

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 31/004/2009

14 April 2009

UA 100/09
YEMEN

Death Penalty/fear of imminent execution
'Aisha Ghalib, (f) aged about 40

'Aisha Ghalib is at risk of imminent execution. She has exhausted all of the appeals available to her and the death sentence against her has now been ratified by the President. Sources in Yemen have informed Amnesty International that she could be executed as early as 19 April.

'Aisha Ghalib was sentenced to death for the murder of her husband. Amnesty International does not have many details about her trial proceedings except that she was sentenced to death in October 2003, by a primary court. The sentence was confirmed by the appeal court after her case was heard by the appeal court in 2007. In December 2008, the Supreme Court in Sana'a upheld the death sentence. Her execution was scheduled to be carried out on 4 April 2009. It was postponed for two weeks to allow attempts to seek a pardon from the relatives of her husband (under Qisas, the relatives of the victim have the power to seek execution, request diya (compensation) or grant a pardon freely). She is detained in the Central Prison in the capital, Sana'a.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has long-standing concerns about the use of the death penalty in Yemen, particularly as death sentences are often passed after proceedings which fall short of international standards for fair trial. Amnesty International acknowledges the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of recognizably criminal offences, but is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, and as a violation of the right to life.

At least 13 individuals were executed in Yemen in 2008, and hundreds of prisoners are currently detained under sentence of death.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic or English or your own language:

- urging the authorities not to execute 'Aisha Ghalib;
- request that the President commutes 'Aisha Ghalib's death sentence and those of all others who are facing execution;
- acknowledging that the government has a right to bring to justice those responsible for criminal offences, but expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty;
- reminding the authorities that they are bound by international standards for fair trial in capital cases, including the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence.

APPEALS TO:

President

His Excellency General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
Office of the President of the Republic of Yemen
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: + 967 127 4147
Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

His Excellency 'Abdullah al-'Ulufi
Office of the Attorney General
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: + 967 137 4412
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

Her Excellency Houda 'Ali 'Abdullatif al-Baan
Ministry for Human Rights
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: + 967 1 444 8333
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Dr Ghazi Shaif al-Aghbari
Ministry of Justice
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: + 967 1 222 015
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 May.