

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 54/053/2005

24 May 2005

UA 136/05      Fear of torture or ill-treatment/ fear of arbitrary arrest

**SUDAN**      **Mayak Nich (m), of Dinka ethnicity, community leader in Soba Aradi IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camp**  
**Mahmoud Gazira (m), of Nuba ethnicity, United Sudan National Party member**  
**Hanan Mahmoud Gazira (f), daughter of Mahmoud Gazira**  
**Abdel-Aal Mahmoud Gazira (m), son of Mahmoud Gazira**  
**Adil Gazira (m), brother of Mahmoud Gazira**  
**El-Amin Kuku (m), aged 13 (disabled)**  
**And an unknown number of residents of Soba Aradi IDP camp**

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At 4.30am on 24 May, hundreds of heavily armed police surrounded the Soba Aradi IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camp, some 30km south of the Sudanese capital Khartoum, preventing outsiders from getting into the camp and residents from moving out of the camp. The police searched houses in the camp and arrested between 50 and 200 people, including those named above. Those arrested may be tortured or ill-treated.

Soba Aradi is mainly populated by southern Sudanese and Darfuris (from western Sudan) who have fled conflict and economic deprivation in their home areas. According to the Reuters news agency, the Khartoum State Governor, Abdul Haleem Mutafi, has stated that the arrests were made in a police round-up of people possessing weapons.

The arrests appear to be linked to clashes between police and IDPs in Soba Aradi on 18 May, when 14 police officers and between 3 and 30 civilians were killed after the police apparently attempted to forcibly remove a number of IDPs from the camp. The State Government's policy of relocating IDPs around Khartoum without full consultation, often by force and without offering adequate alternatives for shelter and basic services, has been criticised by the UN.

Amnesty International is concerned that IDP community leaders who may oppose the State Government's policy to relocate them may have been targeted for arrests. Witnesses of the 18 May clashes may also be arrested, as the government refutes Soba Aradi's residents' accounts that the police opened fire on people.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Torture or ill-treatment of people arrested by the police or the national security forces is often reported in Sudan, particularly when those detained are not given access to the outside world. The poor and the displaced are particularly at risk because they have little access to legal aid. Those who are seen as opponents of the government, including suspected or real members of political opposition, community leaders, and people from certain ethnic groups in Darfur, have been the targets of arrests and incommunicado detention.

It is unclear exactly what happened in Soba Aradi on 18 May. It would appear that some IDPs refused to cooperate with police attempts to remove them by truck from the camp. The Sudanese authorities affirm that IDPs surrounded and set fire to the police station in Soba Aradi and that the 14 policemen were killed in the clashes that followed. Residents of Soba Aradi claim that the police first opened fire on them. The Sudanese authorities claim that three IDPs died in the clashes, while unofficial reports suggest that up to 30 IDPs may have been killed in the incident.

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

- expressing concern at the mass arrests in Soba Aradi IDP camp on 24 May;
- expressing concern that those arrested may be subjected to torture or ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to immediately reveal the names, number and whereabouts of all those arrested from Soba Aradi since the 18 May clashes;
- calling for all those detained to have immediate access to lawyers, families, UN human rights monitors and any medical aid they may need;
- urging the authorities to release those arrested promptly, unless they are charged with a recognisable criminal offence and tried according to international standards for fair trials;
- Calling on the authorities to open an independent and impartial investigation into the Soba Aradi incidents, and for the findings of the investigation to be made public.

**APPEALS TO:**

Mr Abdul Haleem Mutafi  
Governor of Khartoum State  
Khartoum State, Sudan  
**Fax: + 249 183 770143**  
**Salutation: Dear Governor**

Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha  
First Vice-President, People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax: + 249 183 771651 / 779977 / 780796 (Please mark your fax: "For the attention of the First Vice-President")**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax: + 249 183 771479 / 780796 (Please mark your fax "For the attention of the Minister of Justice")**  
**Email: info@sudanjudiciary.org**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Major General Abdel Rahim Mohammed Hussein  
Minister of Internal Affairs  
and Presidential Representative for Darfur  
Ministry of Interior  
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax : +249 183 773046**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Dr Abdel Moneim Osman Taha  
Rapporteur, Advisory Council for Human Rights, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Email: human\_rights\_sudan@hotmail.com**

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 5 July 2005.