

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 12/06/98

27 January 1998

Further information on UA 413/97 (MDE 12/68/97, 30 December 1997) - Death Penalty / Legal Concern and new concern: Imminent Execution

EGYPT Hassan Khalifa
Rif'at Zeidan (*in absentia*)
'Abd al-Hamid 'Uthman (*in absentia*)

The death sentences passed against the three people mentioned above by an (Emergency) Supreme State Security court in Cairo on 27 December 1997 have been approved by the Mufti, the highest religious authority in the country. The execution of Hassan Khalifa is now imminent.

On 27 January 1998 the same court sentenced the remaining defendants to various prison terms: four were sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment with hard labour, three to 15 years, five to 10 years and three to five years. The court acquitted 13 defendants. Two of the 33 defendants in this case died in custody.

Charges against the defendants included carrying out a series of attacks in southern Egypt in 1993 and 1994 in which 26 police officers were killed and a number of civilians and police officers were injured.

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

- urging the President to use his constitutional powers to grant clemency and commute these and all other pending death sentences;
- explaining your opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the most extreme form of cruel and inhuman punishment, stressing that there is no evidence that it is an effective deterrent to violent crimes and that it is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- expressing concern at the continuing extensive use of the death penalty in Egypt and drawing attention to world trends to abolish or reduce the use of the death penalty, in accordance with Article 6 of the ICCPR.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Mohammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt
Telegrams: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt
Telexes: 93794 WAZRA UN
Faxes: + 202 390 1998
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

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

Dr Fathi Sorour
Speaker
The People's Assembly
Magles al-Sha'ab Street, 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 10 March 1998.