

President
His Excellency Bashar al-Assad
Presidential Palace
al-Rashid Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you concerning the case of **Dr. Michel Sa'adey**. More than twenty years ago, on 13 May 1978, Dr. Michel Sa'adey, a Syrian citizen, was arrested by two plainclothes individuals in a jeep in a Damascus street. No one has seen or heard from him since. At the time of Dr. Sa'adey's disappearance, he had just come back to Syria after studying and practicing medicine in France. He was a volunteer at the Muwassat Hospital in Damascus.

Despite numerous requests over the last twenty years, Dr. Sa'adey's family has received absolutely no official information about what happened to him. Amnesty International received reports in 1983 that Dr. Sa'adey was allegedly seen in Tador Prison. Besides not knowing the whereabouts of Dr. Sa'adey, and indeed whether he is alive or dead, the reasons for Dr. Sa'adey's arrest are also a mystery. It is suspected that he was possibly arrested for voicing criticism of the Syrian government.

I am looking for information on why Dr. Sa'adey was arrested and where he is. If he is a prisoner of conscience - detained solely for the nonviolent expression of his beliefs - he should be released immediately and unconditionally. Syria's constitution and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, to which Syria is a party) ensure the right to freedom of expression for all, and the ICCPR also prohibits arbitrary arrest and ensures the right to a fair trial. If Dr. Sa'adey did get a trial, please let us know the details. I am very concerned about Dr. Sa'adey. I urge you to give his family news of his whereabouts immediately and give Dr. Sa'adey access to his family, legal help, and medical attention if needed.

Please let me know any information you have on Dr. Michel Sa'adey. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

cc:

Ambassador Dr Imad Moustapha
Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic
2215 Wyoming Ave. NW
Washington DC 20008