

URGENT ACTION

SEVEN MEN TO BE EXECUTED

Seven Saudi Arabian men are scheduled to be executed on 5 March. They have said they were tortured to make them “confess”, and sentenced to death following a summary trial that was grossly unfair.

Seven Saudi Arabian men, all in their 20s, are scheduled to be executed on 5 March; the King ratified their death sentences in February. In August 2009, the General Court in the south-western town of Abha had found all seven guilty of an armed robbery that took place in January 2006. One of them, **Sarhan bin Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Mashayekh**, was sentenced to death followed by crucifixion, while the other six, **Sa'id bin Hassan bin Ahmed al-'Amri**, **Ali bin Muhammad bin Hazam al-Shihri**, **Nasser bin Sa'id bin Sa'ad al-Qahtani**, **Sa'id bin Nasser bin Muhammad al-Shahrani**, **Abdul Aziz bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-'Amri** and **Ali bin Hadi bin Sa'id al-Qahtani**, are to be executed by firing squad.

The seven men were arrested in early 2006. During their interrogation at the Criminal Investigation Department in Abha, they have since said they were severely beaten, denied food and water, deprived of sleep, forced to remain standing for 24 hours and then forced to sign “confessions”. They were detained for three and a half years in Abha General Prison before they went on trial.

The Abha General Court found all seven guilty of armed robbery in August 2009 and sentenced them to death. Their trial lasted only a few hours, and they were denied any legal representation or appeal. Security officers who were present at the trial warned them that if they withdrew their “confessions” they would be tortured again, and members of their families, including their mothers, would be brought to prison and tortured in front of them.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the King to halt immediately the executions of Sarhan bin Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Mashayekh, Sa'id bin Hassan bin Ahmed al-'Amri, Ali bin Muhammad bin Hazam al-Shihri, Nasser bin Sa'id bin Sa'ad al-Qahtani, Sa'id bin Nasser bin Muhammad al-Shahrani, Abdul Aziz bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-'Amri and Ali bin Hadi bin Sa'id al-Qahtani;
- Calling on the authorities to investigate the seven men's allegations that they were tortured and otherwise ill-treated;
- Urging them to ensure that the seven men receive a new trial that fully meets the international standards for fair trial and does not have recourse to the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 12 APRIL 2013 TO:

King and Prime Minister

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 3125 (please keep trying)
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed
bin 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 3125 (please keep
trying)
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

And copies to:

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Shaykh Dr Mohammed
bin Abdulkareem Al-Issa
Ministry of Justice
University Street
Riyadh 11137
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 401 1741/ +966 1 402 0311
Salutation: His Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia has one of the highest rates of execution in the world: it put to death at least 1,938 people between 1985 and 2012. At least 17 people are known to have been executed so far this year.

The authorities apply the death penalty for a wide range of offences that do not meet the minimum international standards for capital punishment: these include armed robbery and drug smuggling, as well as “offences” such as apostasy that should not even be criminalized under international standards. Saudi Arabia has also continued to sentence to death and execute people for crimes committed when they were under 18, in breach of international law.

Those who are executed are usually beheaded, often in public. The dead body is in some cases “crucified”, in which case the body, along with the separated head if beheaded, are placed on a pole in a public square to act as a deterrent.

Court proceedings in Saudi Arabia fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by lawyers, 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.

Under the UN Safeguards guaranteeing the protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, there should be adequate opportunity for defence and appeal, and the imposition of the death penalty should be prohibited when there is room for alternative interpretation of the evidence.

The Saudi Arabian security forces use torture and other ill-treatment with impunity to extract “confessions”. They commonly use methods including sleep deprivation, punching, beating with sticks, suspension from the ceiling and electric shocks.

Saudi Arabia is a state party to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which prohibits the use of evidence extracted under torture or other ill-treatment. Article 15 states: “Each State Party shall ensure that any statement which is established to have been made as a result of torture shall not be invoked as evidence in any proceedings, except against a person accused of torture as evidence that the statement was made.”

Amnesty International highlighted Saudi Arabia’s extensive use of the death penalty in a report published in 2008, *Affront to Justice: Death Penalty in Saudi Arabia*: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/mde23/027/2008>

Names: Sarhan bin Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Mashayekh, Sa’id bin Hassan bin Ahmed al-‘Amri, Ali bin Muhammad bin Hazam al-Shihri, Nasser bin Sa’id bin Sa’ad al-Qahtani, Sa’id bin Nasser bin Muhammad al-Shahrani, Abdul Aziz bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-‘Amri, and Ali bin Hadi bin Sa’id al-Qahtani.

Gender m/f: m

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