

PUBLIC

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Fear of t

SUDANMohamed Abdel Seed - journalist
Maha Hassan Ali (f) - journalist
Abdelgadir Hafiz - journalist

The three journalists named above were arrested by security service officers in Khartoum between 14 and 18 April 1999. The authorities have refused to say why they were arrested or where they are held, or to allow them access to relatives or lawyers. They have not been charged or taken to court within the period stipulated by law. They were reportedly accused of spying for a foreign power, said to be Egypt.

Mohamed Abdel Seed, 53, is a correspondent for *Al-Sharaq Al-Awsat*, a London-based Arabic newspaper. He has been detained for political reasons twice before. He is being denied his medicine for irritable bowel syndrome.

Maha Hassan Ali works for the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) and is also a correspondent for Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA). Abdelgadir Hafiz is a correspondent for Saudi Arabia's *Al-Gezira* newspaper.

Amnesty International believes they are held for political reasons and fears they may be subjected to torture or ill-treatment, including beatings and denial of medical treatment, while held in a secret detention centre. There has been a pattern in recent years of torture and illegal secret detention of suspected government opponents.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Journalists in Sudan are often detained on suspicion of opposition sympathies. The grounds for these new arrests are not yet clear. Egypt is one of a number of governments involved in peace initiatives and mediation between the government and the armed opposition.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the secret incommunicado detention of these three journalists;
- appealing for them to be given immediate access to their relatives and lawyers, and medical care and treatment as required;
- requesting assurances that they are being treated humanely in detention;
- calling for them to be either taken to court, charged with a recognizable criminal offence and given a fair trial in accordance with international standards, or released immediately and unconditionally.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Lieutenant General Omar Hassan al-Bashir
President of the Republic of the Sudan
People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Faxes: + 24911 787676 or 783223
Telegrams: President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan
Faxes: + 24911 774063
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan
Faxes: + 24911 779383
Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr Hafez al-Sheikh al-Zaki
Chief Justice
Supreme Court
Khartoum, Sudan

Dr Ahmad al-Mufti
Advisory Council for Human Rights
PO Box 302
Khartoum, Sudan

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 3 June 1999.