

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 167/00 (MDE 31/03/00, 20 June 2000) - Fear of Execution

YEMEN Muhammad al-Haj al-Jabr
al-'Azi al-Jaru
'Ali al-Khashibi
'Abd al-Khaleq Sharak
'Ali al-Jawfi
Muhammad Yahya al-Hudhayri
Muhammad Muhammad al-Haruni

The Supreme Court rejected appeals by the seven men named above on 2 September. If their death sentences are now upheld by President 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh, they could be executed at any time.

The group's leader, Muhammad al-Haj al-Jabr, had been sentenced to death followed by crucifixion. There is no news of whether that part of his sentence has been upheld.

The seven were reportedly convicted of murder, kidnapping and armed robbery. They were part of a group of 40 defendants. Fourteen others from this group had their appeals rejected. They had been convicted of armed robbery and resisting arrest, and sentenced to between two-and-a-half and 15 years' imprisonment.

In recent years there has been an apparent trend in Yemen towards speedy executions after unfair trials. Muhammad Ahmad Mislah al-Nadhiri was executed five days after he was sentenced to death, in March 1997. Two other men were executed later that year, five months after they were sentenced to death and crucifixion. In both these cases, the defendants were reportedly denied adequate opportunity to present a defense.

While Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of all governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, it is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right to life, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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

- calling on the President to exercise clemency for these seven men, and commute their sentences to a more humane punishment;
- drawing the President's attention to the growing international trend towards abolition of the death penalty;
- acknowledging the Yemeni government's right to bring to justice anyone found responsible for recognizably criminal offences, but expressing your unconditional opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life;
- reminding the government of international standards for fair trial in capital cases, including the right to legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings, the right to appeal, and the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence.

APPEALS TO:

General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh
President of the Republic of Yemen

Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Telegrams: President 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh, Sana'a, Yemen
Telexes: 2422 RIASAH YE
Faxes: + 967 1 274 147
Salutation: Your Excellency

Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani
Prime Minister of the Republic of Yemen
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Faxes: + 967 1 282 669
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior
Hussain Muhammad 'Arab
Ministry of Interior
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Sana'a, Yemen
Faxes: + 967 1 251 529 / 251 566
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice
Isma'il Ahmad Al-Wazir
Ministry of Justice
Sana'a, The Republic of Yemen
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Sana'a, Yemen
Faxes: + 967 1 252 138
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Yemen accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 October 2000.