

After the strike began there were numerous reports from different parts of the country, describing detentions, torture and apparent extrajudicial executions of teachers by the police and the army.

In a communication by SUTEP to Amnesty International, the trade union claimed three of its members were killed by members of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), including a former prisoner of conscience adopted by Amnesty International, Porfirio Suni Quispe, on 13 May 1991 in Juliaca, Puno department.

For the last nine years Amnesty International has received numerous reports of incommunicado and unacknowledged detentions from Peru, some of which have led to "disappearances". Most of them have occurred in rural areas and have been carried out by uniformed members of the security forces, who often refuse to acknowledge the detentions. Many of those detained by the armed forces "disappear" indefinitely; others are released after days or weeks in secret custody, during which time they may be subjected to torture. The armed forces as a rule never acknowledge having held prisoners prior to their transfer to the police. This is a major contributing factor to the continuing practices of torture and "disappearance".

Human rights violations take place in a context of increasingly violent activities by armed opposition groups, especially Sendero Luminoso which has claimed responsibility for hundreds of execution-style killings of government officials, leaders of political parties, development workers, members of religious orders and members of peasant communities believed to have cooperated with the armed forces.

PLEASE WRITE to the Peruvian authorities

- urging the authorities to provide information about the present circumstances and whereabouts of Marcela Valdez de la Cruz;
- expressing concern that she may have been detained for her peaceful exercise of the right to strike;
- requesting that she be brought before a competent judicial authority and charged with a recognizable offence;

- requesting that she be given immediate access to a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Public Ministry.

Appeals to:

Presidente Alberto Fujimori
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Gobierno
Plaza de Armas

Lima 1

PERU

Telex: 20167 PE PALACIO

General EP Victor Malca Villanueva
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa

Avenida Boulevard s/n

Monterrico

Lima 33

PERU

Tx: 25438 COMGREGJ

Fernando Guillen Salas
Embajador
Subsecretaría de Política Multilateral
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Jr. Ucayali 363

Lima 1

PERU

Tx: (attn. Sr. Subsecretario) 20142; 20165; 20467

(Subsecretary of Multilateral Policy)

Please send copies of your letters to the diplomatic representatives of Peru in your country.

CHINA

Zhang Qiwang

Zhang Qiwang has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He was arrested on 8 June 1989 and was officially described as a "key member" of the Autonomous Union of Shanghai Workers, and an 'entrepreneur'. He and nine other members of the union were accused of "spreading rumours, putting together an organization and inciting people to overthrow the government". In a reply to the Committee on Freedom of Association of the International Labour Office (ILO) the government of China announced on 20 May 1991 that Zhang Qiwang had been sentenced to three years' imprisonment. No further details were available.

According to an official report on his arrest broadcast by Shanghai radio on 9 June 1989, Zhang Qiwang and "his followers" took part in a demonstration on the Shanghai Bund, and incited several thousand people to seize the bodies of victims, killed in an accident, from hospital mortuaries and "tried" to parade the bodies to "create further turmoil". This probably refers to an incident in which six people who organized a sit-in at a railway junction in Shanghai, as part of the pro-democracy demonstrations in June 1989, were run over by a train and killed.

Amnesty International is concerned that Zhang Qiwang has been sentenced for his involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy protests and that he may be a prisoner of conscience detained for the peaceful exercise of his fundamental human rights.

PLEASE WRITE to the Chinese authorities

- expressing concern that Zhang Qiwang has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment for his involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy protests and that he may be a prisoner of conscience detained for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights;
- urging the authorities to provide information about the circumstances and whereabouts of Zhang Qiwang;
- asking for details about the trial and the charges against Zhang Qiwang: whether the trial was open, where it took place, and request a transcript of the trial. Ask whether Zhang Qiwang was afforded full rights in accordance with agreed international standards for fair trial.

