

URGENT ACTION

TWELVE MEN EXECUTED; THREE REMAIN AT RISK

Three men in Iraq are at risk of execution. Twelve men convicted on the same charges were executed on 24 November 2011.

Twelve alleged members of armed opposition groups were executed in Iraq on 24 November 2011. They included **Firas Hassan Fleih al-Juburi**, said to be the leader of one armed group, **Fadhel Ibrahim al-Juburi**, **Haydar Mut'eb 'Abdel-Qader** and **Hikmat Fadhel Ibrahim**. A senior justice ministry official, Major General Hamid al-Moussawi, told the media that some of them had been convicted of the murder of people attending a wedding in 2006 at the village of al-Taji, north of Baghdad, and that some had been sentenced for other killings at the village in 2006. He said that "carrying out this execution against such bold criminals is deemed a deterrent that could prevent the repetition of such crimes in the future".

Those executed were reportedly tried under Iraq's anti-terrorism law and sentenced to death by the Central Criminal Court in Baghdad. Relatives of the murder victims are said to have attended and witnessed the hangings

Three other men, whose identities are not known to Amnesty International, are also at imminent risk of execution in connection with the same case, according to information provided to the media by Iraq's Deputy Justice Minister, Busho Ibrahim. He said their execution has been delayed because they are still standing trial in a separate case.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Please write immediately in Arabic and English or your own language:

- Calling on the Iraqi authorities not to proceed with the executions of the of the other three men who remain at risk of execution;
- Urging the authorities to declare an imminent moratorium on executions;
- Calling for the commutation of all death sentences of people on death row;
- Recognizing that governments have an obligation to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes, but insisting that the death penalty violates the right to life and is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and should not be applied even for crimes of the greatest magnitude.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 DECEMBER 2011 TO THE IRAQI REPRESENTATION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND ADDRESSED TO:

Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

President

Jalal Talabani
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Human Rights
Mohammad Shayaa al-Sudani
Convention Centre
(Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 193/11. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE14/044/2011/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The men convicted of responsibility for the massacre of a wedding party near al-Taji in June 2006 were sentenced to death on 16 June by the Central Criminal Court of Iraq in Baghdad. Before that, several of them were shown on the Iraqi TV channel Al Iraqiya apparently “confessing” to these and other killings and other grave crimes; it is unclear whether these statements were freely given or were coerced confessions. The broadcasting of the alleged confessions before their conviction obviously raises doubts about the fairness of their trial and the improper influence that the broadcast may have had in relation to the verdict reached by the court.

The death sentences were ratified by the Iraqi presidency on 1 November 2011.

The 15 men convicted are alleged to have been members of armed opposition groups responsible for dozens of murders, including murders of women and children, cases of abduction and murder, and the rape of women and girls, including the bride at the wedding near al-Taji in June 2006.

The death penalty was used extensively under Saddam Hussain prior to his overthrow by a US-led international coalition in 2003 in Iraq. It was then suspended by the provisional authority established by the USA, but reinstated when a new Iraqi government took office in 2004. Since then, it has been used increasingly, particularly in response to the wave of sectarian and other attacks and killings by armed groups opposed to the government and the continuing presence of US forces in Iraq. Many civilians have been killed and maimed in these attacks.

Currently, as many as 1,000 people are believed to be on death row in Iraq, many of them sentenced after trials which failed to conform to international standards for fair trial.

Amnesty International is opposed to the death penalty in all cases because it is a violation of two fundamental human rights, as laid down in Articles 3 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the right to life and the right not to be tortured or subjected to any cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. The organization considers the death penalty to be the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned human rights abuses by armed groups in Iraq, some of which are war crimes and crimes against humanity, including kidnapping, torture and killing of civilians, and continues to call for those responsible to be brought to justice in accordance with international human rights law and without recourse to the death penalty.

Name: Ibrahim Najm 'Abboud, Firas Hassan Fleih al-Juburi, Fadhel Ibrahim al-Juburi, Haydar Mut'eb 'Abdel-Qader, Hikmat Fadhel Ibrahim, Sayyid Hamadi Ahmed, Sofian Jassem Mohammad and eight others

Gender m/f: M

Further information on UA: 193/11 Index: MDE 14/046/2011 Issue date: 25 November 2011