

SUDANGarang Wek Atheny (m)]
Gabriel Akol Akol Kuc (m)]
Ajiing Lual Lual (m)]
Andrew Lual Buolo (m)]
Gabriel Lual Deng (m)] Dinka civil servants
Lino Garang Athian (m)]
Garang Mawien Angok (m)]
Gai Gai (m)]
Ahmad Labuo, (m), merchant

The nine people named above were arrested on 20 October in Aweil, the capital of Northern Bahr al-Ghazal state. They are being held in incommunicado detention at the General Army Headquarters in Khartoum North, in the capital of Sudan. The detainees are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

No reason has been given for the arrest of any of these detainees and it is not known whether they have been charged with any offence. Three others, who were also arrested with them on 20 October have been released.

According to reports, Garang Wek Atheny was an advisor to the Governor of Northern Bahr al-Ghazal state. Ahmad Labuo was reportedly arrested at the airport in Aweil, following his questioning of military intelligence members about the reasons for the arrests of the civil servants.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Dinka are the largest ethnic group in southern Sudan. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the main armed opposition in southern Sudan, which has been at war with the central government for 19 years, draws largely on men of Dinka ethnicity to assemble armed forces. The government has often rounded up Dinka people on suspicion that they may belong to the armed opposition.

The National Security Act gives the security forces arbitrary powers to arrest and hold people in incommunicado detention for up to nine months. Many of those held incommunicado are tortured or otherwise ill-treated.

Incommunicado detention breaches international standards such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which the Republic of Sudan has ratified. It states that "anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge" (Article 9(3)). In addition, the Body of Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly, states that "communication of the detained or imprisoned person with the outside world, and in particular his family or counsel, shall not be denied for more than a matter of days" (Principle 15). Incommunicado detention facilitates torture or ill-treatment and can itself be a form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic, English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the incommunicado detention of the nine people named above;
- seeking assurances that those detained will be treated humanely and will have immediate access to lawyers and family;

- calling on the authorities to either charge those detained with a recognizable criminal offence and bring them promptly to a fair trial, or to release them immediately.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Lieutenant General Omar Hassan al-Bashir
President of the Republic of Sudan
President's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: President al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771651/ 787676 / 783223
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 774842 / 774906
Salutation: Dear Minister

Major General Abdul-Rahim Muhammed Hussein
Minister of Internal Affairs
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Minister of Internal Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 774339 / 773046 / 770186 / 777900
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Dr Yasir Sid Ahmed
Advisory Council for Human Rights
PO Box 302
Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 779173 / 770883

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 January 2003.