

PUBLIC

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11 June 2008

Further Information on 309/07 (MDE 23/039/2007, 16 November 2007) Imminent execution

SAUDI ARABIA

**Sheikh Mastan (alias Mohammed Salim) (m) aged 30, married with one child
Hamza Abu Bakir, (m) aged 47, married with four children**

Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir, both Indian nationals, remain at risk of imminent execution and are currently detained in al-Dammam Prison in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir were arrested in January 2004 on charges of drug possession. They were tried before a court in al-Dammam, following which they were convicted and sentenced to death in June 2006. Very little is known about their trial except that Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir were not permitted a legal defence and that their convictions and sentences are said to have been upheld on appeal, meaning that they could be executed at any time.

Concern for Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir is heightened by the number of people executed in Saudi Arabia since January. At least 63 people have been executed since 8 January, at least 22 of them for drug related offences.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offences. Court proceedings fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by a lawyer, and in many cases are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. They may be convicted solely on the basis of confessions obtained under duress or deception. Prisoners under sentence of death may be executed without a scheduled date for execution being made known to the prisoner or their families.

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

- urging the King to halt the execution of Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir;
- appealing to the King to commute the death sentences of Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir and all those on death row in Saudi Arabia as a matter of urgency, with a view to the abolition of the death penalty;
- seeking clarification of the steps being taken to enable Sheikh Mastan, Hamza Abu Bakir and others to exercise effectively the rights to judicial review and to seek a pardon;
- expressing concern at the increasing number of executions in Saudi Arabia.

APPEALS TO:

King Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty The King
Royal Court

Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax (via Ministry of the Interior): + 966 1 403 1185
Salutation: Your Majesty

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 1185
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: + 966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO:

COPIES TO:

Mr Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
The President
The Human Rights Commission,
PO Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road
Building No.373
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 July.