

URGENT ACTION

REDUCTION IN PRISON SENTENCE FOR US SOLDIER

Military authorities in the USA have approved a three-month reduction in the prison sentence of conscientious objector Travis Bishop. He was imprisoned for one year for refusing to serve with the army in Afghanistan because of his religious beliefs. It is likely that he will be released next month. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience.

Following **Travis Bishop's** sentencing, the authorities at the military base where he is held received hundreds of letters appealing for his release. They told Travis Bishop's lawyer to include these letters in a clemency petition. In January 2010, Travis Bishop's lawyer submitted the petition, enclosing 433 letters in support of Travis Bishop. Shortly after the submission, the Commander General of the military base where Travis Bishop is held ordered the sentence to be reduced by three months. Travis Bishop's lawyer estimates that he will be released in late March 2010, taking his good behaviour into account.

Travis Bishop has asked his lawyer to relay this message to the many people who have written letters: "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you to everyone who wrote letters and supported me! This is amazing and unprecedented." (See <http://freetravisbishop.wordpress.com/2010/02/10/war-resister-travis-bishop-gets-three-month-reduction-in-sentence/>)

His lawyer has also personally thanked Amnesty International members "for all of your help on this case. I think the letters may have made the difference. It is extremely rare to get this much time reduced from a sentence".

No further action is requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 221/09 (AMR 51/093/2009). Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/093/2009/en.

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