

URGENT ACTION

THREE SENTENCED TO DEATH IN IRAQ

Three men were sentenced to death in Iraq in April. Their lawyers have appealed, but if their sentences are upheld, the men could be executed within days.

Hadi Hassuni, 'Abd Hassan al-Majid and **Farouq Hijazi** were sentenced to death on 21 April by the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal (SICT) for the 1994 murder of an Iraqi opposition leader, Taleb al-Suhail, in the Lebanese capital, Beirut. Their lawyers appealed the sentences on 12 May. The appeal chamber within the SICT will now review the case and will confirm or reject the sentences.

All three men were senior officers of the intelligence services under former President Saddam Hussain. 'Abd Hassan al-Majid is the brother of 'Ali Hassan al-Majid ("Chemical Ali"), a senior official under and relative of Saddam Hussain, who was executed on 25 January 2010 after being convicted of an array of serious crimes by the SICT. The three men sentenced on 21 April were convicted of the murder of Taleb al-Suhail, leader of the Banu Tamim tribe in Iraq, who fled to Lebanon after the Ba'ath party coup in Iraq in 1968.

In the same trial, two other former military intelligence officials under Saddam Hussein, Saber Duri and 'Abd Hamoud, were sentenced to life imprisonment. One other person was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, while two other defendants were acquitted.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Arabic or your own language:

- welcoming the steps taken by the authorities to bring to justice those accused of responsibility for the murder of Taleb al-Suhail but expressing concern about the death sentences imposed on Hadi Hassuni, 'Abd Hassan al-Majid and Farouq Hijazi and urging that they are commuted if they are confirmed by the appeal court;
- recognizing the right of governments to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes but insisting that the death penalty is a violation of the right to life and the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- calling on the authorities to commute all death sentences and declare a moratorium on executions.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 JUNE 2011 TO THE IRAQI DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE IN YOUR COUNTRY, ASKING FOR IT TO BE FORWARDED TO:

President

Jalal Talabani
President of the Republic of Iraq
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
e-mail:
questions@iraqipresidency.net

Salutation: His Excellency

Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki
Prime Minister
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
e-mail: info@pmo.iq

Salutation: His Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
His Excellency Hoshyar Zebari
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has questioned the fairness of trials before the SICT, which was established to try Saddam Hussain and others accused of responsibility for the crimes committed during his rule. In particular, the SICT has been subject to political interference, undermining its independence.

The death penalty was suspended for a time after the US-led invasion of Iraq but restored in August 2004. Since then, hundreds of people have been sentenced to death and many have been executed. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty unconditionally, as it is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

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