

PUBLIC

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Death penalty

3 April 2002

UNITED Andre Seefred, aged 28, Ukrainian national
ARAB Sergei Doboni, aged 24, Russian national
EMIRATES (UAE)

An appeal court in Dubai reportedly upheld the death sentence against the two people named above on 1 April. The case is expected to be referred to the Supreme Court. If the death sentence is upheld by this court, it will have to be ratified by President al-Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, before it can be carried out.

Andre Seefred and Sergei Doboni were first sentenced to death in February after they were found guilty of the murder in July 2001 of an Indian national. They reportedly killed the victim in his jewellery shop in Dubai and stole about US\$1.4 million worth of jewellery and diamonds.

Under *Shari'a* (Islamic) law, families of murder victims can accept blood money (compensation) and pardon a defendant. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE) the amount is fixed at approximately US\$ 45,000.

Amnesty International recognizes the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those convicted 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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since 1997, nine people including a woman, are known to have been executed in the UAE. All had been convicted of murder. A number of people have been sentenced to death for drug offences. However, no one is known to have been executed on drug charges. Executions are usually by firing-squad.

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

- expressing sympathy for the victim and his family but reminding the authorities that the death penalty is brutalising to all concerned;
- calling for the death sentence against Andre Seefred and Sergei Doboni to be commuted if upheld by the Supreme Court;
- calling for all outstanding death sentences in the UAE to be commuted to lesser, more humane sentences.

APPEALS TO:

President
His Highness
al-Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
Ruler of Abu Dhabi
Manhal Palace
PO Box 280, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Telexes: 22220 PALACE EM
Telegrams: President Al-Nahyan, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Salutation: Your Highness
Minister of Justice & Islamic Affairs

His Excellency Mohammad Nukhairah al-Dhahiri
Minister of Justice & Islamic Affairs
Ministry of Justice & Islamic Affairs
PO Box 753, Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Faxes: + 971 4 282 5557

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 May 2002