

PUBLIC

**AI Index: ASA 33/003/2009
1 May 2009**

Further Information on UA 302/08 (ASA 33/025/2008, 31 October 2008) - Death Penalty

PAKISTAN Zulfiqar Ali Khan (m), aged 38

Zulfiqar Ali Khan is at imminent risk of execution as his most recent stay is due to expire on 6 May. He has been granted three stays of execution since October 2008. President Zardari rejected his final mercy petition on 29 September 2008. He is imprisoned at Adiala Central Jail, in the city of Rawalpindi, Punjab province.

Zulfiqar Ali was arrested for murder on 14 April 1998. According to his lawyer Zulfiqar Ali committed the crime in self-defence.

During the 11 years he has been on death row, Zulfiqar Ali has gained a Masters Degree in Political Science and is currently studying for a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. He has also contributed to the education of other inmates. According to his lawyer, Zulfiqar Ali's academic achievements while in prison are commendable and he has been an example of a successfully rehabilitated prisoner.

Zulfiqar Ali is the only surviving parent of his two daughters, aged 10 and 11. His wife died of leukaemia in 2007.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

An estimated 236 people were sentenced to death in Pakistan in 2008, and a total of 36 people were executed. Prime Minister Gilani's announcement on 21 June 2008 that all existing death sentences would be commuted is being considered by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which is to rule on its constitutionality. Sixteen people have been put to death after the Prime Minister's statement.

There are currently more than 7,000 people who are on death row in Pakistan. The former Human Rights Minister, Ansar Burney, stated that 60 to 65 percent of death row prisoners were innocent or "victims of a faulty system".

On 18 December 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on a worldwide moratorium on the use of the death penalty. The former government of Pakistan, under President Pervez Musharraf, voted against the resolution.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases. The death penalty is a symptom of a culture of violence, and not a solution to it. It has not been shown to have any greater deterrent effect than other punishments, and carries the risk of irrevocable error. The death penalty is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and a violation of the right to life, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.

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

- calling on the President Zardari to use his powers under Article 45 of the Constitution to commute the death sentence handed down to Zulfiqar Ali;
- calling on the President Zardari to urgently implement the June 21 proposal to commute death sentences in Pakistan;
- calling for an immediate moratorium on all executions in the country, in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolutions on a moratorium on executions adopted in 2007 and 2008, reinforcing the worldwide trend towards abolition of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

President

Mr Asif Ali Zardari
Pakistan Secretariat
Islamabad
PAKISTAN

**Fax: +92 51 922 1422/ 4768/ 920 1893 or 1835 (Faxes may be switched off outside office hours.
Pakistan is 6 hours ahead of GMT)**

Salutation: Dear President Zardari

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Pakistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.