

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 179/99

Fear of F

SAUDI ARABIA Faustino Salazar, Filipino national

On 14 December 1999, it was reported that Faustino Salazar, a Filipino national, was sentenced to 75 lashes and four months imprisonment for illegally importing liquor. Amnesty International is extremely concerned that the sentence of flogging will be carried out soon.

Faustino Salazar was reportedly returning to his job in Riyadh on 25 September 1999 after a holiday in the Philippines. During a stopover at Bahrain airport he purchased two chocolate bars at the duty-free shop, apparently unaware that the chocolate brand was liquor-flavoured. The chocolate bars were confiscated at King Khaled international airport in Riyadh where the airport police reportedly fined him 168 Saudi Arabian rials (\$630 U.S.). As he did not have enough money, Faustino Salazar paid 150 rials to the police who detained him for two days. He was later summoned to court and sentenced to 75 lashes and four months imprisonment.

Alcohol in any form is banned in Saudi Arabia.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Punishment by flogging and amputation is enforced in Saudi Arabia for a variety of offences. Flogging is used for sexual offences and can also be used discretionally by judges as a substitute or addition to other punishments. The number of lashes handed down by courts in each case is not clearly prescribed by law and can range from dozens to thousands of lashes. Under international human rights standards the use of these punishments is contrary to the prohibition of torture and other cruel punishments.

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

- expressing concern that Faustino Salazar has been sentenced to 75 lashes;
- expressing concern about the judicial punishment of lashes which you consider to be cruel, inhuman and degrading, contrary to Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- asking the authorities to commute his sentence to a more humane punishment.

APPEALS TO (Please note that fax tones are more likely to be obtainable during office hours local time [+3 hours GMT]. Please also note that the number given for the Minister of Interior is also a phone number. If a voice answers ask: "fax please").

The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines
His Majesty King Fahd bin 'Abdul 'Aziz
Office of H.M. The King
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: King Fahd, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of the Interior
His Royal Highness, Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior

PO Box 2833, Airport Road
Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Faxes: + 966 1 403 1185
Telexes: 404416
Salutation:Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs
His Royal Highness
Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street, Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Faxes:+ 966 1 403 0159
Telexes: 405000
Salutation:Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice
His Excellency
Dr. 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Telexes: 405 980 MINJUS SJ
Salutation:Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.