

**WA 01/2003 (1 October 2003) // Stop Torture: Sudan**

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**Join the fight against torture in Sudan**

In the worldwide struggle to stop torture, those who speak out against torture in their own countries are often in the front line. They can be harassed, targeted for repression, even tortured themselves. The knowledge that people across the world support their struggle can make a tremendous difference.

It can also produce results. In Sudan, lawyers and human rights organizations say that their fight against torture is taken more seriously by the government, thanks to action by members of Amnesty International,

**Torture on the increase in Sudan**

Sudan is a country where reports of torture are on the increase. Over the past year, students and people suspected of supporting a new armed opposition group operating in Darfur, western Sudan, have been particularly at risk.

In Sudan, torture usually happens when people are detained without access to the outside world, often in detention centres under the control of the security forces.

Detainees are kicked or beaten with hoses, rods or gun butts, including on their backs and the soles of their feet. They can be deprived of sleep for several days or forced to do physical exercises, such as being forced to stand with their hands up – sometimes called the “rabbit jump”. Some detainees are reported to have been burned with cigarettes, to have been given electric shocks, and to have had objects inserted in their anus.

Torture is used primarily to punish or scare people suspected of opposing or criticising the current regime, but is also used to extract confessions. These confessions can sometimes be used as evidence in proceedings in 'Special Courts'. Rarely, if ever, are the torturers made accountable, even when medical evidence supports claims of people being tortured, as immunity is provided by law to members of the security forces.

**What you can do**

International pressure and letters sent to the Sudanese authorities on behalf of many individuals held incommunicado in Sudan have already helped to end the secrecy surrounding the practice of torture.

You can take this fight a step further by calling for investigations into cases of torture and protesting at the use of torture to extract confessions that may be used as evidence in unfair trials.

Take action on the cases below and help stop torture.

**APPEAL CASES**

**Sudan: Ask for urgent investigations into accounts of torture**

**Sudan: 'Confessions' extracted under torture could lead to death sentences**

**An action plan to end torture in Sudan**

Amnesty International believes that the following steps will help to stop torture in Sudan.

- **End incommunicado detentions.** Amnesty International is campaigning for the abolition of Article 31 of the National Security Forces Act which allows the security forces to detain people incommunicado for up to nine months.
- **Investigate acts of torture thoroughly, and make the perpetrators made accountable.** Amnesty International is asking for Article 33 of the National Security Forces Act, which provides immunity from prosecution to members of the security forces, to be abolished.

- **Stop using confessions extracted under torture as evidence in trials.** Amnesty International is campaigning for the reforming or abolition of the *Special Courts* in Darfur which can accept confessions made under torture.

link to following documents:

Sudan: Empty promises? Human rights violations in government-controlled areas

Sudan: Appeal case on torture

Sudan: Appeal case on incommunicado detention

UAs on Juma Omar

UAs on Sudan

Maybe press release on August releases? (good news)

## APPEAL CASE

### **Sudan: Ask for urgent investigations into accounts of torture**

Sudanese security forces arrested Awad Ibrahim and his four friends at his house on 19 May 2003. Later that same day, Awad Ibrahim's dead body was returned to his family. His friends went on to endure over a month of detention without charge, during which time they were severely beaten and tortured.

Action is urgently needed to ensure justice for these men, and to bring a halt to the increasing use of torture in Sudan.

Awad Ibrahim, Juma Omar El-Nur, Abu Nigel El Amin, Juma Mahamoud and Ramadan Ismail, who are all from the Nuba ethnic group, were arrested in the town of Dongola, northern Sudan. They were accused of being "traitors". They were taken to the headquarters of the security forces, where Awad Ibrahim died. Although security forces say he died of "natural causes", his body was buried without an autopsy or any independent investigation into the cause of the sudden death.

At least two other detainees needed medical treatment after they were tortured. Juma Omar El-Nur was reportedly unconscious when he was taken to Khartoum Hospital on or around 22 June. He remained in a coma for one week. He had been burnt on his neck, chest and hands by a solution of sulphuric acid and needed an operation following a kidney injury, apparently caused by torture.

Reports of torture in Sudan have increased during 2003. Students and people suspected of supporting a new armed opposition group in the west of the country are particularly at risk. However, international pressure and letters sent to the Sudanese authorities have already helped protect many individuals at risk of torture, and to end the secrecy surrounding the practice.

Add your voice to the protest, and speak out to bring justice to victims of torture in Sudan.

Take Action!

Please write immediately to Mr. Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, First Vice-President, Sudan, using the letter below as a guide.

### **SAMPLE LETTER**

Your Excellency

I am gravely concerned at reports that Juma Omar El-Nur, Abu Nigel El Amin, Juma Mahamoud, Ramadan Ismail and Awad Ibrahim were tortured in detention in Dongola, northern Sudan. They were arrested on 19 May 2003 at the house of Awad Ibrahim, who was later reportedly tortured to death. The security forces reportedly claim he died of "natural causes".

I urge you to open an independent, impartial investigation into the torture of Juma Omar El-Nur, Abu Nigel El Amin, Juma Mahamoud and Ramadan Ismail and the death of Awad Ibrahim, to make the findings public, and bring to justice anyone, including members of the security forces, found to have used or ordered torture.

Furthermore, I urge you to repeal Article 33 of the Sudanese National Security Forces Act of 1999, which gives immunity to officers of the security forces for any of their actions.

Yours sincerely

### **Appeals to:**

Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha

First Vice-President

People's Palace, PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: First Vice-President, Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: +249 11 771651/779977

Salutation: Your Excellency

### **FURTHER INFO**

For further information on how Amnesty International is supporting local organizations in their struggle against torture in Sudan, see <http://www.amnesty.org/stoptorture>.

### **PHOTO CAPTION**

*Students from Bahr-El-Ghazal University in Khartoum giving testimonies about arrests and torture by security forces*

