

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death Penalty

24 August 1993

EGYPT:

Ramadhan Mostafa Mohammad HASSAN

'Ali Fayed MAY'UB

Sayyid 'ABD AL-RAZIQ

Hisham Mohammad MAS'UD (sentenced in *absentia*)

Amnesty International is concerned that the above men were sentenced to death on 21 August 1993 and that they could be executed if their sentences are upheld.

According to the 22 August 1993 issue of Al-Ahram newspaper, on 21 August 1993 the Supreme Military Court pronounced judgment in the case of 32 defendants, all civilians, who were charged with membership of an illegal organization "Al-Shawqiyyin", which aims at suspending the constitution; committing four murders; attempting to assassinate nine people; robbing four jewellers' shops and stealing weapons in order to commit crimes to endanger the security and stability of the country. Two other defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment, 18 received sentences of between 15 and two years' imprisonment, and eight were acquitted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the last 12 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, tourists, Copts (Egyptian Christians), government officials and police and prison officers.

The four people named above were sentenced to death by a military court, even though all of them are civilians. The death sentences are subject to ratification by the President of the Republic, and then review by the Military Appeals' Bureau, also headed by the President of the Republic. Amnesty International believes that 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/express and airmail letters either in Arabic, French, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern that the above four people have been sentenced to death and urging that the President use his constitutional right to grant clemency and commute their death sentences;

- urging an immediate review of military trial procedures to ensure that they comply with international standards to which Egypt is a state party (the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights);

- expressing concern at the sudden upsurge in the use of the death penalty in Egypt (26 death sentences have been passed by military courts since December 1992 and 14 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 ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment;

- drawing attention to worldwide 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:

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

2) 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 5 October 1993.