

PUBLIC

**AI Index: MDE 23/047/2008
24 November 2008**

Further Information on UA 309/07 (MDE 23/039/2007, 16 November 2007) and follow-ups (MDE 23/005/2008, 07 February 2008 and MDE 23/024/2008, 11 June 2008) - Imminent execution

SAUDI ARABIA **Sheikh Mastan (alias Mohammed Salim) (m), aged 30, married with one child
Hamza Abu Bakir (m), aged 47, married with four children**

Indian nationals Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir have exhausted all possible appeals against their death sentences. The sentences are now awaiting the approval of the Supreme Judicial Council, which is headed by the King. If the sentences are approved, the two men could be executed within days.

Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir are currently detained in al-Dammam Prison in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. They were arrested in January 2004 on charges of drug possession. In June 2006, they were convicted and sentenced to death by a court in al-Dammam. However, they had no legal representation throughout the judicial process. Very little is known about their trial except that their convictions and sentences are said to have been upheld on appeal.

At least 89 people have been executed so far this year. In 2007 the authorities executed at least 158 people.

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. Prisoners under sentence of death may be executed without a scheduled date for execution being made known to the prisoner or their families.

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

- urging the King as the head of the Supreme Judicial Council not to approve the death sentences and thereby halt the execution of Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir;
- appealing to the King to commute the death sentences of Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir and all those on death row in Saudi Arabia as a matter of urgency, with a view to the abolition of the death penalty.

APPEALS TO: (Please note that you may experience difficulties sending faxes on Thursdays and Fridays, which are the weekend in Saudi Arabia)

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 5 January 2009.