

PUBLIC

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Fear of imminent execution

16 May 2003

EGYPT

**'Amro Muhammad 'Issam (m)
Muhammad Nagi 'Abd al-Salam (m)**

'Amro Muhammad 'Issam and Muhammad Nagi 'Abd al-Salam are at risk of imminent execution. They were convicted of murder in July 2002 by the Alexandria Criminal Court and their death sentences have recently been confirmed.

The two men have been sentenced to death by hanging. The Court of Cassation, which considers all death sentences issued by criminal courts, reportedly confirmed their sentence in early May. Final verdicts are sent to the President or his nominee, who has the right to grant a pardon or reduce the sentence.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life. The death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishments and is brutalizing to all involved in its application. More than 100 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Egyptian courts have increased their use of the death penalty in the last years, despite the world trend towards its abolition. At least 48 people, including five women, were sentenced to death in 2002. The death penalty is applied for criminal offences such as drug use or trafficking, rape, murder and offences related to "terrorism".

In November 2002 the UN Human Rights Committee expressed concern at the very large number of offences punishable by death. The Committee recommended that Egypt takes measures to abolish the death penalty.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic, English or your own language:

- acknowledging the seriousness of the crime for which 'Amro Muhammad 'Issam and Muhammad Nagi 'Abd al-Salam have been convicted;
- expressing your opposition to the death penalty in all cases, as a violation of the right to life as set out in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";
- pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than other punishments, and that it is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- urging the President to use his constitutional powers to grant clemency and commute this and all other outstanding death sentences;
- drawing attention to the world trend towards abolishing or reducing 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 Mohammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
'Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt

Telegram: President Mubarak, Cairo, Egypt
E-mail: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg - (e-mails sent to this address may bounce; please re-send by air-mail)
Fax: + 202 390 1998
Telex: 93794 WAZRA UN
Salutation: Your Excellency

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

Telegrams: Minister of Justice, Cairo, Egypt
E-mail: mojeb@idsc.gov.eg - (e-mails sent to this address may bounce; please re-send by air-mail)
Fax: + 202 795 8103
Salutation: Dear Minister

Counsellor Maher 'Abd al-Wahid
Public Prosecutor
Dar al-Qadha al-'Ali
Ramses Street, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: + 202 577 4716
Salutation: Dear Public Prosecutor

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Egypt accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.