

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/028/2008

30 July 2008

Further Information on UA 95/08 (MDE 23/020/2008, 11 April 2008) Fear of Flogging/Prisoners of conscience

SAUDI ARABIA

Khalid al-Zahrani (m), biochemistry lecturer
A female postgraduate student (name known to Amnesty International)

Khalid al-Zahrani's sentence of 600 lashes and eight months' imprisonment was recently upheld by a Court of Cassation in Saudi Arabia. He is not in custody, but could be imprisoned and flogged at any time. No further information is known about the unnamed female student who was sentenced in the same case, but it is believed that she too is at imminent risk of flogging and imprisonment.

The sentence was imposed on Khalid al-Zahrani after he was convicted of establishing a relationship with a female student he was supervising and influencing her divorce. She was convicted of being his "accomplice" by terminating her marriage and sentenced to receive 300 lashes and a four-month prison term. Both were sentenced in November 2007 after an unfair trial, on charges that do not correspond to recognizable criminal offences.

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

- expressing concern that the Court of Cassation has upheld the sentence of imprisonment and flogging of Khalid al-Zahrani;
- asking the authorities to either charge both Khalid al-Zahrani and the unnamed female student with a recognizable criminal offence or drop the charges against them;
- calling on the authorities not to carry out the sentences;
- reminding them that Saudi Arabia is a state party to the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), and that their responsibilities under the CAT are inconsistent with the imposition of heavy flogging sentences;
- urging the authorities to bring Saudi Arabian laws and practices into line with international laws and standards against torture, flogging and arbitrary imprisonment.

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

COPIES TO:

Mr Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
President, Human Rights Commission
PO Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road, Building No.373,
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 September 2008.