

URGENT ACTION

TWO WOMEN ARRESTED IN SYRIA

Student Ranim Khalil Ma'touq and human rights lawyer Jihan Amin were arrested by members of the Syrian security forces on 17 February. Their current whereabouts are unknown.

A local contact has told Amnesty International that members of the Syrian security forces arrived at the home of fine arts student **Ranim Khalil Ma'touq** in Sahnaya, near Damascus, and arrested her. They raided the family home, confiscated computers and beat her younger brother, who was present during the arrest. On the same day security forces also came to the house of **Jihan Amin**, who also lives in Sahnaya and arrested her. Amnesty International has received reports that additional people from the same town were also arrested that day.

Both arrested women are associated with prominent Syrian human rights lawyer Khalil Ma'touq, who has been subjected to enforced disappearance by the Syrian authorities since 2 October 2012. Jihan Amin worked with the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research, which was headed by Khalil Ma'touq, and Ranim Khalil Ma'touq is his daughter.

Jihan Amin was recently banned from travelling by Syrian State Security after attending a women's rights workshop in Lebanon. She has defended and worked closely with numerous prisoners of conscience.

The security forces did not give any reasons for the arrest of the two women but it is likely that they are being held for human rights related activities. Families of both women have not been informed about their current whereabouts.

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

- Urging the authorities to reveal the fate and whereabouts of Jihan Amin and Ranim Khalil Ma'touq without delay, and grant them immediate access to their families, lawyers and any medical attention they may require;
- Calling on them to either promptly charge the two women with recognizably criminal offences, or release them;
- Urging them to ensure that Ranim Khalil Ma'touq and Jihan Amin are protected from torture and other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 APRIL 2014 TO:

President

Bashar al-Assad

Fax: +963 11 332 3410 (keep trying)

(If voice answers, say "Fax". Fax is the only reliable communication method; please do not send letters)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

Major General Mohamad Ibrahim al-Shaar

Fax: +963 11 311 0554

(If voice answers, say "Fax". Fax is the only reliable communication method; please do not send letters)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Permanent Representative to the UN

Bashar Ja'afari

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

820 Second Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10017

Fax: +1 212 983 4439

E-mail: exesec.syria@gmail.com

syrianmission@verizonmail.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

Where appropriate, please also send copies to the Syrian and Russian 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 more information on Khalil Ma'touq - Ranim Khalil Ma'touq's father, please see: *Syria: One year on, fears abound over health of disappeared human rights lawyer* (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/syria-one-year-fears-abound-over-health-disappeared-human-rights-lawyer-2013-10-01>) and UA <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE24/006/2013/en>.

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>). Hundreds have died in the custody of the Syrian security forces since the unrest began. 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>).

Although the vast majority of the human rights abuses documented by Amnesty International have been committed by the state's armed forces and pro-government *shabiha* militias, abuses have also been committed by armed opposition groups. This includes the torture and killing of captured members of the security forces and *shabiha* militia as well as the abduction and killing of people known or suspected to support or work with the government and its forces; and the taking of civilians as hostages to try to negotiate prisoner swaps. Amnesty International condemns without reservation such abuses and has called on the leadership of all armed opposition groups in Syria to state publicly that such acts are prohibited and do all in their power to ensure that opposition forces put an immediate stop to them. See *Syria: Summary killings and other abuses by armed opposition groups* (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE24/008/2013/en>).

Name: Ranim Khalil Ma'touq and Jihan Amin
Gender m/f: f

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