

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 28/01

Death Pen

EGYPT Fatima Muhammad 'Abdullah (f), aged 35

Fatima Muhammad 'Abdullah, who was sentenced to death by hanging on 8 May, is at risk of imminent execution.

The 35-year old woman was convicted for the murder of her husband by the Qana Criminal Court.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Egyptian courts have increased their use of the death penalty in the last few years. At least 36 people, including 2 women, have been sentenced to death this year alone. The death penalty is applied for criminal offences such as drug use or trafficking, murder and offences related to "terrorism".

Death sentences are first approved by Egypt's highest religious authority, the *Mufti*, and then passed to the President of the Republic or his nominee for ratification. Appeals against final verdicts by criminal courts can be submitted to the Court of Cassation, but only on the grounds of procedural irregularities in the trial.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- acknowledging the seriousness of the crime for which Fatima Muhammad 'Abdullah has been convicted;
- expressing your opposition to the death penalty in all cases, as a violation of the right to life as set out in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";
- pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishments, and that it is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- urging the President to use his constitutional powers to grant clemency and commute this and all other outstanding death sentences;
- drawing attention to the world trend towards abolishing or reducing the use of the death penalty, in accordance with Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt

Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN
Faxes: + 202 390 1998
e-mails: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Ms Shadia Farag
The Human Rights Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt

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Faxes: + 202 574 9533

Dr Fathi Sorour

Speaker

The People's Assembly

Magles al-Sha'ab Street, Cairo, Egypt

Faxes: + 202 574 9175

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 June 2001.