

EXTERNAL

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EXTRA 178/96

Death Penalty

14 November 1996

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

John Aquino, Filipino worker, aged 33

On 23 November 1996 the Federal Supreme Court in Abu Dhabi will rule on an appeal against the death sentence passed against a Filipino national, John Aquino.

John Aquino was sentenced to death by a criminal court in the Emirate of Ajman in 1989 for the murder of an Indian national and the attempted murder of another Indian during an argument. The sentence was later upheld by a higher court.

If the sentence is upheld by the Federal Supreme Court, it must then be finally approved by the President of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan.

Amnesty International recognizes the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.

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

- expressing concern at the death sentence against John Aquino and urging that the sentence be commuted if upheld on appeal;
- drawing attention to world trends to abolish or reduce the use of the death penalty, the desirability of which was reaffirmed in Resolution 32/61 of 8 December 1977 of the United Nations General Assembly;
- pointing out that there is no reliable evidence to show that the death penalty deters serious crimes;
- urging that all other death sentences in the UAE be commuted.

APPEALS TO:

His Highness
al-Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
Ruler of Abu Dhabi
Manhal Palace
PO Box 280, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Telexes: 22220 PALACE EM
Telegrams: President Al-Nahyan, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Faxes: +971 266 4799
Salutation: Your Highness

COPIES TO:

His Excellency
Dr Abdulla bin Omran Taryam
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 753
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Faxes: +9712 664 944

His Excellency
General Dr Mohd Saeed al-Badi
Minister of Interior
PO Box 398
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Faxes: +9712 461 621; 415 688

and to diplomatic representatives of UAE accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 December 1996.