

7 June 1999

Further information on EXTRA 56/99 - Death Penalty / Legal Concern (AMR 51/73/99, 4 May 1999) and follow-up (AMR 51/88/99, 3 June)

USA (Oklahoma) Scotty Lee MOORE, aged 42

Scotty Lee Moore's lawyer has asked for her thanks and the thanks of Scotty Moore and his family to be passed on to all those who tried to save his life. As reported earlier, Scotty Moore was executed on 3 June 1999, despite many appeals for clemency.

As described in previous Urgent Actions (for example, see UA 292/98, AMR 51/93/98, 10 November 1998, and follow-up to UA 305/98, AMR 51/07/99, 14 January 1999) it is Oklahoma State Penitentiary H-Unit policy to keep a death row prisoner in solitary confinement in a special punishment cell for a prolonged period leading up to his execution date. It is reported that, following the spate of executions in late 1998/early 1999 the policy has changed from 60-day isolation to 30-day isolation prior to execution. Amnesty International will continue to campaign against this practice and other aspects of H-Unit conditions which amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as for an end to executions.

While still in his punishment cell, Scotty Moore wrote: "Under my present circumstances I felt it was important to tell you what is happening in H Unit at McAlester. At present, I am incarcerated in the "high max" or punishment cell awaiting my execution. This is a disciplinary cell and used only for punishment. I have been locked up here only because I have an execution date - not because I have broken any prison rules. It is extreme isolation here behind two closed front steel doors. This high max cell is even more removed from human contact than the rest of H Unit is. Human beings are social creatures. When you isolate someone you torture him. I was put in this isolation cell thirty days prior to my execution date. This torturous policy started after Robert Brecheen attempted suicide while hours away from his execution [in 1995, see UA 292/98 for details]. Since then anyone with an execution date is locked up in this punishment cell. The extreme isolation creates suffering yet in the midst of all this I have done my very best to remain hopeful regarding the outcome of my scheduled date. I would like to say that the many letters, cards, telegrams and emails I have received and all the letters sent to Clemency Board members and the Governor have been a tremendous help and support to me. They have helped me maintain hope and connection to the rest of the real world. I am very grateful. Also, I believe that the impact of the international pressure placed upon US state and federal officials IS HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT. In times past, we became discouraged with the letter writing campaigns, signing of petitions, etc hoping that this would bring relief to death sentenced people and seeing little result. But recently we have seen the tide beginning to turn. There are signs that the pressure, in whatever form, from the international community IS HAVING impact on the political leaders who have been so determined to kill in the name of "Justice". A particular example is of my clemency hearing, where Assistant Attorney General Bill Hume was irate, rude and vicious in his attack against Amnesty International and all international supporters of me. His fear was a signal that what you are doing is working!!! So my word to you is please do not become discouraged... We cannot expect to win them all. The harsh reality is more will be murdered by the state. We cannot allow these state sanctioned killings to overwhelm or defeat us. If we do nothing we can be sure we will get nothing. My hope and prayer is that regardless of the hard

task ahead, those of you in the international community will continue in this struggle. I believe St. Augustine said it best: "An unjust law is no law". Please continue this battle and know how much your presence and your contact helps those of us caught up in this nightmare. Thank you and please continue your prayers."

Note: Scotty Moore's reference to an attack by the Assistant Attorney General refers to that official's attempt at the clemency hearing to trivialize and reject Amnesty International's and other international appeals for clemency on the grounds that they were written from an anti-death penalty perspective, and were from people who did not know Scotty Moore.

Amnesty International makes no apologies for opposing the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. A woman from the Netherlands, who has known Scotty Moore through correspondence with him over many years, and who had gone to Oklahoma to be present at the clemency hearing, has written to the official in question pointing out the offence that his comments caused her personally, and told him that many other appeals had come from people overseas who, like her, had known Scotty Moore.

No further action is requested by the UA Network.