

PUBLIC

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Fear of imminent execution/death penalty

IRAQ

**Samar Sa'ad 'Abdullah (f), aged about 25
Wassan Talib (f), aged 31
Zeynab Fadhil (f), aged 25
Liqa' Qamar (f), aged 25**

The four women named above have been sentenced to death, and at least one of them is in imminent danger of execution. The president has the power to pardon them, or commute their sentences.

Samar Sa'ad 'Abdullah was sentenced to death by the Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI) on 15 August 2005 for the murder of her uncle, his wife and three of their children in the al-Khudra' district of Baghdad. She reportedly blamed the killings on her fiancé, who, she said, had carried them out in order to rob her uncle. Her fiancé was said to have been arrested, but Amnesty International does not know what charges, if any, have been brought against him. Samar Sa'ad 'Abdullah's death sentence was upheld on appeal, and she is facing imminent execution.

In a separate case, Wassan Talib and Zeynab Fadhil were sentenced to death by the CCCI on 31 August 2006 for the 2005 murder of several members of Iraqi security forces in the Baghdad district of Hay al-Furat. Both women denied they had been involved, and Zeynab Fadhil reportedly claimed that she was abroad at the time of the killings.

Liqa' Qamar was sentenced to death on 6 February 2006 by the CCCI, for a kidnapping which reportedly took place in 2005. Her husband is said to have been detained and accused of the same crime. No further details are available.

All four women are held at Baghdad's al-Kadhimiya Prison. Two have young children with them: Zeynab Fadhil her three-year-old daughter, Liqa' Qamar her one-year-old daughter, who was born in prison.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The interim government of Iraq reinstated the death penalty in August 2004 for several offences, including offences against Iraq's internal security, premeditated murder, drug trafficking and (in certain circumstances) kidnapping. The first three executions were carried out on 1 September 2005, and during 2006 at least 65 men and women were executed. Among them were 27 people reportedly hanged in Baghdad on 6 September, and a further 11 hanged in the city of Arbil on 21 September. Among those executed in 2006 was former president Saddam Hussain. So far this year at least two people are known to have been executed: Saddam Hussain's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, and the former head of the Revolutionary Court, 'Awad Hamad al-Bandar al-Sa'dun. Both men were executed by hanging on 15 January. They had been sentenced to death by the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal in connection with the killing of 148 people from the village of al-Dujail, which had followed an attempted assassination of Saddam Hussain in 1982.

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

- urging the authorities not to carry out the death sentences imposed on Samar Sa'ad 'Abdullah, Wassan Talib, Zeynab Fadhil and Liqa' Qamar;
- expressing concern that Samar Sa'ad 'Abdullah is facing imminent execution;
- asking for details of the exact charges against each of the women;
- calling on the authorities to commute all the death sentences that have been passed since August 2004, and to move from there to a complete abolition of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO: In addition to sending direct appeals as below please also send appeals via the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country, asking them to forward your appeals to:

President

Jalal Talabani

Salutation: Your Excellency

Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

E-mail: iraqigov@yahoo.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Hashim al-Shibli

E-mail: minister@iraqi-justice.org

deputy@iraqi-justice.org

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hoshyar Zebari

E-mail: press@iraqmofa.net

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Iraq accredited to your country. Ask them to send copies to the Human Rights Minister, Wajdan Mikhail.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 March 2007.