

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 112/94 (MDE 12/06/94, 18 March 1994) - Death Penalty

EGYPT Salah al-Sayyid SULAYMAN
 'Issam Mohammad 'Abd al-Rahman AL-TOUNI
 Nour al-Din Sulayman Mohammad 'ALI
 Amin Isma'il AL-MUSAILHI
 Tariq 'Abd al-Nabi Hassan AL-FAHAL
 'Adel al-Sayyid 'ABD AL-QODOUS (*in absentia*)
 Tharwat Salah SHAHHATA (*in absentia*)
 Ahmed Isma'il 'OTHMAN (*in absentia*)
 Yasser 'Ali AL-SIRRI (*in absentia*)

According to Al-Ahram newspaper of 4 April 1994, the President of the Republic has now ratified the death sentences passed on the nine people named above.

Although the first five listed above may submit petitions to the Military Appeals Bureau, they have no right of appeal as provided for by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (see background below). Their execution may be imminent.

The nine were sentenced to death by the Supreme Military Court in Cairo, which pronounced judgment in the case known as *the attempted assassination of Prime Minister Dr 'Atef Sidqi* on 17 March.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the last 21 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 a writer known for his secularist views, Copts, tourists, government officials and many police and prison officers.

The nine people named above (including four sentenced *in absentia*) were sentenced to death by a military court, even though all of them are believed to be civilians. These death sentences, now ratified by the President of the Republic, are subject to review by the Military Appeals' Bureau, also headed by the President of the Republic. Such procedures fall short of international standards for fair trial, as guaranteed by Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is a state party, which guarantee that everyone who is convicted shall have the right to their conviction and sentence being reviewed by a higher tribunal. The United Nations' Economic and Social Council has urged that these rights be respected in all cases involving the death penalty.

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

- expressing concern that the death sentences passed on the above nine people have been ratified, and urging that the President use his constitutional right to grant clemency and commute these and all other pending death sentences. If these men are executed, Amnesty International will consider them summary and arbitrary executions;

- expressing concern at the sudden upsurge in the use of the death penalty in Egypt (51 death sentences have been passed by military courts since December

1992 and 30 executions have now taken place), 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
Faxes: 202 260 54 17
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The Human Rights Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Corniche al-Nil
Cairo, Egypt
Faxes: 202 723173

Dr Fathi Sorour
Speaker
The People's Assembly
Magles al-Shaab 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 23 May 1994.