Appeals to:

SHI Zhusan Jianchazhang
Shanghaishi Renmin Jianchayuan
Shanghaishi
People's Republic of China

[Chief Procurator SHI Zhusan
Shanghai Municipal People's
Procuratorate
Shanghai Municipality
People's Republic of China]

HUANG Ju Shizhang
Shanhaishi Renmin Zhengfu
Shanghaishi
People's Republic of China

[Mayor HUANG Ju
Shanghai Municipal People's Government
Shanghai Municipality
People's Republic of China]

PHILIPPINES

Edilberto, Haydee and Mary Grace Bensen

Edilberto Bensen, his pregnant wife Haydee and their 10-year-old daughter Mary Grace were shot by unidentified armed men believed to be members of the 61st Infantry Battalion of the Philippines Army on 28 August 1991 in Hacienda Wawa, barangay Santa Rosa, Murcia, Negros Occidental. Edilberto and Haydee Bensen were both involved in lawful trade union activities, and this was widely believed to have been the reason for their killings.

A neighbour reported that two masked armed men and about 20 others arrived at the Bensens' home at around 9pm. They ordered Edilberto Bensen to come out. When he did he was met with a burst of gunfire and was hit in the chest and legs. His wife and daughter rushed downstairs and were also shot dead. Haydee Bensen's head was said to have been blown off.

The military claimed that the family had been killed by New People's Army (NPA) members because of Edilberto Bensen's alleged involvement with a local Civilian Volunteer Self-Defense Organization (CVO), a locally-based militia unit. However, family and friends have denied that Edilberto had joined the CVO. Members of the local community believe that trade union membership was more likely to have been the motive for the killings. Edilberto Bensen was a district leader of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) and his wife was a member of the Kilusang Manggagawa sang Kababayan-an, The Association of Women Workers. To Amnesty International's knowledge at the end of January 1992 no official investigation had been initiated into the killings of the three members of the Bensen family.

NFSW-FGT workers marching at the funeral of one of their members, killed by the military in July 1990

Amnesty International is concerned about a continuing pattern of serious human rights violations against trade unionists in the Philippines. Victims have predominantly been those accused by the authorities of sympathy with the armed insurgency or members of unions

alleged to be "fronts" for the outlawed Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA). Members of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), May First Movement, a national trade union, and the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW), a KMU-affiliate, have been particularly at risk. The KMU and NFSW have been among the most active and vocal critics of the present government. Military allegations of KMU and NFSW members' involvement in the illegal opposition have sometimes been used to justify the curtailment of lawful trade union activities.

Violations against trade unionists have included extrajudicial executions by members of government and government-backed forces. Trade union members and activists have been among the victims of arbitrary arrest and "disappearance". A number of prominent trade unionists have also been sentenced in trials which may not have been fair and some would be considered prisoners of conscience if detained on the charges they currently face. Amnesty International believes that all workers should be free to carry out peaceful and lawful trade union activities without fear of being subjected to human rights violations by government or government-backed forces.

During the immediate post-1986 period, the new government expressed its commitment to the protection of human rights and this was borne out by a decrease in human rights violations and the introduction of a number of judicial and other safeguards. Since early 1987, however, when negotiations between the government and the insurgents collapsed, this commitment appears to have been eroded. Unarmed civilians, particularly those involved in trade union, social, community or human rights activities, have suffered serious human rights violations. These have been justified in terms of the government's "total approach" (sometimes called the "total war" approach) to counter-insurgency, which has involved efforts to weaken selected civilian organizations as well as the armed elements of the insurgency movement.

When violence has erupted, during strikes or in the course of longer disputes, government and military authorities have tended to focus attention on the violence committed by members of the armed opposition, to the exclusion of the serious violations known to have been perpetrated by government or government-backed forces. Militant unions have been unequivocally condemned by government and military authorities and accused of a deliberate policy of violent action or collaboration with the NPA. These accusations, which often result in trade unionists becoming targets in the counter-insurgency campaign, have been accompanied by calls for the "communist" unions to be banned. The government response to alleged opposition abuse is in marked contrast to its apparent reluctance to take effective action to control police, military and unofficial armed forces, or to bring those suspected of human rights violations to justice.

