

UA 298/99

Preventat.**SAUDI ARABIA**

The execution of a Saudi Arabian national in Riyadh on 10 November 1999, brings the total number of executions this year to 102.

Amnesty International believes that dozens more prisoners may be at risk of imminent execution. Although the organization has asked the authorities for details of over 50 such people it has not received a response.

People are sentenced to death after trials which fall far short of internationally recognized standards, including Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which states that "everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law", and resolution 1984/50 adopted by the Economic and Social Council, on the Safeguards guaranteeing the protection of those facing the death penalty.

Prisoners are often tried *in camera* and without legal assistance. Confessions obtained under torture are sometimes admitted in court, despite Saudi Arabia's accession in 1997 to the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

This Urgent Action is the last in a series of weekly preventative death penalty actions issued in the past few weeks. Amnesty International would like to thank all those who have taken part.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Crimes punishable by death in Saudi Arabia include drug trafficking, murder, rape, armed robbery and apostasy (turning away from Islam). Of the 102 people executed this year, 53 have been foreign nationals, 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.

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

- expressing dismay at the continued use of the death penalty and calling for an immediate halt to executions and the commutation of all outstanding death sentences;
- expressing concern that executions are carried out after trials which fall short of international standards, and urging the authorities to follow international standards for capital trials;
- calling for details and clarification of the legal position of all those on death row.

APPEALS TO:

The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines
His Majesty King Fahd bin 'Abdul-'Aziz
Office of H.M. The King
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness, Prince Naif bin 'Abdul-'Aziz
Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior
PO Box 2933, Airport Road,
Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice

His Excellency

Dr. Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
University Street,
Riyadh 11137, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Information

His Excellency Dr. Fuad Abdul Salam Al-Farsi
Minister of Information, Ministry of Information
PO Box 843, Riyadh 11161,
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Faxes: + 966 1 402 3570/405 0674

Salutation: Your Excellency

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 29 December 1999.