

Further Information on UA 116/07 (MDE 23/019/2007, 17 May 2007) – Death penalty/Fear of imminent execution

SAUDI ARABIA **Dhahian Rakan al-Sibai'i (m), Saudi Arabian national**
 Mohamed Kohail (m), aged 22, Canadian national
 Sultan Kohail (m), aged 16, Canadian national

Juvenile offender Dhahian Rakan al-Sibai'i was executed on 21 July in Taif, according to a Ministry of Interior statement. In January 2006 the Saudi Arabian authorities told the Committee on the Rights of the Child (which monitors states' implementation of the CRC) that no one had been executed for offences committed when they were under 18 years of age since the CRC came into force in the country, in February 1996. The Committee urged the authorities to ensure that no child offenders were sentenced to death. Saudi Arabia had undertaken not to execute anyone for offences committed when they were children.

Dhahian Rakan al-Sibai'i had been sentenced to death for a murder committed while he was still a child. He was held in a juvenile detention facility until he was 18 years old, when he was moved to Taif Prison. In May 2007, he appealed to the family of the victim to pardon him, but his appeal seems to have been rejected.

There is no new information about Mohamed Kohail, who has been sentenced to death, or his brother Sultan Kohail, who may also be at risk of execution.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offences. Court proceedings fall far short of international standards for fair trial, and take place behind closed doors.

Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by a lawyer, and in many cases are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. They may be convicted solely on the basis of confessions obtained under duress, torture or deception.

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

- expressing outrage at the execution of Dhahian Rakan al-Sibai'i, who was put to death on 21 July;
- pointing out that Saudi Arabia is still executing child offenders despite being a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which expressly prohibits this;
- calling on the authorities to immediately halt any pending execution of other child offenders;
- calling on Saudi Arabia to take the necessary steps to halt the imposition of death sentences on child offenders, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child;
- expressing concern at the recent increase in the number of executions in Saudi Arabia, despite UN calls for a moratorium on the death penalty and the international trend towards abolition.

APPEALS TO:

King Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty the King
Royal Court
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Salutation: Your Majesty

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 1185
+ 966 1 403 3614
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO:

Mr Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
President
Human Rights Commission
PO Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road, Building No.373
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 September 2007.*****