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## **Saudi Arabia: 100 executed -- time to stop the killing**

Wednesday's executions in Saudi Arabia bring the total number of people put to death by the state this year to 100, Amnesty International said today.

"The use of the death penalty in Saudi Arabia is in direct contradiction to world trends towards the abolition of capital punishment," Amnesty International said. "Saudi Arabia must take immediate steps to curb this systematic state killing."

The human rights organization fears that death sentences are often imposed after grossly unfair trials.

"The entire judicial process is shrouded in secrecy -- most defendants are not given the right to defend themselves or an adequate opportunity to appeal against the sentences handed down to them."

The organization knows of cases in which prisoners were unaware until the last minute that they were to be put to death.

Amnesty International fears that there are dozens more people languishing in Saudi Arabian jails who are at imminent risk of execution. They include Edwin Gamab, a Philippine national, arrested in 1994 in connection with the capital offence of murder. Edwin's family have had no news from him for one year and they do not know what is happening in his case. Amnesty International has asked for clarification of over 50 cases, including that of Edwin, but has not received any response.

"The international community must take action now to halt the rising toll of executions at the hands of the Saudi Arabian authorities," the organization concluded.

### **Background**

More than half of those executed this year have been foreign nationals from developing countries, including 15 Pakistanis, 10 Nigerians (three of them women), nine Afghans, six Indians, as well as nationals of Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Syria, Jordan, Ethiopia, Chad and Yemen.

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**For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on + 44 171 413 5566 or visit our website at <http://www.amnesty.org>**