

amnesty international

SUDAN

**Appeals on behalf of imprisoned
academics**

November 1990
54/11/90

AFR

a m n e s t y i n t e r n a t i o n a l

SUDAN

Appeals on behalf of imprisoned academics

Numerous academics working in higher education have been detained without charge or trial in Sudan since a new military government seized power in June 1989. Some have been released uncharged but up to a dozen are still held at various prisons in Sudan. They are detained because of their peaceful opposition to the new military government and in some cases because of their past activities.

Four such cases are described in this document.

Amnesty International considers these people to be prisoners of conscience, detained without charge or trial, and is appealing to the Sudanese authorities for their immediate and unconditional release.

Please join the campaign
on behalf of these four prisoners
by sending appeals to the government in Sudan.

Suggestions for action
are given at the back of this document.

BACKGROUND

In addition to the numerous academics currently being held in Sudan without charge or trial, hundreds of people from a variety of other professions and backgrounds have also been arrested since the present government came to power.

Although some detainees have been released uncharged, more than 250 prisoners of conscience remain in custody, held under emergency legislation allowing administrative detention. Despite an official announcement by a member of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council (NSRCC) that all political prisoners would be released by the end of August 1990, only a few prisoners have been released and arrests are reported to be continuing. Many political prisoners are believed to be at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

More detailed information on Amnesty International's concerns in Sudan can be found in the document The Military Government's first year in power - a permanent human rights crisis (AFR 54/10/90) published in August 1990.

ACADEMICS AS SPECIFIC TARGETS FOR ARREST

From August 1989 onwards, active members of the now banned University Lecturers' Union were targeted for arrest. This union was one of the organizations which signed a memorandum submitted to the government on 31 July 1989 by trade unions and professional associations. It protested at government infringements of trade union rights and called on the authorities to allow trade unions and professional bodies to participate in the drafting of new laws concerning trade union rights.

Eight trade union leaders who signed this memorandum were arrested in August and September 1989. Among them were a number of prominent academics such as **Ali Abdallah Abbas**, a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts at Khartoum University and President of the Lecturers' Union. He was held for a year until August 1990, when he was released uncharged. Another example is **Professor Mohamud Said al-Gadal**, a history professor detained without charge or trial at a prison in Port Sudan, in the northeast of the country, from 20 September 1989 until his release at

the end of October 1990.

In late November and December 1989, there were further arrests of academics. These included **Dr Ahmed Osman Siraj**, a lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine who is still detained at a prison in Port Sudan, and **Dr Mohamed Rajab**, a lecturer in Agriculture at the University of Khartoum, currently detained at Shalla Prison, in the western province of Darfur.

ACADEMICS AS VICTIMS OF TORTURE

Lecturers arrested at the end of 1989 are known to have been tortured.

One of them, **Dr Faruk Mohamed Ibrahim**, a 62 year-old biology lecturer at the University of Khartoum, was arrested on 20 November 1989, apparently because the military authorities suspected him of opposing their policies. He was reportedly questioned by senior security officials about his teaching of Darwinist theory of evolution which they evidently considered to contradict their interpretation of the principles of Islam.

Before his release, Dr Faruk Mohamed Ibrahim wrote a letter to the head of state in January 1990, describing the circumstances of his arrest and the torture he underwent while held incommunicado at a secret detention centre. In his letter, he stated:

"I was subjected to physical torture which involved being beaten with shoes, being kicked and being slapped on the face, head and all over the body by people who were professionals. I was also threatened with death, abuse and other forms of torture."

STUDENTS AS VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

In the incident described below, students were also singled out as targets for human rights violations.

In early December 1989, the head of state was reported to have called on the Sudanese people to "purge their ranks of communists, atheists and enemies from within". On 4 December, three students, known to belong to the "Islamic Tendency" (a student branch of the National Islamic Front which supports the military government) stabbed to death another student who was opposed to the government.

The following day, fellow students demonstrated against the killing; there were also protests from university lecturers. On 6 December, when students gathered on the university campus to mourn their colleague, the security forces moved in to disperse the gathering and opened fire on the students. Two students were reportedly killed and 13 others injured.

Dr Bashir Omar Fadlalla

Dr Bashir Omar Fadlalla is a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics at the University of Khartoum. He is a member of the Umma Party and has held office as Minister of Finance, Minister of Energy and Minister of Culture and Information in previous governments.

Dr Bashir Omar Fadlalla was arrested on 17 August 1989. He was released uncharged on 10 February 1990, but three months later he was arrested again, along with over 20 supporters of the National Democratic Forum (a coalition of 11 opposition parties and 51 trades unions and professional associations, all opposed to the military government). Although the government claimed it had evidence of plans to overthrow it by force, neither Dr Bashir Omar Fadlalla nor any of those arrested with him have been charged or brought to trial. Amnesty International regards Bashir Omar Fadlalla as a prisoner of conscience.

