The 15 men named above are reported to have been arrested in late May 1995 in Port Sudan, Sudan's largest seaport on the Red Sea. The men, many of whom hold left wing political views, were reportedly detained by security officials although neither their place of detention nor the reasons for their arrest are known. Amnesty International is concerned that they may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

The arrests have taken place in what appears to be a widespread clampdown on political opponents of the military government, which seized power in a coup in 1989. There are reports of arrests in several Sudanese cities. In Khartoum, Sadiq al-Mahdi, former Prime Minister and leader of the banned Umma Party, was arrested on 16 May and other prominent Umma Party members were arrested in the days that followed. The authorities have accused the Umma Party leadership of cooperating with the armed opposition Sudan People's Liberation Army. There are further, as yet unconfirmed, reports of arrests in Kosti, Gedaref and al-Obeid.

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, in particular those held in secret detention centres known as "ghosthouses". Those whom the authorities suspect may have information about opposition 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 arrest of the 15 men named above, who Amnesty International believes may be prisoners of conscience, imprisoned on account of their non-violent opposition to government policies;
- seeking assurances of their physical safety and guarantees that they are not being subjected to torture or ill-treatment;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released unless they are charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to a fair trial;
- calling on the Sudan Government to put a stop to arbitrary detention without charge and to the torture and ill-treatment of individuals suspected of being government opponents.

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
Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Dr al-Tayib Ibrahim Mohamed Kheir
Minister of the Interior
People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Minister of the Interior Dr al-Tayib Ibrahim Mohamed Kheir,
Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD
Salutation: Dear Minister

3) Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddo
Minister of Justice and Attorney-General
Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Obeid Haj Ali
Chief Justice
Law Courts
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 17 July 1995.