

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 31/03/98

EXTRA 39/98

Fear of Imminent Execution

5 June 1998

YEMEN 'Ali 'Abdullah al-Zubaydi

Amnesty International is extremely concerned at reports that 'Ali 'Abdullah al-Zubaydi is scheduled to be executed on Monday 8 June 1998.

'Ali 'Abdullah al-Zubaydi is reported to have been originally scheduled for execution on Saturday 6 June but received a stay of execution following intervention by his lawyer.

'Ali 'Abdullah al-Zubaydi was sentenced to death on murder charges by a Criminal Court on 14 March 1991. This sentence was upheld by the Court of Appeal on 5 January 1992. Although full details of the trial and appeal proceedings are not available, preliminary reports suggest that there have been gross irregularities in both trial and appeal procedures.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

While Amnesty International recognizes the rights and responsibilities of all governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, it is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right to life as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The organization has long-standing concerns regarding the use of the death penalty in Yemen, particularly in light of the fact that sentences are often passed after trials which fail to meet international standards for fair trial (for more details see Amnesty International's report Ratification without implementation: the state of human rights in Yemen, AI Index MDE 31/01/97, pp36-38).

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

- expressing concern that 'Ali 'Abdullah al-Zubaydi appears to be at risk of imminent execution and urging commutation of the death sentence to a humane penalty;
- acknowledging the right of the government to bring to justice anyone found responsible for criminal offences, but expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty in all cases.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency

General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh

President of the Republic of Yemen

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

Telexes: 2422 RIASAH YE

Faxes: + 967 127 4147

Salutation: Your Excellency

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.