

URGENT ACTION



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Note: Please write on behalf of these persons even though you may not have received the original UA when issued on April 3, 2008. Thanks!

14 August 2008

Further Information on UA 86/08 (3 April 2008)

Death Penalty/Flogging

SAUDI ARABIA Sultan Bin Khalid Mahmud al-Maskati (m), aged 23
Yusef Bin Hassan Bin Salman al-Muwallad (m), aged 23
Qassim Bin 'Ali Bin Ibrahim Al-Nakhli (m), aged 22
Sultan Bin Sulayman Bin Muslim al-Muwallad (m), aged 20
'Issa bin Muhammad 'Umar Muhammad (m), aged 20, Chadian national
Bilal Bin Muslih Bin Jabir al-Muwallad (m), aged 19
Ahmad Hamid Muhammad Sabir (m), aged 17, Chadian national

The seven men named above had their sentences upheld by the Court of Cassation in Makkah in July. Five of the men have been sentenced to death. The two others were sentenced to be flogged. The cases have been passed to the Supreme Judicial Council. If approved by the Council, all seven sentences could be carried out within days.

If the sentences are approved, the prisoners and their relatives may not be informed until the day that the executions and floggings are to be carried out. The King, as head of the Supreme Judicial Council, can intervene and stop the executions and floggings.

All seven men were arrested in 2004 and charged with theft, robbery and assault. They were held incommunicado at police stations in the city of Madina, where they were allegedly beaten in an attempt to make them confess. In February 2008 the General Court in Madina sentenced Sultan Bin Khalid Mahmud al-Maskati, Yusef Bin Hassan Bin Salman al-Muwallad, Qassim Bin 'Ali Bin Ibrahim Al-Nakhli, Sultan Bin Sulayman Bin Muslim al-Muwallad and 'Issa bin Muhammad 'Umar Muhammad to death, and the two others, Bilal Bin Muslih Bin Jabir al-Muwallad and Ahmad Hamid Muhammad Sabir, to "severe flogging" and imprisonment.

Bilal Bin Muslih Bin Jabir al-Muwallad and Ahmad Hamid Muhammad Sabir were aged 15 and 13 respectively at the time of the offenses. Sultan Bin Sulayman Bin Muslim al-Muwallad and 'Issa bin Muhammad 'Umar Muhammad have been sentenced to death for crimes committed when they were both 17 years old.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At least 66 people, almost half of whom were foreign nationals, have been executed so far this year. Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offenses, including offenses with no lethal consequences, and does so following trials which invariably fall short of the most basic international standards.



Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

Saudi Arabia is a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which expressly prohibits the execution of juvenile offenders – those convicted of crimes committed when they were under 18. It is also state party to the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which expressly prohibits the use of punishments such as flogging.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- expressing concern that Sultan Bin Khalid Bin Mahmud al-Maskati, Yusef Bin Hassan Bin Salman al-Muwallad, Qassim Bin ‘Ali Bin Ibrahim Al-Nakhli, Sultan Bin Sulayman Bin Muslim al-Muwallad and ‘Issa Bin Muhammad ‘Umar Muhammad are at imminent risk of execution;
- expressing concern that Sultan Bin Sulayman Bin Muslim al-Muwallad and ‘Issa bin Muhammad ‘Umar Muhammad are at imminent risk of flogging;
- urging the King to commute the death sentences, noting that Sultan Bin Sulayman Bin Muslim al-Muwallad and ‘Issa bin Muhammad ‘Umar Muhammad are juvenile offenders and that Saudi Arabia, as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, is obligated not to execute persons aged under 18 at the time of the crime of which they have been convicted;
- calling for the sentences of flogging against Bilal Bin Muslih Bin Jabir al-Muwallad and Ahmad Hamid Muhammad Sabir to be commuted to a humane punishment, as Saudi Arabia is a state party to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
- reminding the authorities that they are bound by international standards for fair trial in capital cases, in particular the UN Safeguards Guaranteeing the Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty, which guarantee adequate opportunity for defense and appeal, and prohibit the imposition of the death penalty when there is room for alternative interpretation of the evidence.

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: 011 966 1 403 1185
(via Ministry of the Interior, 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: 011 966 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: 011 966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO:

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Ambassador Adel A. Al-Jubeir
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PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.

Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 25 September 2008.