

# URGENT ACTION

## 53 PEOPLE AT IMMINENT RISK OF EXECUTION IN IRAQ

**The death sentences of 53 people, including five foreign nationals, were ratified by the Iraqi presidency on 20 October. They are at imminent risk of execution.**

On 20 October the Chief of staff of the Iraqi Presidential Council, Nassir al-Ani, told media that the Council had ratified the death sentences of 53 people in Iraq, including 5 foreign nationals. He gave no further details on the expected dates of execution, the charges against the 53 people, their names or the nationalities of the foreign nationals.

Only the Iraqi President, Jalal Talabani, and his two deputies, Tareq al-Hashemi and Khudayr al-Khuzaiyor, have the power to ratify death sentences. Jalal Talabani has opposed ratifying death sentences previously but has delegated his power of ratification of death sentences to his two deputies so executions continue despite his stated personal commitment to the abolition of the death penalty. Once the death sentence is upheld by the Court of Cassation, it is referred to the Presidential Council for ratification and implementation. Now that the Presidential Council has ratified the death sentences, the executions are imminent.

In September, Abdelsattar Birakdar, the Higher Judicial Council spokesperson, reportedly stated that 338 death sentences had been issued in 2011 and that three executions had been carried out.

The death penalty was suspended for a time after the US-led invasion of Iraq. It was restored in August 2004. Since then, hundreds of people have been sentenced to death and many have been executed. Amnesty International considers the death penalty to be a violation of the right to life and the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

### **Please write immediately in Arabic or English:**

- Call on the Iraqi authorities not to proceed with the executions of the 53 people whose death sentences have been approved and declare an imminent moratorium on them;
- Commute all death sentences of people on death row;
- Recognize that governments have an obligation to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes. Insist that the death penalty violates the right to life and is the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and should not be applied even for crimes of the greatest magnitude;

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 DECEMBER 2011 TO THE IRAQI REPRESENTATION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND ADDRESSED TO:**

#### Prime Minister

Nuri Kamil al-Maliki Convention Centre  
(Qasr al-Ma'aridh)  
Baghdad,  
Iraq

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### President

Jalal Talabani  
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)  
Baghdad,  
Iraq

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### And copies to:

Minister of Human Rights  
Mohammad Shayaa al-Sudani  
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)  
Baghdad,  
Iraq

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

Name: Unknown

Gender m/f: Unknown

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