

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 01/94 Death Penalty

4 January 1994

EGYPT 'Abd al-Shafi Ahmed IBRAHIM

Amnesty International is concerned that 'Abd al-Shafi Ahmed Ibrahim was sentenced to death on 30 December 1993 and that he could be executed if his sentence is upheld.

According to *Al-Ahram* newspaper (31 December), on 30 December the Supreme State Security Court pronounced judgment in the case of 12 defendants who were charged in connection with the murder of Farag Foda, a well-known secularist writer, in June 1992. Three other defendants were given prison sentences ranging from 10 to three years (two of them *in absentia*) and eight were acquitted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the last 18 months politically motivated acts of violence by armed opposition groups have escalated sharply in Egypt. Islamic militant groups have committed deliberate and arbitrary killings, which Amnesty International has condemned. Victims have included, in addition to Farag Foda, tourists, Copts, government officials and police and prison officers.

Farag Foda, a 49-year-old writer, was shot dead on 8 June 1992 by two masked men while getting into his car outside his office in Cairo. His 16-year-old son and a companion were wounded. Farag Foda, a professor of agriculture, wrote a weekly column for the magazine October and was strongly opposed to Islamic extremism. He had published several books on, among other things, the Muslim Brotherhood, secularism and terrorism.

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

- expressing concern that 'Abd al-Shafi Ahmed Ibrahim has been sentenced to death and urging that the President commute this death sentence if it is referred to him for possible exercise of presidential clemency;
- expressing concern at the sudden upsurge in the use of the death penalty in Egypt (at least 55 people were sentenced to death in 1993 and 43, including 15 sentenced in previous years, were executed), and explaining Amnesty International's opposition to the death penalty as a violation of the right to life and the most extreme form of cruel and inhuman punishment;
- drawing attention to world trends to abolish or reduce the use of the death penalty, in accordance with Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party.

APPEALS TO

His Excellency

Muhammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
'Abedine Palace
Cairo, Egypt
Telegrams: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt
Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The Human Rights Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil
Cairo, Egypt

His Excellency
Mr Faruq Sayf al-Nasr
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Maydan Lazoghly
Cairo, Egypt

and to diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 February 1994.