

PUBLIC

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17 February 1999

Further information on EXTRA 02/99 (MDE 31/01/99, 8 January 1999) - Fear of imminent execution / Legal concern

YEMEN Abu al-Hassan al-Medhar, also known as Zein al-Abideen al Medhar
Ahmed Mohammad Ali Atif
Sa'ad Mohammad Ali Atif
 Mohsin Ghalain, British, 18
 Shahid Butt, British, 33, married with 4 children
Malik Nassar Harhra, dual Yemeni-British nationality, 26
Ghulam Hussein, British, 25, married
 Samad Ahmed, British, 21
 Amer Abdel Rahman

Amnesty International fears that if found guilty Abu al-Hassan al-Medhar, Ahmed Mohammad Ali Atif and Sa'ad Mohammad Ali Atif, whose trial in connection with a kidnapping began in January 1999, may be at risk of imminent execution. An apparent emerging trend in Yemen of speedy and summary trials and executions, especially in highly-publicised cases, heightens this concern.

The three men were arrested in December 1998 in connection with the kidnapping of 16 tourists and a number of deaths which occurred during a subsequent armed clash with security forces.

Trial proceedings also began in January against Shahid Butt, Malik Nassar Harhra, Ghulam Hussein, Samad Ahmed and Amer Abdel Rahman who are being tried in connection with planning bomb attacks in Aden. All have alleged that they were tortured or ill-treated during an initial period of incommunicado detention following their arrest in December, including being beaten, deprived of sleep and being suspended upside down for long periods. The defendants now have restricted access to lawyers.

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

- acknowledging the Yemeni government's right to bring to justice anyone found responsible for recognizably criminal offences, but expressing your unconditional opposition to the death penalty in all cases as it violates the right to life;
- seeking assurances that all the defendants are tried in accordance with international standards, in particular that their rights to legal assistance and to appeal are recognised and, in capital cases, that the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence is recognised;
- seeking assurances that allegations of torture or ill-treatment are thoroughly and independently investigated and that any evidence found to have been obtained under torture is disregarded and that anyone found guilty of torture is brought to justice;
- seeking assurances that all the detainees are now being treated humanely and have full access to family members, lawyers and doctors;

APPEALS TO:

General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
President of the Republic of Yemen
Sana'a

The Republic of Yemen

Telegrams: President 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh, Sana'a, Yemen

Telexes:2422 RIASAH YE
Faxes:+ 967 1 274 147
Salutation:Your Excellency

Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani
Prime Minister of the Republic of Yemen
26 September Street
Sana'a
The Republic of Yemen
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Sana'a, Yeman
Faxes:+ 967 1 282 686
Salutation:Your Excellency

Minister of Interior
Hussain Muhammad 'Arab
Ministry of Interior
Al-Hasaba District
Airport Road, Sana'a
The Republic of Yemen
Telegrams:Interior Minister, Sana'a, Yemen
Faxes:+ 967 1 332 511
Salutation:Your Excellency

Minister of Justice
Mr Ismael Ahmad al-Wazeer
Ministry of Justice
Al-Ahdel Street, Sana'a
The Republic of Yemen
Telegrams:Justice Minister, Sana'a, Yemen
Faxes: + 967 1 225836
Salutation:Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 March 1999.