

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 76/00 (AMR 51/151/00, 3 October 2000) - Death penalty / Legal concern

USA (Alabama) Jeffrey Franklin, aged 19

On 5 October, the judge overseeing the trial of 19-year-old Jeffrey Franklin in Huntsville, Alabama, declared a mistrial. The trial will now be rescheduled, and is unlikely to begin until next year.

The mistrial was declared on the grounds of juror misconduct during jury selection: several of the prospective jurors had talked about the case among themselves, even after they were warned not to do so by the judge.

The judge also raised the possibility that he would move the trial away from Huntsville. Earlier he had rejected a defence motion for a change of venue because of the high-profile nature of the crime.

Jeffrey Franklin is charged with murdering his parents, Gerald and Cynthia Franklin, and with attempting to murder three of his siblings. The Madison County District Attorney's Office intends to seek the death penalty against him in violation of international law, which forbids the use of the death penalty against those who were under 18 years old at the time the crime was committed. Jeffrey Franklin was 17 years old when his family was attacked, reportedly with a hatchet, on 10 March 1998.

Although participants who wish to may still send an appeal on this case, no further action is requested at this time. Many thanks to all who sent appeals. A letter from an Urgent Action participant in the UK was published by the *Huntsville Times* on 6 October.