

EXTERNAL

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Death Penalty

3 December 1997

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE) Ryan Dominic Mahoney, aged 22
Rabi' Ghassan Taraf, aged 28

Ryan Dominic Mahoney, a Canadian national, and Rabi' Ghassan Taraf, a Lebanese national, are reported to have been sentenced to death at the end of November 1997. Both were convicted of drug charges. Under UAE law both defendants have the right to appeal against their conviction and sentences, but it is not clear how long this will take. If upheld on appeal, the sentences will have to be ratified by the UAE president before they can be carried out.

Background information

In April 1995 the UAE expanded the scope of the death penalty to include drug-related offences. However, it is not known whether anyone has been executed for drug-related crimes. Between July and September 1997 five people are known to have been executed for murder.

Amnesty International recognizes the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences but is unconditionally opposed to the death sentence in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.

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

- expressing concern at the death sentences against Ryan Dominic Mahoney and Rabi' Ghassan Taraf and calling for their commutation if upheld on appeal.

APPEALS TO:

Crown Prince
His Highness
Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum
Ruler of Dubai
PO Box 899, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Telexes: 23245
Telegrams: Crown Prince, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Salutation: Your Highness

Minister of Interior
His Excellency
General Dr Mohammad Saeed al-Badi
Ministry of the Interior
PO Box 398
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Faxes: +9712 415 688
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President of the United Arab Emirates
His Highness
al-Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan
Ruler of Abu Dhabi
Manhal Palace
PO Box 280, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

and to diplomatic representatives of Dubai, United Arab Emirates accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 January 1998.