

URGENT ACTION

FILIPINO WORKER SENTENCED TO PRISON, FLOGGING

Sentenced to 18 months in prison and 300 lashes after an unfair trial in Saudi Arabia, Filipino domestic worker Ruth Cosrojas is understood to have already received 50 lashes. She is at imminent risk of further flogging.

According to a family member, Filipino domestic worker **Ruth Cosrojas Gonzales**, who had been sentenced to 300 lashes and 18 months in prison in October 2013, has already received 50 lashes. The 31-year-old mother of three had been convicted of organizing the sale of sex (*quwada*), following a secret trial and without legal representation before a court in the capital, Riyadh. She has denied all charges against her.

Amnesty International has been told that a Filipino man contacted Ruth Cosrojas in early August 2013 claiming he had well-paid hospital cleaner jobs available. On 11 August she and three female friends went to meet him in the car park of the Khurais shopping mall in Riyadh. He asked them to follow him to a nearby office for an interview but instead took the four women to the office of the Mutawa'een (religious police) and told them that the women were engaging in sex work. Ruth Cosrojas was made to sign with her thumb print a statement in Arabic, without translation. The police then confiscated her passport and valid residency permit and took all four women to Riyadh's al-Malaz prison.

Ruth Cosrojas has claimed she first learnt that she had been charged with organizing sex work when she appeared in front of a judge for the first time in October 2013. The court sessions took place in secret and she did not have access to proper legal representation. According to a source familiar with the case, the judge relied on a police report that claimed that Ruth Cosrojas had been caught red-handed. After serving her sentence she is expected to be deported to the Philippines.

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

- Urging the authorities to stop the punishment of Ruth Cosrojas by flogging, which violates the prohibition on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in international law;
- Calling on them to release her or else grant her a retrial which complies fully with international human rights law and standards, without recourse to corporal punishment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 JULY 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 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)
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

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

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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Flogging is mandatory in Saudi Arabia for a number of offences, including sexual offences and alcohol consumption. It can also be used at the discretion of judges as an alternative or in addition to other punishments. Sentences can range from dozens to thousands of lashes and are imposed on children as well as adults, often after trials that fail to meet international standards of fairness.

The use of corporal punishments such as flogging violates the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment set out in Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, under which "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment", as well as Saudi Arabia's obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which it is a state party.

The Saudi Arabian authorities generally fail to abide by international standards for fair trial and safeguards for defendants. Often trials, including those involving the death penalty, are held in secret, with summary proceedings, and with no legal assistance or representation through the various stages of detention and trial. Defendants 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.

Name: Ruth Cosrojas Gonzales

Gender m/f: f

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