

# URGENT ACTION

## DEATH PENALTY FOR JUVENILE ACTIVIST

**A court in Saudi Arabia has sentenced a Shi'a activist to death for crimes it judged he committed when he was 17 years old. He claims he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated to make him "confess", but his allegation has not been investigated. He has had no access to his lawyer.**

**Ali Mohammed Baqir al-Nimr** was sentenced to death on 27 May by the Specialized Criminal Court in Jeddah, for offences that included participating in demonstrations against the government, attacking the security forces, possessing a machine-gun and armed robbery. The court seems to have based its decision on signed "confessions" which Ali al-Nimr claims were extracted under torture and other ill-treatment, and has refused to look into this allegation.

Ali al-Nimr was arrested on 14 February 2012, when he was 17 years old, and taken to the General Directorate of Investigations (GDI) prison in Dammam, in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. He was denied access to his lawyer and was allegedly tortured and otherwise ill-treated by officers of the GDI to make him sign a "confession". He was then taken to a centre for juvenile rehabilitation, Dar al-Mulahaza, before being returned to the GDI prison in Dammam when he turned 18.

Ali al-Nimr is the nephew of Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, a Shi'a cleric from Qatif who has been detained since July 2012 and is now on trial at the Specialized Criminal Court for offences including banditry (*haraba*), which carries the death penalty.

### **Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities, given the serious concerns about the fairness of the trial of Ali Mohammed Baqir al-Nimr, to quash his conviction and death sentence and ensure that he receives a fair trial in line with international law and standards and without resort to the death penalty;
- Calling on them to open an independent investigation into his allegation of torture and other ill-treatment;
- Reminding them of Saudi Arabia's obligations as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which prohibits the use of the death penalty on anyone aged under 18 at the time of the crime;
- Urging them to establish immediately an official moratorium on all executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty in Saudi Arabia.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 JULY 2014 TO:**

#### King and Prime Minister

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 11 403 3125 (please keep trying)  
**Salutation: Your Majesty**

#### Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed  
bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud  
Ministry of the Interior, P.O. Box 2933,  
Airport Road, Riyadh 11134  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
Fax: +966 11 403 3125 (please keep  
trying)  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Minister of Justice

His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin  
Abdulkareem Al-Issa  
Ministry of Justice  
University Street  
Riyadh 11137  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
Fax: +966 11 401 1741  
+966 11 402 0311

**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.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia is one of the top executioners in the world, with more than 2,000 people executed between 1985 and 2013. In 2013, it executed at least 79 people, three of whom were juveniles at the time of the crimes for which they were put to death.

Court proceedings in Saudi Arabia fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by lawyers, 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. Foreign nationals with no knowledge of Arabic – the language of pre-trial interrogation and trial hearings – are often denied adequate interpretation facilities.

Tensions between members of the Shi’a Muslim community and the Saudi Arabian authorities have increased since 2011 when, inspired in part by protests that swept the Middle East and North Africa region, Saudi Arabians in the Kingdom’s predominantly Shi’a Eastern Province stepped up public calls for reforms. Since 2011, demonstrations have also been organized to protest against the arrest, imprisonment and harassment of members of the Shi’a community for holding collective prayer meetings, celebrating Shi’a Muslim religious festivals and breaching restrictions on building Shi’a mosques and religious schools.

The Saudi Arabian authorities have responded with repressive measures against those suspected of taking part in or supporting protests or expressing views critical of the state. Protesters have been held without charge and incommunicado for days or weeks at a time, and some are reported to have been tortured and otherwise ill-treated. Close to 20 people connected with protests in the Eastern Province have been killed since 2011 and hundreds have been imprisoned. Of those whose cases have moved to the courts, many have been charged solely for participating in demonstrations.

Among those held by the Saudi Arabian authorities are two Shi’a religious clerics, Sheikh Tawfiq Jaber Ibrahim al-‘Amr and Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, detained in August 2011 and July 2012 respectively. Both men are on trial, on a similar set of charges. For more information on Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/saudi-arabia-must-charge-or-release-detained-dissident-cleric-2012-08-09>. For more information on Sheikh Tawfiq Jaber Ibrahim al-‘Amr, see <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/mde23/004/2011> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/mde23/006/2011>.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. It violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

Name: Ali Mohammed Baqir al-Nimr  
Gender m/f: m

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