

PUBLIC

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UA 257/08 Flogging/ Risk of Death Sentence

SAUDI ARABIA	Abbas Majood Akanni (m)]
	Murtala Amao Oladele (m)]
	Abbas Azeez Oladuni (m)]
	Nurudeen Owoalade (m)]
	Mohammed Abdulahi Yussuf (m)]
	Wahid Elebyte (m)] Nigerian nationals
	Mafiu Obadina (m)]
	Ahmed Abbas Alabi (m)]
	Samiu Hamud Zuberu (m)]
	Kasim Afolabi Afolabi (m)]
	Abdullamim Shobayo (m)]

The 11 Nigerian men named above, who are serving prison sentences in Saudi Arabia, have also been sentenced to flogging, and are at risk of being sentenced to death.

They were arrested in September 2002 and each sentenced in 2004 or 2005 to five years' imprisonment and 500 lashes, in connection with the murder of a policeman. In 2005 this sentence was increased to seven years' imprisonment and 700 lashes. In May this year, the men were brought to court and told that their sentences had been increased to 10 years' imprisonment and 1,000 lashes. Then in July, according to a reliable source, they were taken to court again and told that their sentences had now been increased to 15 years' imprisonment and 1,000 lashes.

Amnesty International does not know whether the trial has concluded, but fears that, because of the way the men's sentences have been increased, seemingly arbitrarily, the men are at risk of being sentenced to death.

A 12th Nigerian national, Nurudeen Sani, was jailed along with the other 11 men, but died in prison in September 2008. The exact circumstances of his death are unknown to Amnesty International, but according to reliable sources he was gravely ill but said not to have received adequate medical treatment.

Nigerian national Suliamon Olyfemi, who was also tried with them, was sentenced to death, and is at imminent risk of execution. See UA 299/06 (Index: MDE 23/003/2006) of 09 November 2006 and follow-ups.

All 13 men were convicted following a closed trial, at which they had no legal representation or consular assistance. According to a reliable source they were also not provided with adequate translation facilities, despite having difficulties speaking or understanding Arabic, the language of all the proceedings.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At least 71 people have been executed so far this year in Saudi Arabia, though the true figure may be much higher. Almost half of those executed have been foreign nationals.

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

- urging the authorities to prevent the 11 Nigerian men from being flogged, and seeking assurances that they are not at risk of being sentenced to death.

APPEALS TO:

King Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Office of His Majesty The King
Royal Court
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road, Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 1185 (please keep trying)
Salutation: our Royal Highness

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO:

Mr Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
President, Human Rights Commission
PO Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road, Building No.373
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

His Excellency Chief Ojo Maduekwe
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Maputo Street, off Abidjan Street
Wuse Zone 3,
P.M.B. 130, Garki
Abuja, Nigeria
Email: unit@mfa.gov.ngf

and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia and Nigeria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 October 2008.