

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 12/95 Fear of torture

17 January 1995

Sudan

Tobias Atede - NGO relief coordinator
Louis Gore - town planner
Christopher Gore - former Commissioner of Juba
Richard Roman - civil servant
Luke Subek - agriculturalist
Dr Venusto - civil servant
and eight other civil servants

On 5 and 6 December 1994, 14 southern Sudanese civil servants and others were reportedly arrested in Juba, the largest city in southern Sudan. They are reported to be in detention in an unknown place. Amnesty International fears for their physical safety as the organization believes that they are at risk of torture. Furthermore, the organization believes they may be prisoners of conscience, detained because of their peaceful opposition to the policies of the military government.

Five of the six individuals whose names are known to Amnesty International are civil servants working in the Equatoria State Ministries of Engineering (Town Planning), Agriculture and Housing. There are reports that they have been detained because of their reluctance to implement the distribution of land around Juba to northern Sudanese non-governmental relief organizations (NGOs) who are alleged to make conversion to Islam a condition for receiving relief. In the Juba area, where the majority of the population is Christian, this is a highly political issue because of the government's Islamic orientation.

Tobias Atede is reported to work for a Christian-orientated Sudanese NGO. The eight men whose names are unknown are reported to be civil servants.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Political prisoners are held without charge or trial in Sudan on the basis of Constitutional Decree Two of 30 June 1989 which established a state of emergency. The decree bans the "showing of any political opposition by any means to the regime of the Revolution for National Salvation".

Anyone detained by the Sudanese security authorities is at risk of ill-treatment. Prisoners arrested in Juba are reported to be tortured at a detention centre known as the the "White House" which is close to the Military Headquarters. Those whom the authorities suspect of involvement in opposition political activities are at risk of severe torture.

In the past the authorities have blamed torture and ill-treatment on undisciplined security officials. Amnesty International's information, however, suggests that torture and ill-treatment is systematic.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English, Arabic or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the arrests of the people listed above, who Amnesty International believes may be prisoners of conscience, imprisoned on account of their non-violent opposition to government policies;
- seeking assurance of their physical safety and guarantees that they are not

being subjected to torture or ill-treatment;

- urging that their whereabouts in custody be made public and they be granted immediate and regular access to their families, legal counsel and any necessary medical attention;

- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released unless they are to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence and brought promptly to a fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

1) His Excellency Lieutenant General

Omar Hassan al-Bashir

President of the Republic of the Sudan

People's Palace

PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

Faxes: 249 11 71724

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Brigadier-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior

People's Palace

PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammed Husayn, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22604 IPOL SD

Faxes: 249 11 71724/76554/73046/70186

Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister

3) Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddo

Minister of Justice and Attorney-General

Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Faxes: 249 11 74063

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr Obeid Haj Ali

Chief Justice

Law Courts

Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Hussein Suleiman Abu Salih

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PO Box 873

Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Angelo Beda Bambara

Chairman of the Human Rights Committee

of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA)*

Omdurman, Sudan

* The TNA's Human Rights Committee was created by Sudan's government-appointed Transitional National Assembly in December 1992, apparently to counter what

the government perceives as hostile human rights propaganda. The Committee's Chairman has said that it investigates reports of human rights violations.

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 28 February 1995.