PLEASE WRITE to the Philippines authorities

- expressing concern about the deaths of Edilberto Bensen, Haydee Bensen and Mary Grace Bensen on 28 August 1991;
- urging that an official investigation into the killings of the family be initiated, that those found responsible are identified and brought to justice;

- expressing concern about continuing violations against trade unionists in the Philippines;
- stating that all workers should be free to carry out peaceful and lawful trade union activities without fear of being subjected to human rights violations by government or government-backed forces.

Appeals to:

Silvestre H Bello III
Secretary of Justice
Department of Justice
Padre Faura Street
Ermita, Manila
PHILIPPINES

Ruben Torres
Secretary of Labor and Employment
Executive DOLE Building
Inframuros
Manila
PHILIPPINES

Please send copies of your letters to the diplomatic representatives of the Philippines in your country.

SRI LANKA

S B S D Pathirana

S B S D Pathirana was taken away by six armed men travelling in a Pajero jeep from his home at Wanathamulla, Borella, Colombo 8 around midnight of 10 December 1989. The abductors were dressed in civilian clothes, but eye-witnesses believe they were army personnel. Despite numerous appeals to the authorities, including the then Minister of State for Defence and the Speaker of Parliament, his relatives were not able to establish his fate or whereabouts.

In late 1991, Pathirana's father received a message from an unofficial source within the army that his son was detained at Punani Army Camp, but when he tried to visit him there, officials at the camp stated that there was no person by that name detained there.

Pathirana, aged 24, is a member of the Janaraja Health Workers' Union (JHWU) and had been active as secretary of the branch at Jayawardenapura hospital where he worked as a hospital labourer. Approximately six months before his "disappearance" he had, together with the president of the JHWU branch, Somaweera, organized a three-day strike at the hospital to push demands for more trade union rights. The Jayawardhenapura hospital was a newly established hospital and the management is said to have tried to curtail trade union activities among its staff. Somaweera "disappeared" on the same day as Pathirana but Amnesty International has no further details about him.

During the period mid-1987 till early 1990, thousands of people "disappeared" in the south of Sri Lanka. These "disappearances" occurred in the context of large scale counter-insurgency operations by the security forces against members and sympathizers of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), People's Liberation Front. This armed opposition group also contributed to the atmosphere of terror at the time by imposing unofficial "curfews", threatening to kill those who refused to participate in strikes, and mounting a campaign of assassinations of candidates in the elections, gunning down those they considered to be traitors to their cause and openly displaying their bodies as a warning to others. But members or supporters of other parties and groups such as trade unions were also targeted by the military in its counter-insurgency program, in many cases as a result of private disputes in which the security forces acted arbitrarily for one side under the cover of anti-subversive operations.

In January 1992, the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances announced that it had recorded up to 12,000 cases of "disappearances" in Sri Lanka since 1983. In a report on a visit to Sri Lanka by three of its members, it said that this was "by far the highest number ever recorded by the Working Group for any single country". It recommended that the government should remove the time limit of the mandate of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Involuntary Removal of Persons to allow consideration of cases of "disappearances" that occurred prior to 11 January 1991, when the Commission was established. Amnesty International made the same recommendation to the government in a report published in September 1991. To date, out of a total of 32 recommendations made by Amnesty International, this is one of the two which the government has not accepted.

"Disappearances" continue to be reported from all parts of Sri Lanka. Since June 1990, when fighting broke out between the security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the northeast of Sri Lanka, thousands of extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" have been reported from that area.

