

PUBLIC

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Further Information on EXTRA 56/02 (AFR 54/013/2002, 18 July 2002) and follow-up (AFR 54/020/2002, 15 August 2002) - Imminent Execution/Torture/Unfair trial

SUDAN **88 people from the Rezeiqat ethnic group, including two children, Gadim Hamdoum Hamid (m) and Kabashi Alayan (m), both aged 14**

The 88 Rizeiqat people sentenced to death in July 2002, including the two children, are now known to have been released on 29 December 2004, and their death sentences have been quashed.

They had been arrested in May 2002 after clashes between the Rizeiqat and Ma'alia ethnic groups in South Darfur, in which at least 10 people died. They were tortured in custody to force them to confess to crimes including murder, and convicted in proceedings that were grossly unfair.

At least 45 Ma'alia were also arrested and tortured in May 2003, after Ma'alia attacked and killed several Rizeiqat in retaliation for earlier killings. They were also tried, but most were acquitted due to "lack of evidence". One man from the group of accused, Abdallah Agai Akot, of Dinka ethnicity, was condemned to death and has also now been released.

All were released after a government-sponsored reconciliation conference, in October 2004, between the two ethnic groups. The Rizeiqat will reportedly now pay diya (blood money) in compensation for the Ma'alia who died, while the government will pay diya to the Rizeiqat for the deaths they suffered. The High Court then quashed the death sentences.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all those who sent appeals.