

PUBLIC

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Death penalty

12 September 2000

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Muhammad Daoud Khawajeh, aged 19

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A 19-year-old man has been tried and sentenced to death in a single day, two days after he was arrested. Amnesty International believes his trial was unfair. President Yasser Arafat must ratify the death sentence before it can be carried out.

Muhammad Daoud Khawajeh was arrested on 9 September, charged with the murder of 70-year-old currency dealer Mustafa Ahmad Jibril Barud, who was killed a few days earlier. He was put on trial before the Higher State Security Court on 11 September, at about 11am. At about 8pm he was convicted of murder and sentenced to death by firing squad.

Amnesty International is concerned that he was not given sufficient time to organize his defence and is not entitled to appeal against the verdict to a higher court, in violation of international standards for fair trial. The execution of anyone sentenced after an unfair trial is regarded as a violation of the right to life under international human rights law.

The Palestinian Authority has executed three people in the past two years, most recently in February 1999. All three received grossly unfair summary trials, and were executed shortly after sentencing.

Although Amnesty International recognizes the role of governments in bringing the perpetrators of crime to justice, this must be done through a fair and just legal system. The organization is opposed to the death penalty as the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and a violation of the right to life.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Arabic, English or your own language:

- expressing sympathy for the victims of violent crimes and their families and acknowledging the role of governments in bringing the perpetrators to justice;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty, which is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and which is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- expressing concern that Muhammad Daoud Khawajeh received an unfair trial before the Higher State Security Court, as he was not given sufficient time to prepare his defence and was denied the right to appeal against the sentence to a higher court, in violation of international human rights standards;
- urging President Yasser Arafat not to ratify the death sentence imposed on Muhammad Daoud Khawajeh and to order a retrial for him, with full respect for the fair trial standards enshrined in international law;
- urging that no more executions be carried out in the Palestinian Authority and that the government work towards abolishing the death penalty.

**APPEALS TO:**

President Yasser Arafat  
Palestinian Authority  
Al-Muntada  
Gaza

Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: President Arafat, Palestinian Authority, Gaza

**Faxes: + 972 7 282 2366**

**Salutation: Dear President Arafat**

**Mr Freih Abu Meddein**

**Minister of Justice**

**Ministry of Justice**

**Abu Khadra Building**

**Omar al-Mukhtar Street**

**Gaza**

**Palestinian Authority**

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Palestinian Authority, Gaza**

**Faxes: + 972 7 286 7109**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**Mr Khaled al-Qidreh**

**Attorney General for the State Security Courts**

**Police Headquarters**

**Gaza**

**Palestinian Authority**

**Telegrams: Khaled al-Qidreh, Police Headquarters, Gaza, Palestinian Authority**

**Faxes: + 972 7 282 4253 (when voice answers, please ask for fax tone)**

**Salutation: Dear Mr al-Qidreh**

**and to diplomatic representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization accredited to your country.**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 October 2000.**