PLEASE WRITE to the Sri Lankan authorities:

- expressing grave concern at the "disappearance" of S B S D Pathirana and urging a full and impartial investigation of the circumstances leading to his "disappearance" and reports of his detention by the Army;
- urging that if he is detained he should not be ill treated, and that he should be given access to his family and a lawyer, and charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released;
- expressing concern that he may have been detained for the peaceful expression of the right to strike and for pursuing other trade union rights;
- expressing concern about the thousands of "disappearances" reported in Sri Lanka over the last 10 years and urging the government to demonstrate conclusively that it will not permit members of the security forces and other officials to continue to commit grave human rights violations with impunity.

Appeals to:

His Excellency
President R Premadasa
Presidential Secretariat
Republic Square
Colombo 1, Sri Lanka

The Hon Ranil Wickramasinghe
Minister of Industries, Science and
Technology
Ministry of Industries
48 Sri Jinaratana Road
Colombo 2
Sri Lanka

The Hon (Mrs) Renuka Herath
Minister of Health and Women's Affairs
Ministry of Health
5th Floor, Inland Revenue Building
Sir Chittampalam A Gardiner Mawatha
PO Box 513
Colombo 2
Sri Lanka

Please send copies of your appeals to the diplomatic representatives of Sri Lanka in your country.

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Amneh 'Abd al-Jabbar Rimawi

The Israeli authorities in the Occupied Territories systematically use interrogation practices which clearly amount to torture or ill-treatment. Methods include beatings all over the body, often concentrated on sensitive areas such as the genitals; hooding with dirty sacks; sleep and food deprivation while held in solitary confinement; prolonged shackling in painful positions; and confinement in small, dark cells known as "closets" or, when kept cold, "refrigerators".

Amneh 'Abd al-Jabbar Rimawi was reportedly ill-treated during interrogation during November and December 1991. She is the Deputy Chair of the General Federation of Trade Unions in the West Bank (GFTU) and Head of the Labour Studies Centre (LFC) in Ramallah. A 34-year-old mother of three from Ramallah, she reportedly suffers from kidney stones for which she receives medication.

Amneh 'Abd al-Jabbar Rimawi

Amneh Rimawi was arrested and taken for interrogation on 12 November 1991 after reporting to the Moscobiyyah Detention Centre in Jerusalem where she had been summoned. She was kept in solitary confinement until 29 November during which time she is said to have been shackled to a chair and hooded, over several days. At a court hearing on 27 November, the judge refused to release her on bail and ordered that her detention be extended for a further 30 days. She was prevented from seeing a lawyer until 28 November.

On 10 December 1991 Amneh Rimawi was moved for three days of additional interrogation to Hebron (al-Khalil) Prison, where there are apparently no facilities for women prisoners. As a result, in between her interrogation sessions, which numbered four or five daily, she is said to have been kept in a toilet, except for periods when she was kept shackled and hooded outside in the prison yard. On 13 December she was returned to the Moscobiyyah Detention Centre.

At a court session believed to have taken place on 19 January 1992 Amneh Rimawi was charged with possession of a firearm, apparently on the basis of third party confessions. She has denied the charge. She is currently awaiting trial, for which no date has yet been set, in Hasharon Prison.

Amnesty International is urging the authorities to investigate the reports of ill-treatment of Amneh Rimawi, to make public the details of any such investigation, and to bring anyone found responsible to justice. It urges that she be given a fair trial without delay, if she is not to be released. It is also seeking assurances that Amneh Rimawi is receiving all appropriate medical treatment while in detention.

PLEASE WRITE to the Israeli authorities

- urging that an investigation be carried out into the allegations of ill-treatment of Amneh Rimawi, that the details of any such investigation be made public, and that anyone found responsible be brought to justice;
- requesting that she be brought to trial without delay if she is not to be released;
- seeking assurances that Amneh Rimawi is receiving all appropriate medical treatment while in detention;

Appeals to:

Moshe Arens
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
7 "A" Street
Hakiriya
Tel Aviv 67659
Israel

Yitzhak Shamir
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street
Hakiriya
Jerusalem 91919
Israel

Telex: 371434 MOD IL
337129 MISIT IL
Fax: +972 3 217915

Telex: 25279 MPRES IL
Fax: +972 2 358491

Copies to:

Judge Yusef Harish
Attorney General
PO Box 1087
Jerusalem

and to the Israeli Embassy in your country.

