

PUBLIC

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UA 296/07 Fear of imminent execution

IRAQ 11 people

According to the Iraqi news agency *Aswat al-Iraq* 11 people are facing imminent execution. The Court of Cassation has upheld their death sentences, which will now be passed to the Presidential Council for ratification. Their only hope now is for the Presidential Council to refuse to ratify their sentences, or for the president to pardon them.

According to *Aswat al-Iraq* the 11 have been convicted of various criminal offences including murder, murder followed by robbery, and kidnapping. They were sentenced to death by criminal courts in Baghdad, Basra, and in the provinces of Diwaniya, Dhi Qar and Ninewa. Amnesty International has no further information.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since the reintroduction of the death penalty in Iraq in August 2004, scores of people have been sentenced to death and there has been a rapid rise in the frequency of executions. At least 65 people were put to death in 2006 alone, many of them after unfair trials. So far in 2007 at least 171 people have been sentenced to death and 33 have been executed. Under Iraqi law those sentenced to death can seek pardon from the President. However, this law does not apply to those who may be sentenced to death by the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal (SICT). This tribunal was set up to try those accused of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

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

- expressing concern that 11 people are reportedly facing imminent execution;
- recognizing the right of governments to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes;
- calling on the authorities not to execute the 11 people, and to commute all death sentences;
- calling on them to impose an immediate moratorium on executions until they have abolished the death penalty completely.

APPEALS TO: Email addresses for the Iraqi authorities are proving unreliable. Please send appeals to the authorities via the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country, asking them to forward your appeals to:

President

Jalal Talabani

Salutation: Your Excellency

Vice-President

Tariq al-Hashimi

Salutation: Your Excellency

Vice-President

'Adil 'Abdul Mahdi

Salutation: Your Excellency

Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hoshyar Zebari

E-mail: press@iraqmofa.net

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

Wijdan Mikhail Salim

Fax: +9641 538 2007

Email: Wj_mohr_min@yahoo.com

and to diplomatic representatives of Iraq accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 December 2007.