
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 16/95

TO: PRESS OFFICERS
FROM: IS PRESS OFFICE
DATE: 24 JANUARY 1995

AI INDEX: NWS 11/16/95
DISTR: SC/PO
NO OF WORDS:1693

NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - **SUDAN** (The enclosed Sudan news service item reports on a visit by the researcher on Sudan to refugee camps in northern Uganda. The parts of southern Sudan closest to the border are controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA-Mainstream) and therefore the information collected inevitably relates mostly to abuses by the SPLA.

The purpose of this news item is to provide updated information on the human rights situation to stress that our concerns are current. In using the information, sections should take care not to suggest that we are concerned only about the situation in the war-torn south, but to stress that we have concerns throughout the country.) **SUDAN** (Speech to be given by Pierre Sané at press conference launch of Sudan campaign)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Sudan - 25 January - SEE NEWS SERVICES 275 AND 261

UN Commission on Human Rights - 31 January - SEE NEWS SERVICE 06/95

Turkey - 8 February - SEE NEWS SERVICE 261

Northern Iraq - 28 February - SEE NEWS SERVICE 266

Women's Campaign - 8 March

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EMBARGOED FOR 0800 hrs GMT, 25 JANUARY 1995

SUDAN: REPORT OF FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH MISSION

People are continuing to flee southern Sudan into northern Uganda, partly out of fear of human rights abuses, Amnesty International found during a research mission last week.

The organization's researcher on Sudan, Dr. Andrew Mawson, last week met refugees and others who described specific violations fitting the patterns detailed in the organization's 132-page report on human rights in Sudan.

The information was gathered during a four-day trip (18-21 January) to refugee camps near Adjumani in northern Uganda. Dr. Mawson talked to dozens of refugees and other sources on the current situation in southern Sudan. The camp currently holds some 150,000 Sudanese refugees. Uganda is now host to over 300,000 refugees from Sudan.

Between 200 and 300 refugees a day are arriving at Adjumani. Many have spent months hiding in the border areas after fleeing the Sudanese town of Kajo Kaji, re-captured by the government in June 1994. They are now crossing the border as their food runs out -- often because it has been looted by ill-disciplined Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA-Mainstream) soldiers.

An elderly man described how a relative was killed by a hand grenade thrown by an SPLA soldier intent on looting.

A woman said that she fled after a relative was raped by an SPLA soldier. The SPLA officers, she reported, did nothing to stop these atrocities.

With the expectation of intensified fighting between government and SPLA in Eastern Equatoria, tens of thousands of people are at risk of further displacement from camps inside Sudan east of the border town of Nimule.

Boys as young as 12-years-old are being rounded up by the SPLA-Mainstream for training as soldiers. One man reported recently seeing boys as being beaten as they were taken against their will. A young boy described how he fled -- on his own -- over the border after his friends were captured.

Over the past few months SPLA soldiers have made several attempts to abduct men they apparently regard as deserters from refugee camps in northern Uganda. At least one man, who was kidnapped in August 1994, Karlo Madut Dent, a doctor who had resigned from the SPLA, is reported to have been executed inside Sudan.

SPLA soldiers also executed three captured prisoners of war from a rival armed opposition group in mid-January, shortly before abandoning the small town of Parajok

The government's armed forces are also continuing to violate human rights. There are further reports of killings of civilians from northern Bahr al-Ghazal.

In December soldiers from the government's Popular Defence Force (PDF) militia escorting a train loaded with supplies are reported to have extrajudicially executed civilians in attacks on villages each side of the railway line. Dr Mawson visited this area in June 1994 and these incidents continue the pattern he uncovered then.

Also in northern Bahr al-Ghazal, forces led by Kerubino Kuanyin Bol, reportedly part of the South Sudan Independence Army (formerly SPLA-United) but said to be receiving arms from the government, are reported to have attacked villages and killed civilians suspected of loyalty to SPLA-Mainstream in the east of the state.

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**OPENING STATEMENT
PRESS CONFERENCE ON
CAMPAIGN ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN SUDAN**

**PIERRE SANÉ, SECRETARY GENERAL
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

NAIROBI, 25 JANUARY 1995

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

We are here today to talk about a country that the world seems to have grown tired of.

