

PUBLIC

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Death Penalty

SAUDI ARABIA

Khalid 'Abdul Karim al-Mahamid (m) aged about 48

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A man who was jailed for drug smuggling has had his sentence increased to death, and could be executed at any time.

Khalid al-Mahamid was arrested in Jeddah in April 2006, and charged with drug smuggling. In March 2007 the Jeddah General Court sentenced him to 10 years' imprisonment and 2,000 lashes. However after the Court of Cassation had considered the verdict and returned the case for review, in April 2009 the Jeddah General Court upheld his conviction and increased his sentence to death.

Condemned prisoners in Saudi Arabia may be put to death without being told when their executions are to take place. This means that Khalid al-Mahamid could be at risk of imminent execution.

At least 38 executions are known to have taken place in Saudi Arabia so far this year. In 2008, at least 102 people were executed.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offences. Court proceedings fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by a lawyer, and in many cases are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. They may be convicted solely on the basis of confessions obtained under duress or deception.

In a recent report on the use of the death penalty in Saudi Arabia, Amnesty International highlighted the extensive use of the death penalty as well as the disproportionately high number of executions of foreign nationals from developing countries. For further information please see *Saudi Arabia: Affront to Justice: Death Penalty in Saudi Arabia* (MDE 23/027/2008), published on 14 October 2008:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/saudi-arabia-executions-target-foreign-nationals-20081014>

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

- urging the King to halt the execution of Khalid 'Abdul Karim al-Mahamid;
- calling on the King to commute Khalid 'Abdul Karim al-Mahamid's death sentence, and those of all others under sentence of death in Saudi Arabia as a matter of urgency, with a view to abolishing the death penalty;
- enquiring about what is being done to ensure that Khalid 'Abdul Karim al-Mahamid is able to exercise effectively the rights to judicial review and to seek a pardon;
- reminding the authorities that they should act in accordance with international standards for fair trial, including the UN Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, which state that capital punishment may only be imposed after a fair trial in which the defendant is provided with "adequate legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings."

**APPEALS TO:**

His Majesty King 'Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud

The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques

Office of His Majesty the King

Royal Court

Riyadh

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Fax:** (via Ministry of the Interior) +966 1 403 1185 (please keep trying)

**Salutation:** Your Majesty

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud

Minister of the Interior

Ministry of the Interior

P.O. Box 2933

Airport Road

Riyadh 11134

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Fax:** +966 1 403 1185 (please keep trying)

**Salutation:** Your Royal Highness

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Nasseriya Street

Riyadh 11124

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Fax:** +966 1 403 0645

**Salutation:** Your Royal Highness

**COPIES TO:**

Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy

President

Human Rights Commission

P.O. Box 58889

King Fahad Road, Building No. 373

Riyadh 11515

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Fax:** +966 1 4612061

and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 3 July 2009.