

UA 261/02 Fear for safety/ Torture and Ill-treatment/ 23 August 2002
Disappearance/Detention without charge/
Medical concern

SUDAN Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour (m) aged 33, lawyer
Nafir El Din Tampour (m) aged 51, teacher
Ahmed Ibrahim (m), aged 79
63 others

Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour, Nafir El Din Tampour, Ahmed Ibrahim and 63 others were arrested between July and August in Zalingei, Tour and Nyartati in Western Darfur province, and Golou in Jebel Mara province. Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour, Nafir El Din Tampour and 40 others are being held without charge in Nyala prison, Darfur. A number of the detainees have reportedly been tortured by the security forces. The whereabouts of Ahmed Ibrahim and the remaining 23 is unknown. Amnesty International therefore fears that they may have "disappeared".

Eleven of the detainees are seriously ill, among them Nafir El Din Tampour who is reported to be suffering from kidney problems. Together with 79-year-old Ahmed Ibrahim, Nafir El Din Tampour was arrested by security forces and taken to jail from his hospital bed. Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour, who only has one lung, is also reported to be in a poor state of health. All detainees suffering ill-health have reportedly been denied medical attention.

Many of the detainees were arrested following an attack by armed militia on the village of Tour, Western Darfur, in early July. The authorities arrested Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour, Nafir El Din Tampour, Ahmed Ibrahim and 40 others, accusing them of involvement in a new armed political group called the Darfur Liberation Front. All the detainees except for Ahmed Ibrahim were taken to Shala prison in El Fashir on 17 July. However, prison authorities refused to accept them because the prison was already overcrowded. They were then taken to Nyala prison where they are currently being detained. Prison conditions in Nyala are reported to be very poor.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Many of those detained are from the Four ethnic group. There have been many clashes between members of the Four and government-backed militia from Arab ethnic groups, some of whom are reportedly from Chad.

Darfur has been the scene of complex strife between ethnic groups, and frequent armed robberies by bandits, for many years. There are a great number of weapons in the region, partly due to the government's strategy of arming and supporting local ethnic groups as auxiliary forces to fight in the 19 year-old war against the main armed political group, Sudan People's Liberation Army. The government has extended and intensified the State of Emergency, announced in December 1999 in Khartoum and renewed every year since, to Northern and Southern Darfur provinces. Emergency or Special Courts were established in May 2001 in both provinces to deal with offences such as armed robbery, murder and possession and smuggling of weapons. These courts are headed by two military judges and one civil judge, and do not allow legal representation for the accused.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of the 66 people arrested between July and August in Zalingei, Tour and Nyartati in Western Darfur province, and Golou in Jebel Mara province;
- calling on the authorities to immediately reveal the whereabouts of Ahmed Ibrahim and the other 23 people whose whereabouts is currently unknown, and to give assurances that they will not be tortured or ill treated;
- expressing concern for the safety of Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour, Nafir El Din Tampour and 40 others being held without charge at Nyala prison;
- calling on the authorities to abide by its commitments under Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and either charge the detainees with a recognizable criminal offence and give them a prompt and fair trial in accordance with international standards, or set them free immediately;
- calling for investigations into allegations of torture of at least three of the detainees;
- urging the authorities to allow the detainees immediate and unrestricted access to their relatives, legal counsel and any medical aid they may need;
- expressing particular concern at the reportedly poor health status of Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed Nour and Nafir El Din Tampour, and urging that they receive adequate medical treatment while in detention.

APPEALS TO:

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
 Minister of Justice and Attorney General
 Ministry of Justice
 Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 24911 788941 / 774842 / 774906
Salutation: Dear Minister

Major General Abdul-Rahim Muhammed Hussein
 Minister of Internal Affairs
 Ministry of Interior
 PO Box 281
 Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Minister of Internal Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax : + 249 11 774339 / 776554/ 773046 / 770186
Salutation: Dear Minister

Ustaz Abul-Basit Sabdarat
 President's Adviser on Legal and Political Affairs
 Office of the President
 People's Palace
 PO Box 281
 Khartoum
Telegram: President's Adviser on Legal and Political Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan
Salutation: Dear Sir

Engineer Umar Harun Abdullah
 Governor of Western Darfur State
 c/o People's Palace

PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: Governor of Western Darfur State, Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation: Dear Sir

Director of Prisons

Ministry of the Interior

PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: Director of Prisons, Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES TO:

Ustaz Abul-Basit Sabdarat

President's Adviser on Legal and Political Affairs

Office of the President

People's Palace

PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: President's Adviser on Legal and Political Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation: Dear Sir

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 October 2002.