



Escalating concerns over the lives of minors threatened with death in Saudi Arabia

The undersigned organizations express their grave concern for the lives of minor defendants particularly the two young men, Yousif Al-Manasif and Ali Al-Mubaiouq, who are at imminent risk of execution in Saudi Arabia following confirmed information that the Specialized Criminal Court of Appeal (SCCA) has upheld their death sentences. Their cases were therefore referred to the Supreme Court which will render a final judgment. Approximately a year ago, the Supreme Court upheld final death sentences against Ali al-Subaiti. In addition, final death sentences had been approved by the Supreme Court about a year ago for both Abdullah Al-Derazi and Jalal Al-Labad. The Supreme Court is considered the final judicial stage before execution, which occurs after the king's signature.

Considering Saudi Arabia's past practices, it is difficult to predict the exact time frame between case referral to the Supreme Court, its approval, and execution. Previous cases indicate that the lives of the minors sentenced by “discretionary punishment” (*taazir*), are at imminent risk of execution.

As it is expected that there will be cases of minors that have not been identified, with the latest developments, the situation of minors who have been monitored by organizations to have received death sentences:

- Jalal Al-Labad and Abdullah Al-Derazi: The sentence has been approved by the Supreme Court and execution can occur at any moment after the king's signature.
- Yousif Al-Manasif and Ali Al-Mubaiouq, Ali Al-Subaiti: The sentence is currently before the Supreme Court.
- Jawad Qureiris: The sentence is before the specialized criminal appellate court.
- Mahdi Al-Mohsen: A preliminary sentence from the specialized criminal court.

The Saudi Arabia authorities subjected the young men to human rights violations while in detention, including enforced disappearance, solitary confinement for months, and various forms of torture. The risk of execution is exacerbated by the fact that the judiciary in Saudi Arabia is not independent and is thereby unable to protect individuals against arbitrary death sentences. Individuals who are charged for acts related to their peaceful activism, are usually sentenced on the basis of the Counterterrorism law and torture-tainted confessions are used as sole evidence for their conviction.

The undersigned organizations point out that the approval of new death sentences against individuals who are sentenced for acts committed as minors, contradicts Saudi Arabia's narrative that it has halted juvenile death sentences. For instance, in a [statement announcing](#) the promulgation of Royal Decree No. 46274, the Saudi Human Rights Commission mentioned that the death penalty against such individuals and against minors would be annulled. Saudi Arabia has reiterated this announcement on multiple [occasions before](#) the Human Rights Council and in other international human rights foras. This potential executions would entail a flagrant violation of Saudi Arabia's international obligations, given that Saudi Arabia is a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which clearly prohibits the death penalty against minors.

Despite this announcement, Saudi Arabia executed the minor Mustafa Al-Darwish in June 2021 and continued issuing and approving similar death sentences. Instead of halting executions, the government has resorted to cryptic and unsubstantiated responses to [communications from UN](#) special rapporteurs regarding their cases.

Since the beginning of 2024, Saudi Arabia has executed 47 individuals. 12 of these sentences were issued by the Specialized Criminal Court. The Ministry of Interior did not specify the nature of the sentences issued against them, but they are likely taazir sentences.

The undersigned organizations believe that the approval of new death sentences against minors exposes the reality of Saudi Arabia's successive promises regarding the death penalty in general and the death penalty against minors in particular. It is impossible to envisage reforms or changes without immediately halting arbitrary death sentences, especially against minors on charges that are not considered the most serious, and after unfair trials.

Undersigned organizations;

1. ACAT-Belgium (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture)
2. ACAT-France (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture)
3. ACAT-Germany (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture)
4. ACAT-Liberia
5. Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN)
6. Arab Council Foundation
7. ALQST
8. Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD)
9. Capital Punishment Justice Project (Australia)
10. Children Education Society (CHESO)-Tanzania
11. Death Penalty Focus
12. ECPM (Together against the death penalty)
13. European Saudi Organization for Human Rights
14. Federal Association of Vietnamese Refugees in the Federal Republic of Germany
15. German Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (GCADP)
16. International Harm Reduction Organization (HRI)
17. Judicial Reform Foundation
18. Human Rights Watch
19. Legal Awareness Watch Pakistan (LAW)
20. Legal Defence and Assistance Project (LEDAP)
21. MENA Rights Group
22. Mwatana for Human Rights
23. NUFC Fans Against Sportswashing
24. Organization Abolition Death Penalty of Iraq
25. Paris Bar Association (barreau de Paris).
26. Salam for Democracy and Human Rights (SALAM DHR)
27. The Advocates for Human Rights
28. The Transitional Justice Working Group - TJWG (South Korea)
29. Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)
30. World Coalition Against the Death Penalty