

PUBLIC

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Fea.

SAUDI ARABIA Abdul Karim Vastel, 24, from Afghanistan

Amnesty International fears that Abdul Karim Vastel, who has reportedly been convicted of murder and sentenced to death, may be imminently executed.

Abdul Karim Vastel, who was working in Saudi Arabia, was arrested about three years ago in connection with the murder of Mohammed Anwar, also from Afghanistan, who reportedly died a few days after being involved in a fight with Abdul Karim Vastel.

Further information is very difficult to obtain as trial proceedings and sentencing are routinely kept secret in Saudi Arabia.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia retains the death penalty for a wide range of offences, including murder, rape and other sexual offences, apostasy (converting from Islam to another religion) and drug smuggling. Sentencing occurs after trials which fall short of internationally agreed standards - trials are held behind closed doors and defendants do not have the right to formal representation by a lawyer. In many cases defendants and their families are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them.

Amnesty International does not know how many people are at risk of being executed but is aware of at least 61 people detained in connection with capital offences. At least 10 people have been executed so far this year.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/telexes/express/airmail letters in Arabic or your own language:

- calling for clarification on the case of Abdul Karim Vastel and urging that, if he has been sentenced to death, his sentence be commuted;
- expressing concern that defendants facing the death penalty are denied the right to a fair trial, including the right to legal assistance and to a public hearing;
- expressing grave concern about the high numbers of executions in Saudi Arabia, urging that no more executions be carried out and that all outstanding death sentences be commuted to a more humane punishment.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness, Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz

Minister of the Interior

Ministry of the Interior

PO Box 2833, Airport Road

Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Faxes: +966 1 403 1185 (this appears to be a telephone number during office hours local time - which are variable - it might be switched to a fax machine at other hours)

Telexes: 404416

Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Royal Highness
Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street, Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams:Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Faxes:+ 966 1 403 0159
Telexes:405000
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice
His Excellency
Dr. 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams:Justice Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Telexes:405 980 MINJUS SJ
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.