

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/Fear of torture or ill-treatment/
Incommunicado detention

09 January 2004

SUDAN

Abdel Shafie Issa Mustafa (m), former Sudan Textile employee
Adam al-Zubayr Issa (m), merchant
Adam Mohammad Osman (m), merchant
Ahmed Hassan Abdel Rahman (m), banker
Ahmed Taher Ahmed Shattah (m), electronic technician
Al-Fadi Tambour (m), teacher
Bushara Bushra Abdel Rahman (m)
Idris Mohamed Ali (m), merchant
Ismail Abdallah Musa (m), teaching assistant
Hashem Hammam (m), student
Mohammad Abdallah Duma (m), lawyer and former Minister of Local Government
Mohammad Harun Kafi (m), lawyer
Mohammad Ismail (m), student
Mohammad Abu Bakr Idris (m)
Mohammad Issa (m), pharmacist
Suleiman Ahmed Hussein (m)
And scores of others arrested in relation to the conflict in Darfur

Scores of people, including those named above, have been arrested by the military or national security forces in Khartoum, Nyala, Geneina and other towns in the Darfur region over the past month. They are all being held without charge at security forces detention centres or at Kober prison in the capital Khartoum. Amnesty International fears that they may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment as they are being held in incommunicado detention.

It is not known exactly why they have been arrested, though they may have been suspected of supporting armed opposition groups in Darfur.

Amnesty International has received many reports of people suspected of supporting armed opposition such as the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) or the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) being tortured or ill-treated by the national security forces or the military intelligence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over the past few years hundreds of civilians in Darfur, western Sudan, mostly from agricultural ethnic groups like the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa, have been killed or wounded by armed nomadic groups. Their homes have been burnt and herds looted. The SLA and the JEM took up arms against the government in February 2003, because of what they perceived as the lack of government protection for their people and the marginalisation and underdevelopment of the region. Since then, the Sudan government appears to have given free rein to the nomadic militias known as the *Janjawid* to carry out killings, abductions and destructions. More than 700,000 people have fled from their burnt villages and most have taken refuge in towns in Darfur, while more than 90,000 have crossed the border into Chad.

Over the past month scores of people from the Darfur region have been arrested. They were apparently suspected of contacts with the armed opposition in the region. Those arrested have been held under Article 31 of the National Security Forces Act, which allows detention for up to nine months without access to judicial review.

Many of those detained in Darfur before September 2003 were released under the terms of a ceasefire between the SLA and the government, which was sponsored by the Chadian authorities. However on 17

December 2003, negotiations in Chad to end the conflict in Darfur collapsed. Since then, the local authorities have imposed a curfew in El Fasher, Nyala and Geneina, the capitals of North, South and West Darfur. While the peace process between the Sudan government and rebels of the SPLA has been reaching a final agreement, the conflict in Darfur has not been included in the talks.

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

- expressing grave concern for the safety of those named above and others arrested in relation to the conflict in Darfur;
- noting that they are being held without charge and incommunicado in violation of Article 9 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Sudan has ratified. This prohibits the arbitrary detention of individuals and states that anyone arrested on a criminal charge should be brought promptly before a judicial authority and be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or released;
- calling on the authorities to give assurances that the detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the government to allow them immediate access to their families, legal counsel and any medical care they may need.

APPEALS TO:

Mr Ali Osman Mohammad Taha
First Vice-President
People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegram: First Vice-President, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771025
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 770883
Salutation: Dear Minister

Major-General Suleiman Abdalla Adam
Governor of West Darfur State
c/o People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Major General Suleiman Abdalla Adam, Governor of West Darfur State, People's Palace, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771 024
Salutation: Dear Sir

Lieutenant-General Adam Hamid Musa
Governor of South Darfur State
c/o People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Lieutenant-General Adam Hamid Musa, Governor of South Darfur State, People's Palace, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771 024
Salutation: Dear Sir

Mr Osman Mohammad Yusif Kubor
Governor of North Darfur State
c/o People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Mr Osman Mohammad Yusif Kubor, Governor of North Darfur State, People's Palace, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771 024
Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES TO:

Chair of the Human Rights Committee
Dr Hamadtu Mukhtar
National Assembly, Omdurman, Sudan

Fax: + 249 15 560 950

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 20 February 2004.