

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 368/93 (MDE 12/18/93, 15 October 1993) - and follow-up (MDE 12/26/93, 1 December 1993) - Death Penalty/Legal Concern

EGYPT:Yahya Mustafa Imam SHAHROUR  
Ahmed Mohammad HAMMOUDA  
Hesham Taha Ahmed SALIM

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The three men named above were executed today, 16 December. They had been sentenced to death by the Supreme Military Court in Alexandria in two separate political cases on 14 October 1993.

Yahya Mustafa Imam Shahrour was sentenced to death in the case known as *Talai' al-Fatah* (Vanguards of the Conquest) - Group 3, in which 33 people were tried. Charges against those convicted included reviving the banned Islamic group known as *Gihad* (Holy Struggle) and attempting to overthrow the government.

Ahmed Mohammad Hammouda and Hesham Taha Ahmed Salim were among 19 defendants accused in Military Case no. 20. Charges included planning the assassination of government officials.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the last 18 months politically motivated acts of violence by armed opposition groups have escalated sharply in Egypt. Islamic militant groups have committed deliberate and arbitrary killings, which Amnesty International has condemned. Victims have included a writer known for his secularist views, tourists, Copts, government officials and police and prison officers.

The three people named above were sentenced to death by a military court, even though all of them were civilians. (For further information see recent Amnesty International report Military trials of civilians: a catalogue of human rights violations, MDE 12/16/93, October 1993). Death sentences are subject to ratification by the President of the Republic, and then review by the Military Appeals' Bureau, also headed by the President of the Republic. Such procedures fall far short of international standards for fair trial, as guaranteed by Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party, which guarantee that everyone who is convicted shall have the right to their conviction and sentence being reviewed by a higher tribunal. The United Nations' Economic and Social Council has urged that these rights be respected in all cases involving the death penalty.

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

- expressing grave concern at these executions, which Amnesty International

considers to be summary and arbitrary executions;

- urging that civilians should not be tried by military courts and calling for new trials in civilian courts which comply with international standards to which Egypt is a state party (the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights);
- expressing concern at the sudden upsurge in the use of the death penalty in Egypt (39 death sentences have been passed by military courts since December 1992 and 22 executions have now taken place), and explaining Amnesty International's opposition to the death penalty as a violation of the right to life and the most extreme form of cruel and inhuman punishment;
- 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**

His Excellency  
Muhammad Hosni Mubarak  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
'Abedine Palace  
Cairo, Egypt  
**Telegrams: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt**  
**Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN**  
**Faxes: 202 260 54 17**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

The Human Rights Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Corniche al-Nil  
Cairo, Egypt  
**Faxes: 202 723173**

Dr Fathi Sorour  
Speaker, The People's Assembly  
Magles al-Shaab Street  
Cairo, Egypt

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY**