

# URGENT ACTION

## JUVENILE OFFENDERS AT RISK OF EXECUTION

**A woman and three men sentenced to death in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for murder have had their appeals against the sentences rejected by the Supreme Court. At the time of the crime three of the four individuals convicted were under the age of 18.**

The UAE newspaper *Gulf News* reported on 19 April that the death sentences handed down to the four had been upheld by the Supreme Court. A woman, identified only as Khawla; and two other nationals of the UAE, her alleged lover Fahd, his friend Mukhtar and a Bangladeshi man, Abdullah Hussein, had been sentenced to death, possibly in 2003, by a lower court in Sharjah, one of the UAE's seven emirates, for the premeditated murder of Khawla's husband in the al-Hira area of Sharjah in 2003. At the time of the killing, Khawla, Mukhtar and Abdullah Hussein were 17 years old. Khawla confessed to the police on the day of the crime, and the other three were arrested the next day. The four have been held at Sharjah Central Jail since 2003.

According to *Gulf News*, the Supreme Court rejected three previous appeals. A higher judicial authority is expected to confirm whether the four will face execution by firing squad. Under domestic law, the family of a murder victim can accept retribution, or 'blood money' and pardon those found guilty of murder. In the United Arab Emirates, the amount is fixed at approximately US\$45,000. The parents of the victims have refused to pardon the offenders and have pursued capital punishment for the crime.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, English or your own language:**

- Reminding the authorities of the UAE that the execution of juvenile offenders, those under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged crime, is absolutely prohibited under international law and expressing concerns that three of the individuals sentenced were under the age of 18 at the time of the commission of the crime for which they were convicted;
- Urging the authorities to commute the death sentences;
- Requesting the full names of the four offenders and details of the trials in this case.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 JUNE 2010 TO:**

#### Ministry of Justice

Dr Hadeef bin Jua'an Al Dhaheri

Minister of Justice

POB: 260, Abu Dhabi, UAE

**Email: fill in relevant fields:**

**<http://ecomplaint.moj.gov.ae/WComplaintEnglish.aspx>**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Ministry of Interior

Lt-General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al

Nahyan

Minister of Interior

Human Rights Directorate

POB: 398, Abu Dhabi, UAE

**Fax: +971 4 3981119**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

And copies to:

#### Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan

POB 1, Abu Dhabi,

United Arab Emirates

**Fax: +971 2 4447766**

**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.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The UAE is a state party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. On 13 April 2002 the independent body which reviews states' implementation of the treaty urged the UAE to raise the age of criminal responsibility from seven years to 18, in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention; and ensure that deprivation of liberty is only used as a measure of last resort for children, for the shortest possible time, is authorized by the court, and that no one under 18 is detained with adults. For more information, see: <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/%28Symbol%29CRC.C.15.Add.183.En?Opendocument>

There appears to be a surge in the use of the death penalty in the UAE in 2010. At least 25 men have been sentenced to death in the UAE so far this year.

In March 2009, the government pledged to implement 36 of 74 recommendations made in December 2008 after the examination of the country's human rights record during the Universal Periodic Review in the framework of the UN Human Rights Council. These included recommendations relating to women's rights, the rights of migrant workers and the ratification of international human rights treaties. However, the government said it would not abolish the death penalty.

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