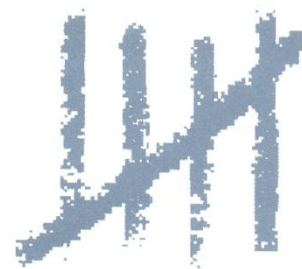


His Majesty King
Abdullah II bin al-Hussein
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



BAR HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMITTEE OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

SENT BY FAX

London, 25 May 2011

Your Majesty,

I am writing on behalf of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRC). The BHRC is the international human rights arm of the Bar of England and Wales. It is an independent body primarily concerned with the protection of the rights of advocates and judges around the world. The Committee is also concerned with defending the rule of law and internationally recognised legal standards relating to human rights and the right to a fair trial.

We are contacting you to express deep concern and dismay at the recommendation to activate the death penalty presented by the Ministerial Anti-Violence Committee in charge of studying the phenomenon of communal violence, and developing solutions to deal with it, on 03 May 2011.

Whilst we acknowledge that it is of utmost importance for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to address the issue of communal violence, we believe that imposing the death penalty is a disproportionate response that is unlikely to deter crime more effectively than other punishments.

We note that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan retains the death penalty but has observed a moratorium on its use since 2006 and proposed amendments to the Penal Code to abolish the death penalty for a number of crimes in April 2010. This is highly encouraging, especially in light of parallel international progress and increasing support for the UN General Assembly resolution in favour of a universal moratorium on the use of the death penalty which was approved most recently in December 2010, and previously in 2007 and 2008.

In UN resolution 62/149, the General Assembly calls on all States that maintain the death penalty to 'progressively restrict the use of the death penalty and reduce the number of offences for which it may be imposed'. Moreover, according to Article 6.2 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a state party to, countries that maintain the death penalty may impose it 'only for the most serious crimes'. Thus, the BHRC considers that implementing the death penalty for communal violence would not only run counter to international trends towards abolishing the death penalty, but seriously impede the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's commitment to international human rights law.

Chair: Mark Muller QC | Vice-Chairs: Kirsty Brimelow QC and Sudanshu Swaroop

We commend the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's efforts to uphold the rule of law. Hence, we urge you to renounce the recommendation to resume executions for acts of communal violence and consider alternatives in accordance with international human rights standards.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mark Muller', written in a cursive style.

Mark Muller QC
Chair Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales