

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture

13 September 1990

SUDAN:

Mokhtar ABDALLAH
Abdelaziz Mohamed SALMANE
Mohamed Omar AL-MIRGHANI

The three people named above were arrested recently in Khartoum. They are believed to be held incommunicado, without having been charged with any offence, at secret detention centres. Amnesty International is concerned that they may be prisoners of conscience, detained without charge because of their peaceful opposition to the government, and that they are at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

Mokhtar Abdallah is a trade union activist in his forties who worked in a textile factory. He was arrested in late August 1990 after he had been living underground for several months in order to evade arrest.

Abdelaziz Mohamed Salmane is a businessman, aged 46, who was previously detained for one year in 1971 under the government of the former President Ga'afar Nimeiri. He was at that time a trade unionist and a member of the Sudan Communist Party.

Mohamed Omar al-Mirghani is a retired senior civil servant in his sixties. Some reports suggest that the security service found in his possession some printing material used by opposition groups in Khartoum.

Abdelaziz Mohamed Salmane and Mohamed Omar al-Mirghani were arrested on 4 September by members of the security service and taken to a secret detention centre in Khartoum.

The arrests took place in the context of growing non-violent opposition to the government. In early September the government closed the University of Khartoum following student strikes and demonstrations at the university campus.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hundreds of people have been arrested since a military government overthrew the elected civilian government of Sadiq al-Mahdi in June 1989. Although a number of detainees have been released uncharged, many remain in detention without charge or trial. These include trade union activists, academics, medical doctors, lawyers and journalists. More than 60 people arrested since November 1989 are known to have been tortured by members of a new security organization called the "Security of the Revolution" while detained in "safe houses" and secret detention centres in Khartoum. One of them, Ali Fadul, a medical doctor, is reported to have died as a result of torture on 22 April 1990 after being detained in secret since 13 March 1990. In a separate development, 28 military officers were executed on 24 April 1990. They were summarily tried by military courts after the authorities announced that a coup attempt against the government had been thwarted. Further arrests have been carried out since late April, with almost all those detained being held incommunicado in unofficial detention centres rather than recognized places of imprisonment.

Eighteen prisoners were released on 1 August 1990, most of them trade union

activists. Following these releases Lieutenant-Colonel Bakri Hassan Saleh, a member of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council (NSRCC), who is in charge of security, told the press that all political prisoners were to be released by the end of August, but to date only a few prisoners have been released and arrests seem to be continuing.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters

- expressing concern at the arrest of the people named above and about reports that they are apparently being held incommunicado;
- requesting clarification of the reasons for their arrest;
- requesting assurances that they are being humanely treated while in detention;
- urging the authorities to inform the three prisoners' relatives and lawyers where they are being detained and requesting that they be allowed immediate access to lawyers, relatives and doctors;
- urging the government to release them immediately and unconditionally if they are not being charged with committing offences of a genuinely criminal nature.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellence Lieutenant-General
Omar Hassan al-Bashir
Head of State and Chairman of the
National Salvation Revolution
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 KAIS SD

Lieutenant-Colonel Bakri Hassan
Saleh
Member of the National Salvation
Revolution Command Council
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Lt Col Bakri Hassan
Saleh, Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22736 PROC SD

Brigadier General Mohamed Saleh
al-Zubeir
Vice President of the National
Salvation Revolution Command
Council People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig Gen Mohamed Saleh
al-Zubeir, Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22736 PROC SD

Brigadier Ahmed Mahmoud Hassan
Minister of Justice and Attorney
General
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302,
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig Ahmed Mahmoud
Hassan,
Telexes: 22604 IPOL SD

COPIES TO: diplomatic representative of Sudan in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 October 1990.