

PUBLIC

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Death Pen

EGYPTWidad Habib Saleh (f)

Mohammad Ramadhan Mohammad Ma'atouq

Fatiha Mohammad al-Tahawi (f)

Saber Adel Ahmed al-Farghali, her son

Hani Salah

Ikrami Salah, his brother

Ahmad Ibrahim

'Eid Mansour

During December 1999, death sentences were passed down, in three different cases, to those named above. Since their death sentences have already been approved by the *Mufti*, the highest Muslim authority in the country, their last chance now lies with the President, to whom the sentences have been sent for ratification.

On 13 December, the Giza Criminal Court sentenced Widad Habib Saleh and Mohammad Ramadhan Mohammad Ma'atouq to death after they were found guilty of the murder of Widad's husband.

On 16 December, Fatiha Mohammad al-Tahawi, also referred to in press reports by the name of Fatiha Husein Mahmoud, and her son Saber Adel Ahmed al-Farghali, were sentenced to death by the Cairo Criminal Court after both were found guilty of the murder of Fatiha's employer.

On 19 December, the Criminal Court in Giza sentenced Hani Salah, Ikrami Salah, Ahmad Ibrahim and 'Eid Mansour to death. All four were accused of the rape of a woman in Giza in December 1998.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The death penalty, which is applied for criminal offences such as drug use or trafficking, and murder, and for offences related to "terrorism", has been used extensively in the country in recent years. In 1998 Amnesty International recorded 74 death sentences passed by military, criminal and (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts, and 48 executions. In 1999, 105 death sentences and 16 executions were recorded.

Death sentences passed down by criminal and (Emergency) Supreme State Security courts are submitted to the *Mufti* for approval as a routine measure. Most cases are approved. They are then passed to the President of the Republic or his nominee for ratification. Appeals against final verdicts by criminal courts can be submitted to the Court of Cassation, but only when procedural irregularities in the trial can be proved.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telexes/faxes/E-mails/express/airmail letters in Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- acknowledging the seriousness of the crimes of which Widad Habib Saleh, Mohammad Ramadhan Mohammad Ma'atouq, Fatiha Mohammad al-Tahawi, Saber Adel Ahmed al-Farghali, Hani Salah, Ikrami Salah, Ahmad Ibrahim and 'Eid Mansour were convicted, but explaining your opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life (as stated in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and

security of person"), pointing out that it has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect, and is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- urging the President to use his constitutional powers to grant clemency and commute these and all other pending death sentences;
- drawing attention to world trends to abolish or reduce the use of the death penalty, in accordance with Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party.

APPEALS TO:

If you are unable to get a fax tone for the President - it is sometimes disconnected - please send your appeal to him using the fax number provided for the Human Rights Department below, asking for it to be forwarded on.

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt
Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN
Faxes: + 202 390 1998
E-mails: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Mr Hani Khalaf
The Human Rights Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil, Cairo, Egypt
Faxes: + 202 574 9533

Dr Fathi Sorour
Speaker
The People's Assembly
Magles al-Sha'ab Street, Cairo, Egypt
Faxes: + 202 574 9175

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 February 2000.