ALEF - Act for Human Rights is deeply concerned by the recent allegations of torture of civilians detained by the Military Court, calling for an immediate inquiry by independent and competent judicial authorities.

In the aftermath of the violent Tayouneh clashes in the Chiyah area of the southern suburb of Beirut on the 14th of October 2021, more than 20 civilians were arrested upon the request of the military prosecutor for their alleged involvement in the clashes. Ten days later, more than 60 individuals were charged with murder, sedition, incitement, possession of unlicensed firearms, and sabotage of public and private properties; of which at least 12 remain detained and have been allegedly tortured and ill-treated during their detention.

Lawyers of the detainees reported that their clients have been deprived of contacting a family member or their legal representatives and of requesting a medical examination, as provided for in Article 47 of the Code of Criminal Procedures.[1] According to the families of those detained, the detainees have also been mistreated and coerced to confess under duress. Furthermore, before they were charged, the detainees had already been held in custody since the 15th of October, beyond the legally permissible 48 hours renewed once.

ALEF - Act for Human Rights is also deeply concerned that civilians are being investigated and tried before a military tribunal, in complete violation of the basic principles of fair trial. The Military Tribunal is a court acting beyond the scope of ordinary law. Suspects should have the right to be tried before a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal in a fair and public hearing. The provision of such guarantees is non-derogable and serves as an essential guarantee to ensure justice and accountability. Lebanon, as signatory to the UN Convention Against Torture, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, should take immediate actions to investigate, prevent, and prosecute acts of torture.

Inaction towards addressing the allegations of torture and the provision of a fair trial is particularly sensitive, as they accompany an escalating political tension and growing unrest between sectarian groups in the area.

ALEF - Act for Human Rights calls on the National Human Rights Commission, inclusive of the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture, to investigate the conditions of detention and allegations made by the families of the detainees and to proceed with the required criminal processes. We also call on the judicial authorities to cease the jurisdiction of the Military Court over the Tayouneh investigation, and to transfer the investigation to the ordinary justice system in pursuit of a fair trial.

[1] MTV Lebanon: "*Ain El Remmane... And the biggest lie we believed!*", https://www.mtv.com.lb/news/محليات/1229923/عين-الرمانة--والكذبة-الأكبر-التي-صدقناها?utm_campaign=magnet