

PUBLIC

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Death Penalty/Torture/Legal concern

26 July 2001

JORDAN

Badr Ramadan Sha'th [m], Agricultural Engineer, aged 26

Badr Ramadan Sha'th was sentenced to death in May 2001 following an unfair trial and reports of torture.

On 3 June 2000, Badr Ramadan Sha'th was summoned to the Jebel al-Hussein police station, Amman. From there he was taken to the Criminal Investigations Department where he was reportedly held incommunicado in solitary confinement and tortured for nine days. He was allegedly beaten about his body for up to six hours while handcuffed, hung in painful positions, forced to stand for 3½ days (a guard was said to have stood by him ensuring he remained on his feet). After nine days he signed a confession to the murders of Dirgham Barqawy, a jeweller, who was killed on 27 February 1999, and Zuhayr Ishaq Farid Ziad, a taxi driver, who was killed on 19 September 1999.

A police officer allegedly told Badr Ramadan Sha'th that he knew Badr did not commit the crime but that there was "no one else to frame but [him]".

During the trial, a doctor reportedly gave evidence acknowledging that bruising to Badr Ramadan Sha'th's eye resulted from an injury which must have taken place during his detention. However, although Badr Ramadan Sha'th testified that he had been tortured, this was not, apparently, taken into account during the trial.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty at all times and for any offence and calls for all death sentences to be commuted. In addition, there are reportedly a number of discrepancies in the evidence in this case, among them that Badr Ramadan Sha'th's description of the murder in his confession does not coincide with the police description; he has an alibi for both murders and his blood group does not match blood found at the scene of one of the crimes.

Badr Ramadan Sha'th is now held in Swaqa Prison. An appeal to the Court of Cassation (which may only consider the trial procedures, and not the substance of the case) was filed on 13 June.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International does not in any way condone violent crime, but opposes the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Capital punishment has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect and a death sentence is irrevocable.

At least two people have been executed in Jordan this year.

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

- calling for the death sentence on Badr Ramadan Sha'th to be commuted if it is upheld by the Court of Cassation;
- calling for Badr Ramadan Sha'th to be re-tried according to international standards on fair trials;
- expressing concern at reports of Badr Ramadan Sha'th's torture and calling for the allegations of torture and ill-treatment to be investigated, and for anyone found to have used torture to be brought to justice;
- noting that governments have not only a right but also an obligation to bring those who plan or perpetrate violent crimes to justice, but that this should be done in accordance with international standards for fair trials;
- urging that no more executions be carried out in Jordan and that the Government work towards abolishing the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

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COPIES TO:

Her Majesty Queen Rania
President of the Royal Commission on Human Rights
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and to diplomatic representatives of Jordan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 September 2001.