

URGENT ACTION

ARRESTED AT THE BORDER, WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN
Syrian men Jadia Nofal and Omar al-Sha'ar were arrested by immigration officials on the Syrian side of the Lebanese-Syrian border on 31 October. They have not been heard of since their arrest and there are fears for their well-being.

Jadia Nofal, the Director of the Centre for Democracy and Civil Rights in Syria, and **Omar al-Sha'ar**, a journalist and translator, travelled to Beirut, Lebanon, on 22 October through a regular border crossing. On their way back to the Syrian capital of Damascus the following week, the two men were stopped and held by immigration officials at the Syrian border. According to a local contact, Jadia Nofal and Omar al-Sha'ar were able to contact relatives while they were held at the border, and informed them that they were being handed over to members of the Syrian Political Security, one of several intelligence agencies operating in Syria. Information Amnesty International has received from former detainees indicates that torture and other ill-treatment is rife in detention facilities operated by these agencies.

According to Amnesty International's contact, the authorities have not provided any information about the arrest of the two men. The reasons for their arrest are therefore unknown but both men had previously been arrested as a result of their peaceful activism. Jadia Nofal was sentenced to five years in prison in 1992 as a result of his involvement with the Committees for the Defence of Democratic Freedoms and Human Rights in Syria. Omar al-Sha'ar was previously detained between November 2013 and January 2014 after being involved in peaceful political activities. Amnesty International understands that Omar al-Sha'ar is in ill-health as a result of the detention conditions following his last arrest.

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

- Expressing concern that there has been no news about either of Jadia Nofal and Omar al-Sha'ar since their arrest and urging the Syrian authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts and legal status of the men, and granting them, without delay, access to their families, lawyers and any medical attention they may require;
- Urging them to ensure that they are protected from torture and other ill-treatment;
- Calling on them to release the men if they were detained solely as the result of the legitimate exercise of their human rights to freedom of expression and freedom of association.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 DECEMBER 2014 TO:

Permanent Representative to the UN

Bashar Ja'afari, Ambassador
 Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
 820 Second Avenue, 15th Floor
 New York, NY 10017, USA
 Fax: +1 212 983 4439
 E-mail: exexec.syria@gmail.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

President

Bashar al-Assad
 Fax: +963 11 332 3410 (keep trying)
 (If fax does not go through, please
 include your message to the president in
 an email to the Ambassador, asking for it
 to be forwarded)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

Major General Mohamad Ibrahim al-Shaar
 Fax: +963 11 311 0554
 (If fax does not go through, please
 include your message to the Minister of
 Interior in an email to the Ambassador,
 asking for it to be forwarded)

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.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For an insight into the widespread torture and other ill-treatment in Syria's detention centres, see *I wanted to die: Syria's torture survivors speak out* (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE24/016/2012/en>). Thousands are reported to have died in the custody of the Syrian security forces since unrest began in 2011. Amnesty International documented this practice in the report *Deadly detention: Deaths in custody amid popular protest in Syria* (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE24/035/2011/en>). For further information on detention conditions in some of the branches of Syria's security forces, please also refer to Amnesty International's current campaign against enforced disappearances: <https://campaigns.amnesty.org/campaigns/conflict-in-syria>

Name: Jadia Nofal and Omar al-Sha'ar

Gender m/f: m

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