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Six Sudanese men executed amid fears of unfair trials

Amnesty International has today condemned the execution of six men accused of murdering 13 policemen during clashes over a forced eviction in Khartoum, Sudan in 2005.

The organization has grave concerns that the defendants may have been forced to confess to the murders under torture, after the Supreme Court ignored repeated complaints by defence lawyers that the men were tortured and instead twice confirmed the death sentences.

'Six men have lost their lives due to the Courts' blatant failure to ensure their right to a fair trial. These tragic deaths highlight the growing number of executions taking place in Sudan, many of which are being carried out after unfair trials. More needs to be done to protect defendants against torture and unfair trials.' said Tawanda Hondora, Deputy Africa Director.

Seven men were originally sentenced to death on 23 November 2006 for the killing of 13 policemen who died in violent clashes as they attempted to forcibly evict residents from the Soba Aradi squatter settlement in Khartoum in May 2005.

Six of the defendants, Paul John Kaw, Abdelrahim Ali Al Rahama Mohamed, Idris Adam Elias, Naser El Din Mohamed Ali Kadaka, Suleiman Juma'a Awad Kambal and Badawi Hassan Ibrahim, were granted a stay of execution in early December, which expired on 6 January.

The seventh defendant, Fathi Adam Mohamed Ahmed Dahab, had his sentence reduced to a five-year prison term.

Between five and 30 residents of the settlement are also believed to have died in the clashes, no independent investigation has so far been launched to determine whether the security forces used excessive force during the evictions.