

PUBLIC

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Death penalty / Legal concern

15 October 2001

JORDAN

Basim 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma (m), 26 years old, Ra'ed 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma (m), 24 years old, his brother

The brothers named above were sentenced to death on 30 May following a reportedly unfair trial. They have no further right of appeal and will be executed if His Majesty King 'Abdallah bin Hussein confirms their death sentence.

According to reports, Ra'ed 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma had a fight with a third man, Mahmoud al-'Affishat at the al-Zarqa sports club on 9 May 1998, which resulted in both of them being hospitalized. Mahmoud al-'Affishat later died from his injuries and Ra'ed 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma remained in hospital for 15 days. Basim 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma was reportedly not involved in nor present at the time of the fight.

On 23 February 2000 both brothers were found guilty of accidental killing. The Court of Cassation upheld the death penalty against the two men, although one of the judges reportedly refused to sign the decision on the grounds that the trial was unfair.

The defendants' lawyer petitioned the Minister of Justice without success. Their final hope for clemency lies with His Majesty King Abdullah bin Hussein.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International does not in any way condone violent crime, but opposes the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Capital punishment has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect and a death sentence is irrevocable.

At least nine people have been executed in Jordan this year.

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

- urging the King 'Abdallah bin Hussein to commute the death sentence passed against Basim 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma and Ra'ed 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma;
- calling for Basim 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma and Ra'ed 'Abdallah Najeeb Abu-Shamma to be re-tried according to international standards for fair trials;
- noting that governments have not only a right but also an obligation to bring those who plan or perpetrate violent crimes to justice, but that this should be done in accordance with international standards for fair trials;
- urging that no more executions be carried out in Jordan and that the Government work towards abolishing the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

His Majesty King 'Abdallah bin Hussein
Office of H.M. the King
Royal Palace
Amman

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Telegrams: King 'Abdallah bin Hussein, Amman, Jordan

Faxes: + 962 6 463 4755

Salutation: Your Majesty

Faris Nabulsi
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice
PO Box 6040

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Amman
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Telegrams: Deputy Prime Minister, Amman, Jordan
Fax + 962 6 568 0238
Salutation: Your Excellency

Dr Fayez Tarawneh
Chief of the Royal Court
PO Box 80
Amman
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Telegrams: Chief of the Royal Court, Amman, Jordan
Fax: + 962 6 463 1452
Salutation: Dear Dr Tarawneh

COPIES TO:

Her Majesty Queen Rania
President of the Royal Commission on Human Rights
Office of her Majesty the Queen
Royal Palace
Amman
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Salutation: Your Majesty

and 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 12 November 2001.