

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 25/02/96

30 January 1996

Further information on EXTRA 127/95 (MDE 25/07/95, 30 October 1995) - Flogging

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES Sarah Balabagan (f), Filipina national

According to a press report, the prison authorities have begun to carry out the flogging sentence against Sarah Balabagan. No further details are available at present.

On 15 September 1995, Sarah Balabagan was found guilty of the premeditated murder of her employer, Almas Mohammed al-Baloushi. During her trial before the court of first instance she stated that she had stabbed him to death because he had raped her. Her defence lawyer argued for her acquittal on the basis of self-defence, but the court found her guilty as charged and sentenced her to death.

On 30 October 1995, an appeal court in Al-Ain sentenced Sarah Balabagan to one year's imprisonment and 100 lashes. It quashed the death sentence verdict passed by the court of first instance on 15 September 1995, and ordered her to pay 150,000 dirhams (US\$41,000) blood money to relatives of Almas Mohammed al-Baloushi, who was stabbed to death by the defendant.

Amnesty International considers the judicial punishment of flogging to be contrary to Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states "no-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the press report that the flogging sentence against Sarah Balabagan has begun to be carried out;
- calling for any of her flogging sentence that remains to be immediately commuted.

APPEALS TO:

His Highness
al-Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
Ruler of Abu Dhabi
Manhal Palace
PO Box 280, Abu Dhabi, The United Arab Emirates
Telexes: 22220 PALACE EM
Telegrams: President Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Salutation: Your Highness

His Excellency
Dr Abdulla bin Omran Taryam
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
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Telegrams: Justice Minister, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency
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Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of United Arab Emirates accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 March 1996.