

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 35/04/96

12 February 1996

Further information on EXTRA 20/96 (AMR 35/03/96, 9 February 1996) - Death Penalty

GUYANA

Ayube Khan
Rockcliffe Ross

Amnesty International has learned with deep regret that Ayube Kahn was hanged on the morning of 12 February 1996 in the first execution to be carried out in Guyana since 1990.

Rockcliffe Ross, who was scheduled to be hanged at the same time as Ayube Khan, was granted a stay of execution on 9 February, pending the outcome of a constitutional appeal to be heard at the high court later this week.

It was reported that no lawyer could be found to file for a stay of execution for Ayube Khan, despite the fact that a high court judge indicated he would be prepared to hear a motion for a stay. The lawyer who represented Khan at his last trial could not be contacted and, as there is no legal aid in Guyana for constitutional appeals, lawyers are reluctant to take on such cases.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- expressing deep regret at the execution of Ayube Khan and thus the resumption of executions in Guyana after more than five years break;
- urging that the death sentence on Rockcliffe Ross be commuted and that no further death warrants be signed;
- urging that, at the very least, no further executions should be carried out pending the outcome of the constitutional motion currently underway on behalf of Noel Thomas and Abdul Saleem Yasseen, which may have implications for others on death row;
- stressing that the resumption of executions is a retrograde step in the protection of human rights for all Guyana's citizens and is contrary to international standards and trends towards abolition of the death penalty;
- making some or all of the following general points about the death penalty: the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishment; it has a brutalizing effect upon all those who are involved in the process; execution is irrevocable and, despite the most stringent judicial safeguards, can be inflicted on the innocent.

APPEALS TO:

H.E. Dr Cheddi D. Jagan
Executive President
Office of the President
New Garden Street
Georgetown, Guyana

Telegrams: Executive President, Georgetown, Guyana

Faxes: +592 2 69969 (if this number does not work, send faxes via the
Head of the Presidential Secretariat at: 592 2
63395, marked for the attention of: H.E. Dr Cheddi
D. Jagan, Executive President)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Bernard De Santos
Attorney General and
Minister of Legal Affairs
Carmichael Street
Georgetown, Guyana
Telegrams: Attorney General, Georgetown, Guyana
Faxes: +592 2 50732
Salutation: The Honourable Bernard De Santos

COPIES TO:

Clement Rohee
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Office of the President
New Garden And South Streets
Georgetown, Guyana
Faxes: +592 2 59192

Guyana Chronicle
Lama Avenue, Bel Air Park
Georgetown, Guyana
Faxes: +592 2 75208

The Stabroek News
46-47 Robb Street
Lacytown
Georgetown, Guyana
Faxes: +592 2 54637

and to diplomatic representatives of Guyana accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.