

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 112/92 (MDE 23/01/92, 3 April 1992) - Fear of imminent flogging/Legal concern

**SAUDI ARABIA: Maha Sa'ad-ul-Din Banat, female
 Ahmed Hussein al-Zahrani**

Maha Sa'ad-ul-Din Banat, a 35-year-old Syrian national and mother of four who had been sentenced to 200 lashes by the Shari'a Court of Expedient Affairs in Riyadh on 10 March 1992, was administered the lashes in four instalments in a one month period, between April and May 1992. During each of the four sessions, she received 50 lashes, the final session being on 4 May. Maha Banat was accused of adultery with Ahmed Hussein al-Zahrani, a Saudi citizen, whom she claims she does not know, and who was sentenced by the same court to three months' imprisonment and 100 lashes. The lashes were administered to Ahmed Hussein al-Zahrani in two instalments during the first few weeks of April.

The administration of the lashings had been postponed until after the holy month of Ramadan, which, in Saudi Arabia, ended on 2 April.

Amnesty International considers flogging to be cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment prohibited internationally by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention against Torture or Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment and by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters:

- expressing deep regret that Maha Banat and Ahmed al-Zahrani were subjected to floggings during April and May 1992 and reiterating Amnesty International's opposition to the judicial punishment of flogging;

- urging that a prompt and impartial inquiry be carried out into allegations that Maha Banat and Ahmed al-Zahrani were ill-treated while in custody, and that its findings be made public;

- expressing concern that Maha Banat and Ahmed al-Zahrani did not receive a fair trial in accordance with international standards.

APPEALS TO:

His Royal Highness
Prince Naif bin 'Abd al-'Aziz
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegrams: Minister Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Telexes: 404416 DMMOI SJ (Riyadh); 603788 AMN SJ (Jeddah)
Faxes: + 966 1 4050130
[Salutation: Your Royal Highness]

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 July 1992.