

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 54/30/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 213/93

Fear of torture/Incommunicado detention

25 June 1993

SUDAN:

Ibrahim Mohammed Abbo, former member of Parliament for Darfur region	
Abdalla Ali Masar, former regional minister for Darfur Region	Dr Abdel
Latif Abdel Rahim, physician at Al-Fasher hospital	Dr Adam Mohammed Ahmed,
former deputy governor of Darfur region	Abdel Rahman Ishaq, UMMA party
representative in Nyala in Darfur region	Atim Mohammed Salama, local government
official	
Adam Ibrahim Khalil, Ministry of Agriculture official in Darfur region	Abdel
Rahman Yousif, assistant medical officer	

The eight men named above, some of whom are elderly, all of whom are members of the banned Umma Party, were reportedly arrested on 16 June 1993 in El-Fashir, in Darfur region in Western Sudan, apparently on suspicion of plotting against the regional governor. Their place of detention is not known but it is common for political opponents arrested in the regions to be transferred to the capital, Khartoum. There is grave concern that they may be being subjected to torture.

Detainees in Khartoum are normally held in the security headquarters or in secret detention centres, commonly known as "ghost houses" in Sudan. Detainees are badly beaten on arrival at "ghost houses" and torture during interrogation of prisoners suspected of being active opponents of the government is systematic.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

These arrests are the latest in a widespread clampdown on suspected political opponents of the government. In April and early May 1993 there were widespread arrests in towns and cities in northern Sudan. The majority of those whose names are known to Amnesty International are members of the Umma Party and Ansar sect, a traditional order in Sudanese Islam, although members of other political parties, including the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), are also known to have been detained. (The Ansar sect has its origins in the followers of the Mohamed Ahmad al-Mahdi, the great-grandfather of Sadiq al-Mahdi, Sudan's former Prime Minister and leader of the Umma Party.)

The recent crackdown on Umma and Ansar members began on 5 April 1993 when Sadiq al-Mahdi, former Prime Minister and leader of the Umma Party, was held for 24 hours for questioning. On 25 March 1993 he gave a speech during the 'Id al-Fitr feast to mark the end of Ramadan (the Islamic fasting month) in which he called for a return to a multi-party political system in Sudan. On 9 April 1993 a demonstration took place in Omdurman after Friday prayers led by Sadiq al-Mahdi. There are reports that dozens of others were arrested during and after the demonstration and subjected to beatings in the course of being interrogated.

In May, in the days immediately preceding the 'Id al-Adha, the Muslim holiday marking the end of the period of pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca, the security authorities took control

of the religious complex centred on the tomb of Mohamed Ahmad al-Mahdi in Omdurman, which is one of the most important shrines belonging to the Ansar. In the days that followed, important mosques belonging to the Khatmiya and the Ansar Sunna were also put under the control of the security authorities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters either in English Arabic, or your own language:

- expressing concern at the arrest on 16 June 1993 of the individuals above (please select two or three names);
- expressing concern at their continuing detention without charge or trial and fear

Page 2 of UA 213/93

that they may be subjected to torture;

- requesting assurances that they are being humanely treated, that their whereabouts in custody be made public and that they have immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers and any necessary medical attention;
- urging that either they be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to a fair trial, or be released.

APPEALS TO:

1) His Excellency Lieutenant General

Omar Hassan al-Bashir

Head of State and Chairman of the National Salvation Revolutionary Command
Council

People's Palace

PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

Faxes: 010 249 11 71724

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Brigadier-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior

and Deputy Chairman of the National Salvation Revolutionary Command
Council

People's Palace

PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammed Husayn, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Faxes: 010 249 11 71724/76554/77900/73046/70186

Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister

3) Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu

Minister of Justice and Attorney-General

Ministry of Justice

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Faxes: 010 249 11 74063

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Mr Jalal Ali Lutfi

Chief Justice

Law Courts

Khartoum, Sudan

2) Mr Hussein Suleiman Abu Salih

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PO Box 873

Khartoum, Sudan

3) Dr A al-Mufti

Secretary of Human Rights Commission*

Khartoum, Sudan

* The Human Rights Commission is a government-backed body, nominally independent, apparently created to counter what the government perceives as hostile human rights propaganda.

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 August 1993.