

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 28/92

Death Penalty

17 March 1992

ALBANIA

Hajdar Niman GJURIQI

According to press reports, Hajdar Niman Gjuriqi has been sentenced to death by shooting. On 5 March 1992 the district court of Tropoje found him guilty of murdering three men and robbing several people under Article 84 points a, b and c and Article 101, paragraph 2 of the Albanian Criminal Code.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In May 1990 the scope of the death penalty was restricted under amendments to the criminal code. Women may no longer be sentenced to death. The number of offences punishable by death has been reduced from 34 to 11. These include treason, espionage, terrorism and premeditated murder, as well as certain economic, non-violent offences. In 1991, six men were sentenced to death in Albania. Four were executed; one had his sentence commuted and the Supreme Court returned the case of the sixth for re-trial.

In February 1992 two men, Zamir Loçi and Hamit Bitri, were sentenced to death by the district court of Tirana for murder (see EXTRA 21/92, EUR 11/02/92, 26 February 1992); Amnesty International has so far not learned the result of their appeals.

By law, the Supreme Court hears appeals against death sentences within 10 days of receipt of the case and reviews all death sentences even if no appeal is made. If the death sentence is confirmed by the Supreme Court, the defendant may petition for clemency to the President of the Republic of Albania, who must in any case examine and approve all death sentences before they are carried out. Execution may be by shooting or hanging.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at reports that Hajdar Niman Gjuriqi was sentenced to death on 5 March 1992 by the district court of Tropoje after being found guilty of murdering three men and robbery;
- stating that you recognize the gravity of Hajdar Niman Gjuriqi's crimes, but that Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without reservation, on the grounds that it is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- urging the President to exercise his constitutional power to commute this death sentence.

APPEALS TO

President Ramiz Alia
President of the Republic of Albania
Tirana
The Republic of Albania
Telegrams: President Ramiz Alia, Tirana, Albania
Telexes: 4298 pkprssh ab

Dear President

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COPIES TO:

Minister of Justice:
Mr Kudret Çela
Ministria e Drejtësisë
Tirana
The Republic of Albania

Minister of Foreign Affairs:
Mr Ilir Boçka
Ministria e Puneve te Jashtme
Tirana
The Republic of Albania

Forum for Human Rights:
Prof. Arben Puto
President of the Forum for Human Rights
Rr. Lidhja Prizrenit nr.3; ap. 5,
Tirana
The Republic of Albania

and to diplomatic representatives of Albania in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 April 1992.