

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 22/001/2003

24 February 2003

Further Information on UA 320/02 (MDE 22/001/2002, 28 October 2002) Death Penalty New concern: Imminent Execution

QATAR

Firas Nassuh Salim Al-Majali (m), journalist

On 24 February an appeal court in Qatar upheld the death sentence passed on Firas Nassuh Salim Al-Majali, a Jordanian national and journalist with the Qatari Television network. His case should now be referred to the Amir, the Head of State, who has the power to pardon him or to ratify the death sentence. Amnesty International fears that Firas Nassuh Salim Al-Majali may be at risk of imminent execution.

Firas Nassuh Salim Al-Majali was convicted and sentenced to death on 22 October 2002 on charges of spying for Jordanian Intelligence. He was reportedly held incommunicado for long periods of time and denied access to a lawyer during his interrogation. Amnesty International believes he may be a prisoner of conscience, punished solely as part of the diplomatic rift between Qatar and Jordan.

Until 2001, when three people were put to death, there had been no executions in Qatar for 10 years. At least 20 people are thought to be currently sentenced to death.

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

- expressing concern that Firas Nassuh Salim Al-Majali may be at risk of imminent execution and urging the Amir to commute the death sentence against him;
- calling for his immediate releases if he is a prisoner of conscience held solely as part of the deteriorating political situation between Jordan and Qatar.

APPEALS TO:

His Highness Shaikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani
Amir of the State of Qatar
PO Box 923
Doha, Qatar

Telegrams: Amir, Doha, Qatar

Fax: + 974 436 12 12

Salutation: Your Highness

COPIES TO:

His Highness Shaikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al-Thani
Prime Minister and Minister of Interior
PO Box 115
Doha, Qatar
Fax: + 974 432 71 77

His Excellency Hassan bin Abdullah Al-Ghanem
Minister of Justice
PO Box 917

Doha, Qatar

Fax: + 974 483 28 68

and to diplomatic representatives of Qatar accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 April 2003.