

URGENT ACTION

YEMENI MAN AT RISK OF EXECUTION

Ahmed Omar al-Abbadi al-Markashi, a Yemeni security guard, had his death sentence upheld by the Court of Appeal in June 2011. If his death sentence is approved by the Supreme Court and then the Vice President, he will be at imminent risk of execution.

Ahmed al-Markashi was sentenced to death for murder by a court in the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, on 11 June 2010. On 25 June 2011, the Court of Appeal upheld his death sentence. He was not brought to the Court of Appeal for the session, even though he was being held in Sana'a's Central Prison at the time. Neither he nor his lawyers were informed of the session in advance.

Ahmed al-Markashi was a security guard at the house of Hisham Bashraheel, the chief editor of al-Ayyam newspaper, in Sana'a. In February 2008, armed men reportedly shot at Hisham Bashraheel's house in Sana'a and security guards returned fire. One of the armed men was killed and another injured. Ahmed al-Markashi was arrested in connection with this incident on 14 February 2008, and later charged with murder.

Al-Ayyam newspaper has been effectively silenced by the authorities since 30 April 2009, when authorities confiscated copies of it from newsstands and distribution points and in early May security forces physically blockaded the offices of al-Ayyam to prevent distribution of the paper. Al-Ayyam was believed to have been targeted solely because of its coverage of the protests in the southern part of the country.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the Vice President, in his position as acting President, to commute Ahmed Omar al-Abbadi al-Markashi's death sentence, and those of all others facing execution;
- Reminding the authorities that they should act in accordance with international standards for fair trial, including the UN Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, which state that capital punishment may only be imposed after a fair trial in which the defendant is provided with "adequate legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings";
- Urging the Vice President, in his position as acting President, to establish a moratorium on executions, with a view to completely abolishing the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:

Vice President

His Excellency Abd Rabbu Mansour al-Hadi
Office of The President
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: +967 1 274 147 (please keep trying)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

His Excellency Ali Ahmed Nasser al-Awash
Attorney General's Office
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Fax: +967 1 374 412

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Ministry of Human Rights
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Email: mshr@y.net.ye

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

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

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has long-standing concerns about the use of the death penalty in Yemen, particularly as death sentences are often passed after proceedings which fall short of international standards for fair trial.

In 2009, at least 53 people were sentenced to death and at least 30 people were executed. In 2010, at least 53 people were executed. Hundreds of people are believed to be under sentence of death.

Amnesty International acknowledges the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of recognizably criminal offences, but is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, and as a violation of the right to life.

Name: Ahmed Omar al-Abbadi al-Markashi

Gender m/f: M

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