

**PUBLICAI Index: MDE 12/10/00**

**UA 84/00 Death Penalty / Possible imminent execution 13 April 2000**

**EGYPT Gamal Muhammad Amin, fisherman, aged 33  
'Afaf Isma'il Muhammad (f), aged 26**

On 10 April 2000, the Cairo Criminal Court sentenced Gamal Muhammad Amin and his friend 'Afaf Isma'il Muhammad to death. Both were accused of the murder of a shop-owner. Since their death sentences have already been approved by the *Mufti*, the highest Muslim authority in the country, their last chance now lies with the President, to whom the sentences have been sent for ratification. Both are at risk of possible imminent execution.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The death penalty, which is applied for criminal offences such as drug use or trafficking, and murder, and for offences related to "terrorism", has been used extensively in the country in recent years. In 1998 Amnesty International recorded 74 death sentences passed by military, criminal and (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts, and 48 executions. In 1999, at least 108 people were sentenced to death sentences and at least 16 people were executed.

Death sentences passed down by criminal and (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts are submitted to the *Mufti* for approval as a routine measure. Most cases are approved. They are then passed to the President of the Republic or his nominee for ratification. Appeals against final verdicts by criminal courts can be submitted to the Court of Cassation, but only when procedural irregularities in the trial can be proved.

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

- acknowledging the seriousness of the crime of which Gamal Muhammad Amin and 'Afaf Isma'il Muhammad were convicted, but explaining your opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life, pointing out that it has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect and is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- reminding the government of Egypt of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 3: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";
- urging the President to use his constitutional powers to grant clemency and commute these and all other pending death sentences;
- drawing attention to world trends to abolish or reduce the use of the death penalty, in accordance with Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party.

### **APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

'Abidine Palace, Cairo, Egypt

**Telegrams: President, Cairo Egypt**

**Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN**

**Faxes:+ 202 390 1998**  
**E-mails:webmaster@presidency.gov.eg**  
**Salutation:Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

Mr Hani Khalaf  
The Human Rights Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt  
**Faxes:+ 202 574 9533**

Dr Fathi Sorour  
Speaker  
The People's Assembly  
Magles al-Sha'ab Street, Cairo, Egypt  
**Faxes:+ 202 574 9175**

and to diplomatic representatives of Tunisia accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 May 2000.