

EXTERNAL

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Death Penalty

5 January 1998

**JORDAN**Firas Issam, 24

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Firas Issam was sentenced to death by the Amman Criminal Court on 28 December 1997 after being found guilty of robbing and killing a man in Aqaba in February 1997.

The death sentence must be ratified by the Court of Cassation and King Hussein bin Talal before it can be carried out.

Amnesty International does not condone violent crime and recognizes the role of governments in bringing perpetrators of such crimes to justice. However, the organization considers the death penalty to be the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and a violation of the right to life, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is therefore unconditionally opposed to its use.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Eleven people were executed in Jordan in 1997. Others are awaiting hearings before the Court of Cassation. In 1996, at least 23 people were sentenced to death and 10 people were executed. At least 13 people had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment by King Hussein bin Talal in 1996.

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

- expressing sympathy for the victims of violent crimes and their families and acknowledging the role of governments in bringing the perpetrators of such crimes to justice;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty, which has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect and which is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- urging King Hussein bin Talal to commute the death sentence imposed upon Firas Issam on 28 December 1997 to a more humane form of punishment;
- urging that no more executions be carried out in Jordan and that the government work towards abolishing the death penalty by the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal  
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
The Royal Palace

Amman

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Telegrams: King Hussein, Amman, Jordan**

**Faxes: + 962 6 627 421**

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

'Abd al-Salam Majali  
Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
PO Box 80  
Amman  
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
**Telegrams: Prime Minister, Amman, Jordan**  
**Faxes: + 962 6 642 520**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Riyad Shak'a  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
Amman, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Amman, Jordan**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Nazir Rashid  
Minister of Interior  
Ministry of Interior  
Amman, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
**Telegrams: Interior Minister, Amman, Jordan**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Jordan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 16 February 1998.