

URGENT ACTION

IRAQI NATIONAL'S EXECUTION STAYED

The Saudi Arabian government has stayed the execution of an Iraqi man, Mohammad Abdul Amir, to allow his family to negotiate his fate with relatives of the man he allegedly murdered. However, it is unclear how long the execution has been stayed for, and he could be executed at any time if the negotiations break down.

Mohammad Abdul Amir, aged 35, was arrested in 1995 and charged with the murder of a Saudi Arabian man. He confessed to the crime after being interrogated for three months, during which he was allegedly tortured. A criminal court in the town of Arar, near Saudi Arabia's border with Iraq, sentenced him to death after a summary and secret trial. He has not been allowed any access to lawyers.

Under Saudi Arabian law, those found guilty of murder are often sentenced to *qisas* (retribution in kind). In these cases, the victim's relatives have the power to seek execution, request *diya* (compensation) or grant a pardon freely. The relatives of the murder victim must reach adulthood before deciding the fate of those found guilty of murder. Mohammad Abdul Amir has remained on death row as the children of the murder victim were too young to be consulted on whether he was to be pardoned or executed. They have since reached the age of majority and are said to have informed the court which tried him that they want him to be executed. Mohammad Abdul Amir was scheduled to be executed on 13 March. The length of the stay he has been granted is not known. Prisoners under sentence of death may be executed without the date of their execution being made known to them or their families.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, English or your own language:

- calling on the King to commute the death sentences of Mohammad Abdul Amir 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;
- urging the authorities to remand the case for a retrial that meets international fair trial standards;
- calling on authorities to carry out an immediate and impartial investigation into allegations that Mohammad Abdul Amir was tortured, and bring those responsible to justice;
- 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".

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 APRIL 2010 TO:

King and Prime Minister

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

Second Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin

'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud, 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

And copies to:

Iraqi Embassy or Diplomatic

Representative in your country, asking

them to forward it to:

President

Jalal Talabani

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 21/09 (MDE 23/003/2009). Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/003/2009/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/003/2010/en>

**AMNESTY
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At least 158 people, including 76 foreign nationals, were executed by the Saudi Arabian authorities in 2007, and at least 102 people, including almost 40 foreign nationals, were executed in 2008. In 2009, 69 people are known to have been executed, including almost 20 foreign nationals. Since the beginning of 2010, at least eight people have been executed.

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 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* (Index: MDE 23/027/2008).
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/saudi-arabia-executions-target-foreign-nationals-20081014>

Further information on UA: 21/09 Index: MDE 23/005/2010 Issue Date: 16 March 2010

