

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 21/011/2001

EXTRA 55/01

**PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY/Khaled al-'Akka,28
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**

Khaled al-'Akka was condemned to death on 12 August for collaborating with the Israeli security services, after he confessed to passing on information that led to the killing of a member of President Yasser Arafat's bodyguard. He is not entitled to appeal, and he could be executed at any time, if President Arafat ratifies his sentence.

He received an unfair and summary trial before the Higher State Security Court in Gaza. The trial took no more than four hours in total. Khaled al-'Akka told the court that he had given the Israelis information about a major in the Force 17 presidential guard, Mas'ud 'Ayyad, who was extrajudicially executed by Israeli forces on 13 February 2001.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has previously condemned trials by the Higher State Security Court as being grossly unfair. Trials are often summary, take place before military judges and there is no right of appeal. Sentences are subject only to ratification by President Yasser Arafat and may be carried out within hours or days of the trial.

Since the end of July 2001, five men have been sentenced to death by the Higher State Security Court for treason and collaborating with Israel. They were accused of providing information about individuals who were assassinated by the Israeli security forces. (See EXTRA 45/01, 1 August 2001, MDE 21/008/2001 and EXTRA 47/01, 3 August 2001, MDE 21/009/2001 and MDE 21/010/2001). Two Palestinians were executed on 13 January 2001, one of them was executed only a day after his trial.

Amnesty International recognizes the need to bring the perpetrators of crime to justice, but this must be done in proceedings which meet international standards for fair trial.

The organization is opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and a violation of the right to life.

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

- recognizing the need to bring perpetrators of crimes to justice;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty, and urging President Yasser Arafat not to ratify the death sentence imposed on Khaled al-'Akka;
- expressing concern that Khaled al-'Akka was sentenced in unfair proceedings, and that he is being denied the right to appeal against the sentence to a higher court, in violation of international human rights standards;
- calling for a retrial to take place before an ordinary criminal court in accordance with international standards for fair trial and without the imposition of the death penalty;
- urging that no more executions be carried out in the Palestinian Authority, and that the authorities work towards abolishing the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

President Yasser Arafat
Palestinian Authority
Al-Muntada
Gaza

Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: President Arafat, Palestinian Authority, Gaza

Faxes: + 972 8 282 2366 (when voice answers, please ask for fax tone)

Salutation: Dear President Arafat

Mr Freih Abu Meddein
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Abu Khadra Building
Omar al-Mukhtar Street
Gaza

Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Palestinian Authority, Gaza

Faxes: + 972 8 286 7109

Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Khaled al-Qidreh
Attorney General for the State Security Courts
Police Headquarters
Gaza

Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: Khaled al-Qidreh, Police Headquarters, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Faxes: + 972 8 282 4253 (when voice answers, please ask for fax tone)

Salutation: Dear Mr al-Qidreh

COPIES TO:

to diplomatic representatives of the Palestinian Authority accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 September 2001.