

URGENT ACTION

12 SAUDI MEN AT RISK OF IMMINENT EXECUTION

The families of 12 Saudi Arabian men sentenced to death after a grossly unfair mass trial fear that their relatives could be executed imminently, as their cases were transferred from the Specialized Criminal Court (SCC) to the Presidency of State Security.

Amnesty International has received information that the families of **Salem al-Amri, Muhammad Attieh, Abbas al-Hassan, Muhammad al-Aashur, Taleb al-Harbi, Hussein al-Hamidi, Hussain al-Abbud, Taher al-Harbi, Ali al-Aashur, Yussuf al-Harbi, Ali al-Mahna and Abbas al-Abbad** learnt that the cases of their relatives were transferred from the SCC to the Presidency of State Security on 5 November. As the cases were transferred to the body that holds prosecutorial powers and reports directly to the King, and considering the accustomed opacity of the Saudi Judiciary, the families of the 12 men seriously fear that their relatives could be executed imminently. It is still unclear whether their sentences were ratified by the King.

On 12 December 2017, as some families of the 12 men visited the SCC to check for updates, they learned that the death sentences of their relatives were upheld. The 12 men were part of a group of 15 men who were sentenced to death on 6 December 2016, after the mass unfair trial of 32 people from Saudi Arabia's Shi'a minority, who had been arrested across Saudi Arabia in 2013 and 2014. The 15 men were charged with a series of offences including "high treason" for spying for Iran. Some of them however faced charges that are not recognisably criminal offences under international law such as "supporting protests" and "spreading the Shi'a faith". Some of the men told the SCC that they were threatened with solitary confinement, and that they would be banned from having any contact with their families if they did not sign "confession" documents.

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

- Urging the Saudi Arabian authorities not to execute the 12 men and quash their convictions, given the grave concerns about the fairness of the trial, and to retry them in line with international fair trial standards, without recourse to the death penalty;
- Calling on them to order a prompt, impartial, independent and effective investigation into the allegations of ill-treatment;
- Urging them to immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty in Saudi Arabia.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 DECEMBER 2018 TO:

King and Prime Minister

His Majesty King Salman 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 Interior)
+966 11 403 3125 (please keep trying)
Twitter: @KingSalman
Salutation: Your Majesty

Presidency of State Security
His Excellency General Abdul Aziz
Mohammed Al-Howairini
Olaya Secondary Street
Olaya Riyadh 12611 8408
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 11 412 5555
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Human Rights Commission
Bandar Mohammed 'Abdullah al-Aiban
P.O. Box 58889, Riyadh 11515
King Fahd Road
Building No. 3, Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 11 418 510

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Nawaf bin Abdul Aziz - Ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in London, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 30 Charles Street, Mayfair, London, W1J 5DZ tel: 020 7917 3000 or 02079173288, fax 02079173113 email: ukemb@mofa.gov.sa complete the webform here:

<http://embassies.mofa.gov.sa/sites/uk/EN/ContactDiplomaticMission/Pages/ContactWithDiplomaticMission.aspx>; twitter: @SaudiEmbassyUK,
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 182/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/7894/2018/en/>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 6 December 2016, Salem al-Amri, Muhammad Attieh, Abbas al-Hassan, Muhammad al-Aashur, Taleb al-Harbi, Hussein al-Hamidi, Hussain al-Abbud, Taher al-Harbi, Ali al-Aashur, Yussuf al-Harbi, Ali al-Mahna, Ahmad al-Nasser, Abdullah al-Khamiss, Hussain al-Ibrahim and Abbas al-Abbad, were sentenced to death.

The families of the 15 men learned that their relatives' sentences had been upheld, when some of them checked with the SCC's Court of Appeal for updates. On 23 July, the families were told by a court official that the cases had been sent to the Supreme Court for review on 20 July. While 12 of the 15 men have had their sentences ratified by the Supreme Court, the sentences of the three other men have not been ratified and the cases were sent from the Supreme Court back to the SCC with further comments.

According to a lawyer that defends most of the convicts, all 32 men that were initially arrested in 2013 and 2014, were detained without an arrest warrant and held incommunicado for almost three months, during which they were repeatedly interrogated without a lawyer.

Since 2013, Amnesty International has recorded a spike in the use of death sentences against political dissidents in Saudi Arabia, including the Shi'a Muslim minority. Amnesty International also documented the cases of at least 18 additional Shi'a men currently sentenced to death. All were accused of conducting activities putting national security at risk, and were handed death sentences by the SCC. Fourteen of them remain on death row and are at imminent risk of execution, after the Supreme Court upheld their death sentences in July 2017. The 14 men were convicted of a series of offences including, among other things, taking part in violent protests in the Eastern Provinces in 2012. They were eventually sentenced to death by the SCC after a mass unfair trial, which relied on confessions extracted through torture.

Amongst the 18 other Shi'a men on death row and awaiting execution, there are four Saudi Arabian men who were arrested for offences committed when they were under 18. Those four men include **Ali al-Nimr, Abdullah al-Zaher, Dawood al-Marhoon and Abdulkareem al-Hawaj**". Ali al-Nimr is the nephew of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, a prominent Shia cleric and dissident who was executed in January 2016. The three men have said that they were tortured to make them "confess".

See Amnesty International's Urgent Action: Death penalty for juvenile activist, 3 June 2014:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/014/2014/en/> and Juvenile offenders risk execution, 15 October 2015:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde23/2671/2015/en/>.

The death penalty is a cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty at all times, regardless of who is accused, the crime, their guilt or innocence or the method of execution. Saudi Arabia is one of the top executioners in the world, with more than 2,000 people executed between 1985 and 2016.