

URGENT ACTION

SENTENCE COMPLETED IN MARCH 2015, STILL IN JAIL

Walid Yunis Ahmad was due to be released on 6 March 2015. He still remains in prison in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq more than a year after having completed his five-year prison sentence. He is being arbitrarily detained and must be released immediately.

Walid Yunis Ahmad, an Iraqi man held for over 16 years, completed his prison sentence on 6 March 2015 but has not been released as scheduled. He continues to be held at the Zirga prison in the city of Dohuk in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I). The authorities have not told him or his family of any new charges brought against him. According to the most recent information available to Amnesty International, his lawyers withdrew from the case after having felt that they had exhausted all legal routes.

Amnesty International has written to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) on two occasions – in May 2015 and March 2016 – asking for the reasons for Walid Yunis Ahmad's continued detention. The authorities have never responded to the enquiry. On 6 June 2016, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) adopted the opinion that the detention of Walid Yunis Ahmad is arbitrary and called on the KRG to immediately release him and provide him with full reparations.

Walid Yunis Ahmad was arrested in February 2000 and spent the first three years of his imprisonment in conditions amounting to enforced disappearance. He continued to be held without charge until 2010, during which period he says he was repeatedly tortured. On 17 March 2011, he was sentenced to five years in prison for "sending orders and instructions from prison to his followers in Kirkuk and Mosul to carry out terrorist attacks in Dohuk in 2009". The court that convicted and sentenced him took into account the time he had spent in pre-trial detention after his investigation started in February 2010, but not the previous 10 years that he had been held without charge. Amnesty International considers that the charge brought against Walid Yunis Ahmad and used to sentence him was fabricated and that he received an unfair trial when convicted in 2011.

Please write immediately in Kurdish, English, Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release Walid Yunis Ahmad immediately;
- Calling for an independent and impartial investigation into his enforced disappearance and allegations of torture, prolonged arbitrary detention, and the apparent fabrication of serious charges against him;
- Calling on them to provide him with full reparations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 AUGUST 2016 TO:

President

Masoud Barzani
Kurdistan Region Presidency
Diwan P.O. BOX 60
Erbil
Iraq
Twitter: @masoud_barzani
Email:
<http://www.presidency.krd/english/contact.aspx?sm=>

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judicial Council

Judge Ahmad Abdullah Zubair
High Judicial Council
Kurdistan Regional Government
Erbil
Iraq
Email: nusinga@kjc.krd
Salutation: Dear Sir

Minister of Interior

Karim Sinjari
Minister of Interior
Kurdistan Regional Government
Erbil
Iraq
Care of Dr Dindar Zebari
Head of the High Committee to Evaluate
and Respond to International Reports
Email: dindar.zebari@krg.org
Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 148/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE14/2016/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Walid Yunis Ahmad was arrested on 6 February 2000 in Erbil, capital of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), by the KRI-I security agency, the Asayish, and subjected to enforced disappearance. For the next three years his family did not know where he was or even whether he was alive.

Walid Yunis Ahmad has said that he was tortured during these three years. After he went on hunger strike in protest, he was kept in solitary confinement. He was then moved between prisons without explanation. He is currently held in Zirga prison in the governorate of Dohuk in the KR-I.

Walid Yunis Ahmad belongs to the minority Turkmen ethnic group in Iraq. Before his arrest he was working as a translator and programme organizer for a local radio and TV station apparently affiliated to an opposition party, the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan. Shortly before his arrest, he had attended a meeting of the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan. Afterwards, he was given a lift in a car which the police stopped and searched. The police claimed they had found explosive material in the car and arrested Walid Yunis Ahmad, who denied any knowledge of the explosives. The driver, who was also arrested, was released three months later.

An Amnesty International delegation visited Walid Yunis Ahmad in prison in June 2010 and has on several occasions raised his case with the relevant KR-I authorities. During a meeting, a senior government official told the delegation that despite not having any formal charges against him, Walid Yunis Ahmad could never be released because he was considered as a dangerous person. Amnesty International has been campaigning on behalf of Walid Yunis Ahmad for over five years.

Name: Walid Yunis Ahmad

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 148/15 Index: MDE 14/4397/2016 Issue Date: 5 July 2016