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SUDAN Samuel Aru Bol

Samuel Aru Bol, a prominent politician from Rumbek District in southern Sudan, is reported to have been arrested in Khartoum on 14 October 1991. He is reportedly held without charge or trial and his place of detention is unknown.

Samuel Aru Bol was arrested after he criticized changes introduced in the education system which affect people in southern Sudan. He is believed to have been detained solely for his peaceful opposition to the policies of the Sudanese government. Amnesty International is appealing for his immediate and unconditional release.

Shortly before Samuel Aru Bol's arrest, the government announced that schools in southern Sudan, as well as those in the north specifically set up for southern Sudanese displaced by the war, were to have Arabic rather than English as their language of instruction.

The issue of Arabic as the language for teaching in secondary and higher education is politically sensitive in Sudan. Historically, English is the language of government in southern Sudan and is the medium of instruction in most southern educational institutions. Tuition in English is regarded by many southern Sudanese intellectuals as protecting their cultural identity in relation to Muslim northern Sudan. Steps to Arabicize the educational system started earlier this year when the government announced that all school-leavers seeking university places would be required to pass an examination in Arabic.

Since 1972 southerners have been exempted from this requirement. Southern leaders argued that the requirement discriminated against southern students gaining university places, even at Juba University, which was set up as a university in southern Sudan, but which is now located in Khartoum because of the war.

Samuel Aru Bol, who is 62 years of age and is married with eight children, is a senior politician from southern Sudan. During the government of former President Gaafar Nimeiri, he was Vice-President of the High Executive Council, the government of the autonomous southern Sudan. Following the April 1985 coup against President Nimeiri, he served as Deputy Prime Minister in the Transitional Military Government of President Sowar al-Dahab. Samuel Aru Bol is also the former Chairman of the now banned political party, the Southern Sudan Political Association (SSPA) and former spokesperson of the Union of

Southern African Parties (USAP) formed during the government of Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi. Samuel Aru Bol was arrested with other senior politicians following the military coup of 30 June 1989 and was detained for six months without charge or trial.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern about the arrest of Samuel Aru Bol in Khartoum on 14 October 1991;
- requesting assurances that he is being humanely treated;
- requesting information about his whereabouts and urging that he be given prompt access to relatives and legal counsel and any necessary medical attention;
- urging his immediate and unconditional release as he appears to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for having peacefully exercised his universally recognized right to freedom of expression.

APPEALS TO

His Excellency Lieutenant General **Your Excellency**
Omar Hassan al-Bashir
Head of State and Chairman of the NSRCC
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan
Telex: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

Brigadier-General al-Zubeir Mohamed Saleh **Dear Brigadier-General**
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior
and Deputy Chairman of the NSRCC
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Brig-Gen al-Zubeir Mohamed Saleh, Khartoum, Sudan
Telex: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Brigadier Ahmad Mahmoud Hassan **Dear Brigadier**
Minister of Justice and Attorney-General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

COPIES TO:

Mr Abd al-Basit Sabdrat Sudan
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
PO BOX 284
Khartoum
Sudan

Mr Jalal Ali Lufti
Chief Justice
Law Courts
Khartoum

Mr Ali Sahloul
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO BOX 873
Khartoum
Sudan

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 January 1992.