

# URGENT ACTION

## EXECUTION OF SAUDI ARABIAN MAN POSTPONED

**Hajras al-Qurey was not executed on 25 August, as had been expected, but is still at imminent risk of execution.**

**Hajras bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-Qurey** was transferred from his prison cell to a secure location in the Najran General Prison on 22 August. He was scheduled to be executed on 25 August but, without any explanation, his execution was not carried out. He could be executed at any time.

Hajras al-Qurey was sentenced to death on 16 January 2013 by the General Court in Najran. Despite allegations that he had been tortured and given an unfair trial, the sentence was upheld by both an appeal court and the Supreme Court. Hajras al-Qurey and his son Muhammad al-Qurey had been arrested on 7 January 2012 at the al-Khadra border crossing with Yemen, when customs officers suspected them of carrying drugs in their car. Both men were then taken for interrogation and later claimed they had been tortured. Muhammad al-Qurey "confessed" to the crime, and testified that his father had not known that he, Muhammad, was trafficking drugs. He received a 20-year prison sentence. However, the father, Hajras al-Qurey, was sentenced to death. Both men were denied access to lawyers during interrogation.

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

- Urging the Saudi Arabian King to halt the execution of Hajras bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-Qurey and all other prisoners sentenced to death;
- Urging the authorities to grant Hajras bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-Qurey and his son Muhammad al-Qurey a retrial in accordance with international standards for fair trial and without recourse to the death penalty;
- Calling on them to order without delay an impartial and independent investigation into the men's allegation that they were tortured and otherwise ill-treated and to exclude any evidence tainted with torture allegations;
- Reminding them that, pending full abolition, under international law the death penalty may be imposed only after trials complying with the most rigorous internationally recognized standards for fair trial, and only for the most serious crimes, and that non-lethal crimes such as drugs offences do not meet the threshold of "most serious crimes".

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 OCTOBER 2014 TO:

#### King and Prime Minister

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 11 403 3125 (please keep trying)

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

#### Minister of Justice

His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin  
Abdulkareem Al-Issa  
Ministry of Justice  
University Street  
Riyadh 11137  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Fax: +966 11 401 1741

+966 11 402 0311

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Minister of the Interior

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed  
bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud  
Ministry of the Interior, P.O. Box 2933,  
Airport Road, Riyadh 11134  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Fax: +966 11 403 3125 (please keep  
trying)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 201/14. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE23/020/2014/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Saudi Arabian authorities executed at least 22 people between 4 and 22 August alone, including four members of one family on 18 August in the south-eastern city of Najran, for “receiving large quantities of hashish”. The four men had been sentenced to death on the basis of forced confessions reportedly extracted under torture. In 2013, Saudi Arabia executed at least 79 people, three of whom were under 18 at the time of the crimes for which they were put to death, in blatant violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Saudi Arabia is one of the top executioners in the world, with more than 2,000 people executed since 1985.

Court proceedings in Saudi Arabia fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Trials in capital cases are often held in secret. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by lawyers, 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. Foreign nationals with no knowledge of Arabic – the language of pre-trial interrogation and trial hearings – are often denied adequate interpretation facilities. In some cases condemned prisoners’ families are not notified in advance of their execution.

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offences that are not accepted as “most serious crimes” under international standards for applying the death penalty, as this is limited to crimes involving intentional killing. These include “adultery”, armed robbery, “apostasy”, drug-related offences, rape, “witchcraft” and “sorcery”. Some of these offences, such as “adultery” and “apostasy”, should not even be criminalized at all. At least one person has been executed for witchcraft and sorcery in 2014.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. It violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

Name: Hajras bin Saleh bin Muhammad al-Qurey  
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 201/14 Index: MDE 23/021/2014 Issue Date: 26 August 2014