Please send copies of your letters, marked FOR INFORMATION ONLY, to as many of the following as possible:

al-Haq
PO Box 1413
Ramallah
West Bank
Via Israel

Palestine Human Rights Information
Centre
PO Box 20479
Jerusalem
Israel

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel
PO Box 8273
Jerusalem
Israel

General Federation of Trade Unions in the
West Bank
PO Box 57
Nablus
West Bank
Via Israel

Labour Studies Centre
PO Box 1555
Ramallah
West Bank
Via Israel

Centre for Trade Union Rights
PO Box 20224
Jerusalem
Israel

Houcine el Manouzi

Houcine el Manouzi "disappeared" in November 1972. He was a trade union activist in the Union marocaine du travail (UMT), Moroccan Labour Union, and belonged to a family with a history of political opposition to the government. Born in 1943 in Tafraout, he became an aeroplane mechanic, but in 1963 was dismissed from Royal Air Maroc (RAM), where he was working as an apprentice, allegedly because of his trade union activities. He was also an active member of the Union Nationale des Forces Populaires, National Union of Popular Forces, a socialist party.

After his dismissal from the RAM he emigrated to Belgium, where he worked as a mechanic at Sabena, the Belgian national airline, and continued his trade union activities. In 1971 he was sentenced to death *in absentia* in a major political trial in Marrakech after conviction on charges of plotting against internal state security.

Houcine el Manouzi

The trial was condemned as grossly unfair by Amnesty International observers who concluded that the majority of the accused could not be associated with the crimes for which they were tried. He subsequently went to live in Libya.

The following year, on 1 November 1972, while on a visit to Tunis, Houcine El Manouzi "disappeared". There were allegations that he had been kidnapped by Moroccan police agents in Tunis and returned to Morocco. For three years nothing more was heard of him. Then, suddenly, in July 1975 his picture appeared on "wanted" posters displayed in Moroccan police stations and the police raided houses of his relatives. It transpired that he had indeed been held in secret detention and had escaped with other "disappeared" detainees, including three brothers, Midhat René Bourequat, Bayazid Jacques Bourequat and Ali Auguste Bourequat. A week later he was apparently recaptured. Since then there has been no definite news of him. Amnesty International has been seeking information on his whereabouts and legal status from the Moroccan authorities since 1975 but has not received any reply.

During 1991 the Moroccan government took a number of positive steps to improve its human rights record. On 13 June it was reported that King Hassan II had granted an amnesty to Western Saharans who had supported the Polisario Front. Over 200 "disappeared" Western Saharans, held by the Moroccan authorities in secret detention centres for up to 15 years, were released. In September the detention centre at Tazmamert was demolished, and over 20 prisoners held incommunicado there for 18 years were released. And on 30 December came the release of the three brothers who had escaped with Houcine el Manouzi in 1975 after having been "disappeared" since 1973. They were immediately recaptured after their escape and for the last 10 years of their detention had been held in the secret Tazmamert centre.

PLEASE WRITE to the Moroccan authorities

- expressing concern about the continued "disappearance" of Houcine el Manouzi, whose whereabouts have not been known since 1972;
- urging the authorities to set up an inquiry into the events of his "disappearance" and his subsequent fate;
- asking that he be immediately and unconditionally released.

Appeals to:

Sa Majesté
King Hassan II
Bureau de Sa Majesté le Roi
Palais Royal
Rabat
Morocco

Telex: 31744 or 32908

Driss Basri
Ministère de l'Intérieur
et de l'Information
Quartier Administratif
Rabat
Morocco

Telex: 36161, 36731, 36969 ProCivile
Rabat

Please send copies of your letters to diplomatic representatives of Morocco in your country.