

PUBLIC

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Death Penalty

22 October 2002

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Walid Radi Ibrahim Hamdiya (m), aged 39

Amin Ahmad Ibrahim Khalafallah (m), aged 31

After a one-day trial, Walid Hamdiya was sentenced to death by firing squad by the State Security Court in Gaza on 17 October. Two days later, Amin Khalafallah received the same sentence. Both men were found guilty of Atreason, communicating with the enemy (Israeli intelligence) and weakening the morale of the Palestinian people@.

Walid Hamdiya, a former *Hamas* activist, was detained on suspicion of Acollaboration@ in 1995. He reportedly confessed to helping the Israeli authorities track and kill five *Hamas* members between 1987 and 1995. This included the 1993 killing of the *Hamas* military commander in the Gaza Strip. Palestinian security officials have described Walid Hamdiya as the most senior Palestinian Acollaborator@ ever uncovered.

Amin Khalafallah was arrested in 1998 and also charged with Acollaboration@ with Israel. He reportedly provided Israel with intelligence that led to an attack in September 2002 in which Muhammad Deif, a leader of the military wing of *Hamas*, was injured. Previous intelligence reportedly led to the 1996 killing of leading *Hamas* member Yahya Ayyash.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has previously condemned trials by the State Security Court as being grossly unfair. Trials are often summary, take place before military judges, and have no right of appeal. Sentences are subject only to ratification by President Arafat and may be carried out within hours or days of the trial.

People convicted of Acollaboration@ with Israel face extremely harsh treatment. Since the beginning of the current *intifada* in September 2000, three alleged Acollaborators@ have been executed after summary unfair trials. Scores of other Acollaborators@ have been killed by armed Palestinians.

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

- calling on President Arafat not to ratify the death sentences passed on the two men named above and expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty;
- expressing concern that these and other trials before the State Security Court are grossly unfair, failing to meet even minimum international standards for fair trial;
- calling for a retrial to take place before an ordinary criminal court in accordance with international standards for fair trial and without recourse to the death penalty;
- urging that no more executions be carried out and that the death penalty be abolished.

APPEALS TO:

President Yasser Arafat
The President=s Office, Ramallah

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Palestinian Authority

Fax: + 972 2 296 3176 (it may be difficult to get through; please keep trying)

Salutation: Dear President Arafat

Ibrahim Dughmeh

Minister of Justice

P O Box 1021

Gaza

Palestinian Authority

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Gaza, Palestinian Authority

Fax: + 972 8 286 7109

Salutation: Dear Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of the Palestinian Authority accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 3 December 2002.