

URGENT ACTION

THREE MEN AT IMMINENT RISK OF EXECUTION

Three men in Yemen had their death sentences sent to the President for ratification in mid-October. If the sentences are ratified by the President, they could be executed at any time.

The three men, **Shaikh Khalid Nahshal, Mabkhout 'Ali Nahshal** and **Abduh Muhammad Nahshal**, were among 32 people charged in connection with the killing of at least one government official in the district of Khayran in northern Yemen in September 2006. This happened following a dispute over the local and presidential elections and an exchange of fire between a group of armed men and the government official in charge of Khayran. In 2007 six of the defendants were sentenced to death, but three had their sentences commuted to prison terms in June 2009, following an appeal. The remaining 26 received prison sentences. In January 2010, Shaikh Khalid Nahshal, Mabkhout 'Ali Nahshal and Abduh Muhammad Nahshal had their death sentences upheld by the Supreme Court.

The three at risk of execution are reported to be leading members of Islah, an opposition party. Their lawyers have complained that their trials failed to meet international standards. Specifically, they complained that they were not given full and effective opportunity to challenge the evidence against the three men, and that court judges were threatened by relatives of the official who was killed. They also argued that their clients may have been targeted because they had supported a candidate who mounted an unsuccessful challenge against the incumbent President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, in presidential elections in 2006.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the President to halt the execution of Shaikh Khalid Nahshal, Mabkhout 'Ali Nahshal and Abduh Muhammad Nahshal;
- Calling on the President to commute the death sentences of Shaikh Khalid Nahshal, Mabkhout 'Ali Nahshal and Abduh Muhammad Nahshal;
- Acknowledging that the government has a right to bring to justice those responsible for criminal offences, but expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty;
- Reminding the authorities that they are bound by international standards for fair trial in capital cases, including the UN Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, which state that capital punishment may only be imposed after a fair trial in which the defendant is provided with "adequate legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings";
- Urging the President to commute all outstanding death sentences and establish a moratorium on executions, with a view to completely abolishing the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 DECEMBER 2010 TO:

President

His Excellency Ali Abdullah Saleh
Office of the President of the Republic
of Yemen
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Fax: + 967 1 274 147
Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

His Excellency 'Abdullah al-'Ulufi
Office of the Attorney General
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Fax: + 967 1 374 412
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Human Rights

Her Excellency Dr Huda Ali Abdullatef
Alban
Ministry for Human Rights
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
Fax: +967 1 444 838 /
+967 1 419 555 / +967 1 419 700
Email: mshr@y.net.ye

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 28/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE31/006/2010/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has long-standing concerns about the use of the death penalty in Yemen, particularly as death sentences are often passed after proceedings which fall short of international standards for fair trial.

In 2009, at least 53 people were sentenced to death and at least 30 people were executed. In 2010 so far, at least eight people have been executed. Hundreds of people are believed to be on death row.

Amnesty International acknowledges the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of recognizably criminal offences, but is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, and as a violation of the right to life.

Further information on UA: 28/10 Index: MDE 31/013/2010 Issue Date: 05 November 2010

