After a one-day trial, Walid Hamdiya was sentenced to death by firing squad by the State Security Court in Gaza on 17 October. Two days later, Amin Khalafallah received the same sentence. Both men were found guilty of treason, communicating with the enemy (Israeli intelligence) and weakening the morale of the Palestinian people.

Walid Hamdiya, a former Hamas activist, was detained on suspicion of collaboration in 1995. He reportedly confessed to helping the Israeli authorities track and kill five Hamas members between 1987 and 1995. This included the 1993 killing of the Hamas military commander in the Gaza Strip. Palestinian security officials have described Walid Hamdiya as the most senior Palestinian collaborator ever uncovered.

Amin Khalafallah was arrested in 1998 and also charged with collaboration with Israel. He reportedly provided Israel with intelligence that led to an attack in September 2002 in which Muhammad Deif, a leader of the military wing of Hamas, was injured. Previous intelligence reportedly led to the 1996 killing of leading Hamas member Yahya Ayyash.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Amnesty International has previously condemned trials by the State Security Court as being grossly unfair. Trials are often summary, take place before military judges, and have no right of appeal. Sentences are subject only to ratification by President Arafat and may be carried out within hours or days of the trial.

People convicted of collaboration with Israel face extremely harsh treatment. Since the beginning of the current intifada in September 2000, three alleged collaborators have been executed after summary unfair trials. Scores of other collaborators have been killed by armed Palestinians.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic or your own language:
- calling on President Arafat not to ratify the death sentences passed on the two men named above and expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty;
- expressing concern that these and other trials before the State Security Court are grossly unfair, failing to meet even minimum international standards for fair trial;
- calling for a retrial to take place before an ordinary criminal court in accordance with international standards for fair trial and without recourse to the death penalty;
- urging that no more executions be carried out and that the death penalty be abolished.

APPEALS TO:
President Yasser Arafat
The President=s Office, Ramallah
Palestinian Authority
Fax:+ 972 2 296 3176 (it may be difficult to get through; please keep trying)
Salutation: Dear President Arafat

Ibrahim Dughmeh
Minister of Justice
P O Box 1021
Gaza
Palestinian Authority
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Gaza, Palestinian Authority
Fax: + 972 8 286 7109
Salutation:Dear Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of the Palestinian Authority accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 3 December 2002.