

PUBLIC

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Death pen

EGYPTFatiha Yussef al-Sayyid (f), 37
Rizq Ahmad Mazid, 52
Imam Yussef al-Sayyid, 31

Fatiha Yussef al-Sayyid, Rizq Ahmad Mazid and Imam Yussef al-Sayyid could face imminent execution. Their death sentences were confirmed by the Criminal Court in Sohag (Upper Egypt) on 7 October 1999 and have been passed to the President for ratification.

Their death sentences had already been approved by the *Mufti*, the highest Muslim authority in the country.

All three were convicted of premeditated murder and sentenced to death by the Sohag Criminal Court on 9 September 1999.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International is very concerned by the increasing use of the death penalty in Egypt. The death penalty is applied for criminal offences such as drug use or trafficking, murder and offences related to "terrorism". Last year the organization recorded 74 death sentences passed by military, criminal and (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts, and 48 executions. Seventy three death sentences and 15 executions have been recorded so far in 1999.

Death sentences issued by criminal and (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts are submitted to the *Mufti* for approval as a routine measure. The majority are approved. They are subsequently passed on 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 on the grounds of procedural irregularities in the trial.

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

- acknowledging the seriousness of the crime of which Fatiha Yussef al-Sayyid, Rizq Ahmad Mazid and Imam Yussef al-Sayyid were convicted, but explaining your opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life (as stated in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person"), pointing out that it has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect, and is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- 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 (please note that it can sometimes be difficult to get faxes through to the President's address. If unsuccessful, please try later):

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt

Telegrams: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt
Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN

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

COPIES TO:

Ms Nayla Gabr
The Human Rights Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt
Faxes: + 202 574 9533

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 November 1999.