

**PUBLIC**

**AI Index: MDE 16/013/2003**

**10 July 2003**

**Further Information on UA 45/02 (MDE 16/005/2002, 13 February 2002) and follow-up (MDE 16/016/2002, 30 October 2002 and MDE 16/001/2003, 9 January 2003) - Death penalty/Torture/Unfair trial**

**JORDAN**

**Ra'ed Muhammad Hijazi (m)**

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In June 2003, the Court of Cassation overturned the death sentence against Ra'ed Muhammad Hijazi following an appeal against the State Security Court (SSC) decision in January. The case will again return to the SSC. According to reports the Court of Cassation's decision was based on its assertion that the SSC had not followed correct procedures in not addressing the Court of Cassation's decision when issuing its verdict. Apparently the Court of Cassation has also asked the SSC to look at whether Ra'ed Muhammad Hijazi's case should not have benefited from a Royal Amnesty in 1999.

Amnesty International has expressed grave concerns at reports that Ra'ed Muhammad Hijazi has been condemned to death after "confessions" apparently made under torture and following an unfair trial.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Amnesty International has repeatedly voiced its concern that the SSC, which almost invariably uses military judges and a military prosecutor, does not provide the same guarantees of independence and impartiality provided by the ordinary courts. The UN Human Rights Committee expressed concern in 1994 that the State Security Court continues to exercise special jurisdiction<sup>6</sup> and recommended that consideration be given to its abolition.

At least two people have been executed in Jordan this year and thirteen sentenced to death.

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

- calling for Ra'ed Muhammad Hijazi to be re-tried before an ordinary criminal court according to international standards for fair trials;
- reminding the Jordanian authorities that "confessions" made under duress are inadmissible;
- calling for an immediate and independent investigation into the torture allegations;
- noting that governments have not only a right but also an obligation to bring those who plan or perpetrate violent crimes to justice, but that this should be done in accordance with international standards for fair trials.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Majesty King =Abdallah bin Hussein  
Office of H.M. the King  
Royal Palace  
Amman

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Telegrams: King >Abdallah bin Hussein, Amman, Jordan**

**Faxes: + 962 6 462 7421**

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

Faris Nabulsi  
Minister of Justice

PO Box 6040  
Amman  
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
**Telegrams:** **Justice Minister, Amman, Jordan**  
**Fax:** **+ 962 6 464 3197**  
**Salutation:** **Your Excellency**

Dr Fayez Tarawneh  
Chief of the Royal Court  
PO Box 80  
Amman  
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
**Telegrams:** **Chief of the Royal Court, Amman, Jordan**  
**Fax:** **+ 962 6 463 1452**  
**Salutation:** **Dear Dr Tarawneh**

**COPIES TO:**

Her Majesty Queen Rania  
President of the Royal Commission on Human Rights  
Office of her Majesty the Queen  
Royal Palace  
Amman  
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
**Salutation:** **Your Majesty**

and to diplomatic representatives of Jordan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 August 2003.