

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Penalty/Fear of execution

25 November 1993

ALGERIA Didier-Roger GUYAN (French national)

Amnesty International is gravely concerned at the confirmation on 23 November 1993 by the Algerian Supreme Court of the death sentence passed on Didier-Roger Guyan. The organization fears that his execution may now be imminent.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Didier-Roger Guyan, a 44-year-old French national whose Algerian wife lives in France, was arrested on 12 June 1991 at a police roadblock as he was driving to Algiers. Firearms and explosives were allegedly found hidden in his car.

At his trial Didier-Roger Guyan, a convert to Islam, reportedly stated that he had returned to Algeria in order to serve the cause of the Algerian Islamic state "which would arise from the [postponed then cancelled] elections of 27 June 1991". He was sentenced to death by the Tiaret Criminal Court on 30 December 1992 on charges of "plotting to propagate massacre and devastation" and illegal possession of firearms and explosives. Three co-defendants tried with him were sentenced to prison terms of five and eight years.

At least 360 death sentences have been passed in Algeria since a state of emergency came into force in February 1992 (renewed for an indefinite period in February 1993). To date, 26 people have been executed in Algeria this year, the first executions since 1989.

Amnesty International acknowledges the seriousness of the situation in Algeria and the right of the authorities to bring to justice those responsible for offences such as those Didier-Roger Guyan was convicted of. However, such offences provide no justification for the death penalty, which is a violation of the right to life and the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.

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

- expressing deep regret at the confirmation by the Algerian supreme court of the death sentence passed on Didier-Roger Guyan;
- urging Ali Kafi, President of the Haut Comité d'Etat, to commute his sentence;
- expressing grave concern that at least 360 death sentences have been passed in Algeria since February 1992 and urging that Ali Kafi commute all outstanding and future death sentences;
- emphasising that Amnesty International acknowledges the seriousness of the situation in Algeria, but that the organization unconditionally opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. These rights are enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

(ICCP), to which Algeria is a state party, and may not be derogated from under any circumstances.

APPEALS TO

(all salutations: Excellence/Your Excellency)

1) President of the Haut Comité d'Etat

M. Ali KAFI

Président du Haut Comité d'Etat

Présidence de la République

El-Mouradia

Alger, Algérie

faxes: +213 2 609618

telegrams: Président Kafi, Alger, Algérie

telexes: 66044/66088

2) Prime Minister and member of the Haut Comité d'Etat

M. Redha MALEK

Chef du Gouvernement

Palais du Gouvernement

Alger, Algérie

telexes: 66217/66221

telegrams: Premier Ministre Malek, Alger, Algérie

3) Minister of Justice

M. Mohamed TEGUIA

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

Alger, Algérie

faxes: +213 2 796557

telexes: 61498

telegrams: Ministre Téguia, Ministre de la Justice, Alger, Algérie

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Governmental Human Rights body:

Observatoire national des droits de l'homme

Palais du Peuple

Avenue F. Roosevelt

Alger, Algérie

faxes: +213 2 601042

and to diplomatic representatives of Algeria accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 December 1993.