

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 14/001/2007

04 January 2007

UA 02/07 Imminent execution/possible death sentence

IRAQ **Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti (m)**  
**'Awad Hamad al-Bandar al-Sa'dun (m)**  
**Taha Yassin Ramadhan (m)**

---

The three men named above are all at risk of imminent execution. The first two, who were sentenced to death on 5 November after an unfair trial, could be executed as early as 7 January. Former vice-president Taha Yassin Ramadhan, though sentenced to life imprisonment, is now likely to be sentenced to death.

Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti is Saddam Hussain's half-brother, and was the head of the Iraqi Intelligence Service, the *Mukhabarat*. 'Awad Hamad al-Bandar al-Sa'dun was the head of the Revolutionary Court. They were sentenced to death along with former president Saddam Hussain, after an unfair trial before the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal (SICT), in connection with the killing of 148 people from the village of al-Dujail, north of Baghdad, after a failed attempt to assassinate Saddam Hussain in 1982. Four other defendants in the case, including Taha Yassin Ramadhan, received prison terms and another was acquitted.

The three men sentenced to death had their appeals rejected by the SICT's Appeals Chamber on 26 December 2006, and by law the sentences must be carried out within 30 days. Saddam Hussain was executed by hanging on 30 December.

Taha Yassin Ramadhan is also at risk of execution. On 26 December 2006 the Appeals Chamber referred his case back to the court requesting a higher sentence, suggesting that he is now at risk of being sentenced to death and executed.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International welcomed the decision to bring Saddam Hussain to justice for the human rights violations committed by his government, but this should have been through a fair trial process and without recourse to the death penalty. In the event, the trial, which opened in October 2005 in Baghdad, was unfair. It was marked by political interference and was widely criticised for failing to satisfy international standards for fair trial. No adequate measures were taken to ensure the protection of witnesses and defence lawyers, three of whom were assassinated during the course of the trial. Amnesty International raised its concerns about the trial of Saddam Hussain and others before the SICT on several occasions.

Since the reintroduction of the death penalty in Iraq in August 2004, scores of people have been sentenced to death and there has been a rapid rise in the number of executions, with at least 65 people put to death in 2006 alone, many of them after trials which may have been unfair.

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

- expressing concern that Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti and 'Awad Hamad al-Bandar al-Sa'dun are facing imminent execution;
- expressing concern that the Appeals Chamber has rejected Taha Yassin Ramadhan's sentence of life imprisonment and apparently requested that he be sentenced to death;
- expressing concern that the trial of Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, Taha Yassin Ramadhan and 'Awad Hamad al-Bandar al-Sa'dun before the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal failed to meet international fair trial standards;

- recognizing the right of governments to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes but insisting that this be done through fair trial and without resort to the death penalty;
- expressing opposition to the death penalty on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- calling on the authorities to commute these and all other death sentences and take steps to abolish the death penalty in law and practice.

**APPEALS TO:** fax numbers and e-mail addresses for the Iraqi authorities are not available. Please send appeals via the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country, asking them to forward your appeals to:

President

Jalal Talabani

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

**E-mail:** iraqigov@yahoo.com

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Hashim al-Shibli

**E-mail:** minister@iraqi-justice.org  
head-minister@iraqi-justice.org  
deputy@iraqi-justice.org

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hoshyar Zebari

**E-mail:** press@iraqmofa.net

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:** Ask the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative to send copies to the Human Rights Minister, Wajdan Mikhail.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**