The story of Sudan sounds to many like a litany of war, famine and peace talks that seem to go nowhere.

The danger is that the world is becoming complacent. That it is learning to live with the scale of suffering in Sudan.

And this is why Amnesty International is today launching a major worldwide campaign on human rights in Sudan.

We want to break that complacency, and put Sudan's human rights crisis firmly back onto the international agenda again.

For years, human rights violations have undermined hopes for future peace and stability. And they are at the root of the country's humanitarian crisis.

Simply put, we believe that Sudan's future depends on respect for human rights being established throughout the country.

And we want to build pressure for real, concrete action to end the human rights crisis that is ravaging Sudan.

We are starting to build that pressure here in Africa where we want governments, NGOs, and Amnesty's African members to push for change in Sudan.

I have already met with NGOs and representatives of the Kenyan, Ugandan and Ethiopian governments here in Nairobi, and will meet officials and NGOs when I visit Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire over the next one and a half weeks.

The starting point for this campaign is the dramatic situation set out in our report on Sudan, which covers the last five and a half years since the 1989 coup.

In the north, there has been a terrible cost to the government's attempt to crush political opposition and mould society to its own version of a radical Islamist agenda.

It's now standard practice to detain anyone suspected of opposition. And just as common for them to be tortured in secret detention centres called "ghost houses".

The President of Sudan still denies that "ghost houses" exist, but the torture scars and the testimonies of hundreds of people cannot be ignored.

In the south, we have seen the forces of the government, the SPLA, and the SSIA kill and "disappear" tens of thousands of civilians in a war marked by a "take no prisoners" approach.

On the government side, civilians have been killed, tortured and raped, in a war in which they have been as much the deliberate targets as opposition forces.

And the tactics used by SPLA factions have involved torture, executions and political killings.

Millions have already been displaced by the bloody fighting. Refugees have fled to neighbouring countries -- and those still inside Sudan are at risk from food shortages and intensified fighting.

I have been asked why we are talking about the North, and not just the South.

The answer is that the carnage in the war-torn south is only half the picture.

Even in areas less affected by civil war, the brutal violation of human rights has also divided the population.

The assault on human rights takes different forms in the north and south, but make no mistake that the assault is serious throughout Sudan.

Remember that war is not the sole cause of the erosion of human rights in the country.

And ending the war will not in itself end human rights violations.

This brings me to the question of peace.

I have also been asked if human rights will not inevitably take a back seat to the peace negotiations here in Nairobi, which in recent months appear to have reached an impasse.

We would say that there is no sharp dividing line between peace and human rights.

Each abuse deepens hatreds and mistrust. An end to those abuses is vital in building the trust necessary to reach a political solution.

For this reason, protection of human rights must be part of any peace or ceasefire settlement for it to have a real and lasting impact.

With this campaign, we are looking for a radical new way to tackle Sudan's human rights problem.

Our key recommendations are:

To the government, SPLA and SSIA

- take steps now to end the killings, "disappearances", torture and arbitrary detention

- bring those responsible for human rights violations to justice

To the international community

- create an international civilian human rights monitoring team

We have seen human rights monitors as an important step towards ending human rights violations, but not a solution in themselves.

Having international monitors on the ground would make it more difficult for government and opposition forces to get away with the killings, torture and arbitrary detentions that have fractured Sudanese society.

They could also work with the various entities in Sudan to help build their capacity to protect human rights.

We have had encouraging signals from churches, NGOs and others in the international community that they see intensified monitoring as a logical next step in shoring up human rights in Sudan.

The UN already provides relief aid at vast expense to deal with the consequences of war and human rights abuse, but this is not enough.

In my meetings with government representatives this week, we have been seeking to develop the debate on the issue of human rights monitors.

Within Sudan itself, the government and SPLA factions would have to agree to have monitors on the ground.

We don't expect that this agreement will come tomorrow.

But it is up to the international community -- governments and NGOs -- to use persuasion and pressure to build the climate where the parties see that monitors are in their interest.

At the heart of this whole debate is a question mark over Sudan's future.

Without respect for human rights, Sudan's future will remain one of instability, conflict, and deep social division.

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