

Minister of Justice
His Excellency Muhammad al-Ghafari
Ministry of Justice
al-Nasr Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic

Your Excellency,

Please, we beg you, help us. This concerns the person of **Dr. Michel Sa'adey**. More than twenty-five 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. Amnesty International received reports in 1983 that Dr. Sa'adey was allegedly seen in Tador Prison, but this report was not confirmed by government officials. 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 thirty years, Dr. Sa'adey's family has received absolutely no official information about what happened to him. 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.

Please investigate and tell us what has happened to Dr. Sa'adey. If he is still held as 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 arrests and ensures the right to a fair trial. If Dr. Sa'adey did get a trial, please let us know the details. In the unfortunate case that it is found that Dr. Sa'adey is dead, please let us know. Any information would be very appreciated and would help bring closure for his family. If you can make inquiries about this case to other government authorities please do so. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

cc:

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