

URGENT ACTION

SAUDI MEN SENTENCED TO AMPUTATION

Six men have been sentenced by the General Court in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to amputation of their right hands and left feet for “highway robbery”. Their sentence was reportedly upheld by a court of appeal in October and is due to be approved at any moment by the Supreme Court, placing them at risk of amputation.

Barzan bin Raheel al-Shammari, aged 29, Amer bin Eid al-Jarba’, aged 26, Muhammad bin Ali al-Shammari, aged 25, Muhammad bin Dhiyab Maddhi, aged 27, Abdullah bin Dhiyab Maddhi, aged 30, and Bandar bin Abbas al-As’adi, aged 22, all from Bedouin tribes, were arrested in October 2010 in Riyadh, capital of Saudi Arabia. They were accused of “highway robbery” and were transferred to Malaz prison, following their arrest. All of them were allegedly beaten and forced to confess to the charges against them under duress.

Amer bin Eid al-Jarba’ was reportedly beaten for eight days and told that if he did not confess, his three brothers would be arrested. It appears that he signed a confession without knowing its contents and, afterwards, was placed in solitary confinement for 33 days.

All six were tried before the General Court in Riyadh with no legal assistance or representation and were sentenced in March to “cross amputation” of their right hands and left feet for “highway robbery”. A court of appeal was reported to have upheld the verdict in October and it is now reported to be with the Supreme Court for approval.

If the Supreme Court approves the sentence and the King ratifies it, the six men will be at imminent risk of amputation, a form of judicial corporal punishment amounting to torture.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urge the King to commute the sentences of “cross amputation” for Barzan bin Raheel al-Shammari, Amer bin Eid al-Jarba’, Muhammad bin Ali al-Shammari, Muhammad bin Dhiyab Maddhi, Abdullah bin Dhiyab Maddhi and Bandar bin Abbas al-As’adi as a matter of urgency;
- Remind the authorities that the use of “cross amputation” amounts to torture, thus violating Saudi Arabia's obligations as a state party to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and urge them to abolish judicial corporal punishment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 JANUARY 2012 TO:

King
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 3125 (please keep trying)
Salutation: Your Majesty

Governor of Riyadh
His Royal Highness Sattam bin Abdul
Aziz Al Saud
Riyadh Principality
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Email: webmaster@riyadh.gov.sa
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

And copies to:
President, Human Rights Commission
Bandar Mohammed ‘Abdullah al-Aiban
Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 58889, King Fahad Road,
Building No. 373, Riyadh 11515
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 46 12 061
Email: hrc@haq-ksa.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

SAUDI MEN SENTENCED TO AMPUTATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Punishment by amputation is enforced in Saudi Arabia for offences mainly limited to cases of "theft", for which the sentence is amputation of the right hand, and "highway robbery", which is punished by cross amputation (right hand and left foot).

The use of corporal punishments such as amputation violates the absolute prohibition against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment set out in Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment", as well as Saudi Arabia's obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which it is a state party. The UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment has stated that "corporal punishment is inconsistent with the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Court proceedings in Saudi Arabia generally 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, for example through torture or other ill-treatment, or deception.

Name: Barzan bin Raheel al-Shammari, Amer bin Eid al-Jarba', Muhammad bin Ali al-Shammari, Muhammad bin Dhiyab Maddhi, aged 27, Abdullah bin Dhiyab Maddhi, and Bandar bin Abbas al-As'adi.

Gender: All male.

UA: 363/11 Index: MDE 23/030/2011 Issue Date: 15 December 2011