

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety / torture / possible "disappearance"

26 April 2001

**SYRIA**

**Hussain Daoud, aged 30**

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Hussain Daoud, an asylum seeker who was forcibly returned to Syria, has been held incommunicado since he was arrested by Syrian security forces. He has reportedly been tortured, and Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

Hussain Daoud, a Syrian Kurd, was forcibly returned to Syria on 10 December 2000 after the German authorities rejected his asylum application. He was reportedly arrested by the State Security Force (*Amn al-dawla*) when he arrived at Damascus Airport. He was initially brought to State Security detention centre No. 285, where he was apparently questioned about his and other Kurdish activists' activities in Germany. He has since been held at various detention centres in Damascus and al-Qamishli in northern Syria, and has been interrogated and tortured continually. According to unconfirmed reports, he was hospitalized about a month ago after he suffered a nervous breakdown as a result of torture. His current whereabouts are unknown.

The authorities have not acknowledged Hussain Daoud's detention, but some acquaintances of his reportedly saw him at State Security Detention centre No. 285 in March. They were not allowed to speak with him. His family have made numerous enquiries with the authorities, but have been unable to see him or find out where he is being held.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Hussain Daoud applied for asylum in Braunschweig, Germany on 18 January 1996. His asylum claim was rejected by the German authorities in all instances. He was reportedly politically active while in Germany, and took part in demonstrations organised by Syrian exiled groups in front of the Syrian embassy.

Political detainees are routinely tortured or ill-treated in Syria, particularly during periods of interrogation. Throughout the years, scores of people have reportedly "disappeared" after being arrested by Syrian security forces.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Arabic or your own language:**

- asking where Hussain Daoud is being held, and urging that he is treated humanely and allowed access to medical care, his family and a lawyer of his choice;
- asking the authorities why he was arrested and whether he has been charged or tried;
- expressing concern at reports that he has been tortured and ill-treated, and calling for an independent and impartial investigation into these allegations.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency  
President Bashar al-Assad

2

Presidential Palace  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Telegrams: President al-Assad, Damascus, Syria**  
**Telexes: 419160 prespl sy**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

His Excellency  
Dr Muhammad Harba  
Minster of the Interior  
Ministry of the Interior  
Merjeh Circle  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic  
**Faxes: + 963 11 222 3428**  
**Telexes: 411016 AFIRS SY**

and to diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 June 2001.