Dr Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud

Dr Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud is a lecturer in languages at the University of Khartoum and director of an Arabic teaching institute. He is also a human rights activist.

In October 1987, when the government of the former Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi was in power, he was briefly detained following the publication of a pamphlet he had written which criticized the authorities in connection with a massacre carried out by members of the Rizeigat ethnic group in Ad-Daien in Darfur region in May 1987. Hundreds of members of the Dinka ethnic group had died in the massacre. He was released after being interrogated for several hours. However, in December 1987, he was detained for two weeks and again questioned about the publication of the same pamphlet.

Dr Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud was arrested again on 8 July 1989 and has been in detention ever since. In March 1990, he received a visit, at Khartoum's Kober Prison where he had been held since his arrest, from a government minister who threatened him with indefinite detention without trial if he did not retract in writing his report on the Ad-Daien massacre. He refused to do so. Ten days later - evidently as a punishment - he was moved to Shalla Prison in Darfur, where prison conditions are known to be particularly harsh.

Dr Khalid al-Kid

Dr Khalid al-Kid is a writer and a lecturer in politics at Ahlia University in Omdurman. He is 48 years old and married with three children. During the 1960s, he was an army officer and in 1975, he left the army and worked as an English teacher. He studied outside Sudan on two occasions, firstly in Northern Ireland in 1970 when he studied Anglo-Irish literature, and later at the University of Reading in the United Kingdom, where he obtained a doctorate in political science in 1987. He is a member of the Sudanese Organization for Human Rights and of the Union of Sudanese Writers. He is also known to be a member of the Sudan Communist Party. He was a regular contributor to al-Maidan and al-Khartoum newspapers.

Dr Khalid al-Kid was arrested on 17 July 1989. After being held initially in Kober Prison, he was later transferred to Shalla Prison, where conditions are particularly harsh. He is still detained there without charge or trial.

Dr Faruk Kaduda

Dr Faruk Kaduda is a prominent economist who, until his arrest on 27 July 1989, was head of the Economics Department at Ahlia University in Omdurman. He is in his early 50s, married, with two daughters.

In 1959, while studying at Khartoum University, he was elected President of the Students' Union. In the early 1960s, he was imprisoned by the military government of General Aboud because of his political activities. After his release, he went to study in Moscow and obtained a doctorate in economics. On his return to Sudan, he worked for the Ministry of National Development Planning. During the 1970s he was arrested again and detained for being a member of the Sudan Communist Party.

In 1980, he joined Juba University, in the south of Sudan, as a senior lecturer in economics and two years later became dean of the faculty of social and economics studies there. However, he was later dismissed, apparently for political reasons. He was subsequently appointed head of the economics department at Ahlia University in Omdurman. He is known to have published many articles in Sudanese newspapers.

Dr Faruk Kaduda has been in detention since 27 July 1989. He is not allowed access to lawyers or relatives. Under the state of emergency legislation, he cannot challenge the legal grounds for his arrest or appeal to any court or judicial review commission.

ACTION

What you can do
to help secure the release
of these four prisoners
and other academics
detained in Sudan

1. Send appeals to the Sudanese government authorities overleaf making the following points:
 - *call for the immediate and unconditional release of the prisoners whose cases are described in this document, on the grounds that they are prisoners of conscience held on account of the peaceful expression of their opinions
 - *ask for assurances that they are not being ill-treated or tortured
 - *urge for them to be allowed access to relatives, lawyers and independent doctors
 - *express concern about the way academics are being singled out as victims of human rights violations on account of their peaceful opposition to the government
 - *ask for the government to review the cases of all untried political prisoners to ensure that no one is imprisoned solely for his or her non-violent beliefs and activities
2. Encourage others in your country, especially academics and students, to send appeals on behalf of these prisoners. Ask them to publicize these cases in colleges, universities and other educational establishments.
3. Try to obtain maximum publicity in your country for the plight of academics in Sudan. Send a copy of this document to journalists and others known to have a special interest in Sudan, or in African and Middle Eastern affairs.

ADDRESSES FOR APPEALS

- * Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan

(Lieutenant-General al-Bashir is Head of State and Chairman of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council - NSRCC)

- * Brigadier-General Mohamed Salih al-Zubeir
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan

(Brigadier-General al-Zubeir is Deputy Chairman of the NSRCC)

- * Mr Ali Sahoul
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Khartoum
Sudan

- * Mr Mahjoub al-Badawi Mohamed
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
Khartoum
Sudan