

URGENT ACTION

EXECUTION OF TWO BROTHERS MAY BE IMMINENT

Amnesty International has received information that two Saudi Arabian brothers Muhammad Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id and Sa'ud Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id are at imminent risk of execution.

Muhammad Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id and **Sa'ud Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id**, who are both married and have children, were sentenced to death in late December 1998 by a court in Mecca, for the murder of another man. Their sentences were ratified in late April 2011 by the King and we issued an Urgent Action which urged the King to halt their impending executions. Amnesty International has since received information from Saudi Arabia that both executions may happen imminently, increasing the need for urgent appeals on behalf of the brothers.

The death sentences were imposed following what appear to have been unfair trial proceedings. According to the lawyers who have assisted them after their sentences, neither of the two brothers had access to a lawyer at the original trial and Sa'ud Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id confessed to the murder under duress after the authorities arrested his elderly father to put pressure on him.

The two brothers have spent 14 years in prison in Ta'if waiting for the children of the man who was killed to reach adulthood. This is because, under Saudi Arabian law, the relatives of a murder victim have to reach the age of majority before they can be consulted on whether they wish to seek execution, request *diya* (compensation) or grant a pardon freely. It is reported that in 2009, after all the children reached the age of majority, they informed the court that they wanted Muhammad Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id and Sa'ud Jaber Sahbah al-Ja'id to be executed.

Please write immediately in Arabic or your own language:

- Urging the King to halt the execution of Muhammad Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id and Sa'ud Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id;
- Calling on the King to commute the death sentences of the brothers and those of others under sentence of death in Saudi Arabia as a matter of urgency, with a view to abolishing the death penalty;
- Reminding the authorities that they should act in accordance with international standards for fair trial, including the UN Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, which state that capital punishment may only be imposed after a fair trial in which the defendant is provided with "adequate legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings".

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:

King

His Majesty King 'Abdullah Bin
'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy
Mosques
Office of His Majesty the King
Royal Court, Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: (via Ministry of the Interior)
+966 1 403 3125 (please keep
trying)
Salutation: Your Majesty

Second Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of the Interior
His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin
'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud, Ministry of the
Interior, P.O. Box 2933, Airport
Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 3125 (please keep
trying)
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

And copies to:

President, Human Rights
Commission
Bandar Mohammed 'Abdullah al-
Aiban
Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 58889, King Fahad Road,
Building No. 373, Riyadh 11515
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Email: hrc@haq-ksa.org

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 176/11. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/011/2011/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Despite a decrease in executions in the last few years, there has been a marked increase in executions this year with no less than 15 people executed in May alone. So far this year, 34 people have been executed, more than the total number of people executed in the whole of 2010. Amnesty International is seriously concerned about over 100 prisoners who are currently known to be under sentence of death in Saudi Arabia.

At least 158 people were executed by the Saudi Arabian authorities in 2007, and at least 102 people were executed in 2008. In 2009, at least 69 people are known to have been executed.

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offences. Court proceedings fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by a lawyer, and in many cases are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. They may be convicted solely on the basis of confessions obtained under duress or deception.

In a report published in 2008 on the use of the death penalty in Saudi Arabia, Amnesty International highlighted the extensive use of the death penalty as well as the disproportionately high number of executions of foreign nationals from developing countries. For further information please see *Saudi Arabia: Affront to Justice: Death Penalty in Saudi Arabia* (Index: MDE 23/027/2008), 14 October 2008: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/saudi-arabia-executions-target-foreign-nationals-20081014>

Name: Muhammad Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id and Sa'ud Jaber Shahbah al-Ja'id

Gender m/f: Both male

Further information on UA: 176/11 Index: MDE 23/017/2011 Issue Date: 27 July 2011

