

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 31/020/2007

01 October 2007

Further Information on UA 198/07 (MDE 31/009/2007, 3 August 2007) and follow-ups (MDE 31/014/2007, 13 August 2007; MDE 31/017/2007, 04 September 2007) – Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture/Medical concern

YEMEN Hassan Ahmed Omar Ba'oom (m), aged 66
Brigadier Nasser al-Nouba (m), aged in his 50s
Ahmed al-Qama'a (m)
Nasser al-'Awlaqi (m), aged about 40
'Abbas al-'Assal (m), aged 42
Ahmed 'Omar bin Farid (m)
Ahmed al-Qama'a (m)
Hassan Ba'oom (m)
Fadi Ba'oom (m), son of Hassan Ahmed Omar Ba'oom
Mohsin al-Yazidi (m)
At least seven others

New names: Hashem Abdullah Yehya Hajar (m)
Saleh Sa'id Obran (m)

Hassan Ba'oom and Brigadier Nasser al-Nouba are reportedly gravely ill and being denied adequate medical attention.

Hassan Ba'oom is reported to be in urgent need of specialist medical care. He is having difficulty breathing, and suffers from high blood pressure, diabetes and renal dysfunction. He had open heart surgery **in 2006**.

Brigadier Nasser al-Nouba suffers from heart disease and diabetes. He is reportedly allowed to take the regular medicine that he needs, but has not been allowed the hospital treatment he needs. He is now allowed regular visits by his family, but his lawyer apparently still has no access to him.

Another detainee died on 30 September after he was denied medical treatment. Student Hashem Abdullah Yehya Hajar had been detained for nearly five months, reportedly on suspicion of supporting Shi'a Zaidi cleric Hussain Badr al-Din al-Huthi, who was killed in September 2004 during clashes with government forces. His family repeatedly told the authorities that he was in urgent need of medical attention for chronic liver disease and other ailments but he was only taken to hospital when he was seriously ill, on 29 September at around 9pm. He died eight hours later.

Hassan Ba'oom and about nine other detainees, including his three sons Fadi, Salem and Fawaz, were put on trial on 29 September in the city of al-Mukalla, charged with staging protests without authorization. The court ordered that all should be released on bail except Hassan Ba'oom, but the prosecution has appealed and the men were put into solitary confinement, incommunicado, putting them at risk of torture and ill-treatment. Their families were turned away when they brought food to them for *iftar*, the meal that ends each day's fasting during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

Hassan Ba'oom and Brigadier Nasse al-Nouba are among about a dozen prisoners of conscience held in connection with peaceful demonstrations in southern cities staged since August by retired soldiers from the south. The demonstrators voiced concern that they do not receive the same treatment in employment, salary

and pensions as soldiers from the north of the country. President Ali Abdullah Saleh promised to address their grievances but Amnesty International does not have further details on this.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Most of the retired soldiers are from the army of the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). Following the unification of the country in 1990, the armies of the PDRY (South Yemen) and the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) (North Yemen), were merged into a single army for the new Republic of Yemen. However, following the civil war of 1994, many of the soldiers of the former PDRY were dismissed. They, as well as those who remained in the army, complained of facing discrimination when compared to soldiers originally from the north.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic, English or your own language:

- calling the authorities to ensure that Hassan Ba'oom and Brigadier Nasser al-Nouba are immediately taken to hospital for the medical attention they need;
- urging the authorities to ensure that all those detained in connection with the protests by retired soldiers in August and September are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and given regular access to lawyers of their choosing, their families and any medical treatment they may require;
- calling on the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally if they are held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly;
- expressing concern at reports that Hassan Ba'oom was beaten during arrest, and calling for a prompt and independent investigation.

APPEALS TO:

President

His Excellency General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
President of the Republic of Yemen
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Fax: +967 127 4147

Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

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Minister of Interior

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Minister of Human Rights

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Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 November 2007.