

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 88/00

Fear of f.

SAUDI ARABIA Dr Muhammad Jabir al-Barbari, Egyptian national, aged 35

Amnesty International is concerned that a doctor will be flogged if he is convicted of sexual or moral offences at his trial on 26 November.

A Saudi Arabian national has reportedly accused Dr Muhammad Jabir al-Barbari of touching his wife inappropriately during a medical examination in the course of his duties at the Emir Salman hospital in Riyadh. Dr Muhammad Jabir al-Barbari was arrested by the police in October, and was apparently made to sign a statement, although he was given no opportunity to read it through or understand its content.

Dr Muhammad Jabir al-Barbari has reportedly denied the charge and has requested that a foreign female nurse, who was present throughout the examination, be called as a witness. He has explained that the woman's husband physically assaulted him at the hospital, in full view of other doctors. The police have apparently shown no interest in this information. The nurse's contract was reportedly terminated shortly after the incident, and she has since returned to her country of origin.

Dr Muhammad Jabir al-Barbari is expected to be brought before a *Sharia* (religious) court in Riyadh on 26 November, where he is likely to be sentenced to flogging if convicted, as this is the usual punishment for sexual and moral offences. He has not been given any legal assistance, and will probably not have any legal representation during the trial.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Flogging is a widely used punishment in Saudi Arabia, and is regularly carried out in prisons and public squares throughout the country. It can be applied for a wide range of offences, and there appears to be no upper limit on the number of lashes that can be inflicted.

Amnesty International considers the punishment of flogging to be cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment amounting to torture, in contravention of Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

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

- urging that Dr Muhammad Jabir al-Barbari is not flogged if he is convicted on 26 November;
- stating that you consider the use of flogging as punishment to be cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment amounting to torture, which contravenes Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights **[no need to repeat the quote]**.

APPEALS TO:

King and Prime Minister
The Custodian of the Two Holy Shrines
His Majesty King Fahd bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud,
Office of H.M. The King, Royal Court,
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: 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,
P.O. Box 2933, Airport Road,
Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Minister of Interior, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 1185
Telex: 404416
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Foreign Affairs

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

Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 0159
Telex: 405000
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Minister of Justice

His Excellency Dr. 'Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh
Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
University Street,
Riyadh 11137, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Telegram: Minister of Justice, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 401 1741
Telex: 405 980 MINJUS SJ
Salutation: Your Excellency

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 22 December 2000.