

PUBLIC

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Imminent execution

YEMEN

Amina Ali Abdulatif (f), aged 21
Muhammad Ali Said Qaba'il (m), aged 26

Amina Ali Abdulatif is reportedly scheduled to be executed on 2 May. She was reportedly sentenced to death when she was 16 years old, although the Yemeni Penal Code expressly prohibits the use of the death penalty against anyone convicted of crimes committed when they were under 18.

She was convicted of the murder of her husband, who had been killed in January 1998, and sentenced to death on 24 May 1999. She had reportedly been tortured to force her to confess, and has since maintained her innocence. Muhammad Ali Said Qaba'il was also sentenced to death for the murder, but it is not known when he is scheduled for execution.

The court of appeal did not consider Amina's age, and upheld the sentence in July 2001. The Supreme Court upheld the sentence in July 2002, and the sentence was ratified by the president shortly afterwards.

Not long after the president ratified the sentence, Amina Ali Abdulatif was, according to her lawyer, put before a firing squad. It was only when the executioners noticed that she was pregnant that the execution was stopped. According to her lawyer she had been raped by one of the guards at al-Mahawweet prison. As a result she gave birth to a child, who is with her in Sana'a Women Central prison, where she is now held, and is now very nearly two years old.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has longstanding concerns about the use of the death penalty in Yemen, particularly as death sentences are often passed after proceedings which fall short of international standards for fair trial.

While Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of recognizably criminal offences, it is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right to life.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- urging the President to commute the death sentence passed on Amina Ali Abdulatif and Muhammad Ali Said Qaba'il, and stressing that the Yemeni Penal Code prohibits the execution of people convicted of crimes committed when they were under 18;
- acknowledging that the government has a right to bring to justice those responsible for criminal offences, but expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty;
- reminding the authorities that they are bound by international standards for fair trial in capital cases, including the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence;
- calling on the authorities to order an investigation into the rape of Amina Ali Abdulatif, allegedly by a prison guard, and to ensure that she is protected from any further ill-treatment while she is in prison.

APPEALS TO:

President

His Excellency General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
President of the Republic of Yemen
Sanaa
Republic of Yemen

Faxes: + 967 127 4147

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior

His Excellency Dr Rashid Muhammad al-Alimi
Ministry of Interior
Sanaa
Republic of Yemen

Faxes: + 967 1 332 511

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Human Rights

Her Excellency Amat al Aeem al Suswah
Ministry for Human Rights
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Faxes: + 967 1 444 838

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 June 2005.