

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 54/24/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 182/93 Fear of Torture/Legal Concern

4 June 1993

SUDAN: Mohamed Atim Mohamed Salama, former member of parliament
Yusif Mohamed Sharaf al-Din, director of an agricultural project
Nasr al-Din Tambul, teacher
Yacoub Khamis, former member of parliament
Omer Haroun, former minister in regional government
Fiqi Salih Ibrahim, head of Darfur State religions department
Mohamed Sowar Adam
al-Zubeir Mohamed Khamis

The eight men named above, who are members of the banned Umma Party and of the Fur ethnic group were arrested in the remote western region of Darfur in late April 1993. They are alleged to have been beaten by security officers with Nasr al-Din Tambul being seriously ill as a result of ill-treatment. They are held incommunicado, possibly in Zalingei in Southern Darfur or in al-Fasher, the capital of Northern Darfur. The authorities have not given reasons for their detention.

Amnesty International is concerned that the detainees named above have been arrested solely for their peaceful activities as regional leaders of the Umma party and considers them to be prisoners of conscience. They are at high risk of being tortured under interrogation about their opposition to the government.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There were widespread arrests in towns in northern Sudan in April and early May 1993. The majority were members of the Umma Party and Ansar sect, a traditional Islamic order in Sudan, although members of other political parties, including the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), also were detained. (The Ansar sect has its origins in the followers of the Mohamed Ahmad al-Mahdi, the great-grandfather of Sadiq al-Mahdi, Sudan's former Prime Minister and leader of the Umma Party.)

The recent crackdown on Umma Party and Ansar members began on 5 April 1993 when Sadiq al-Mahdi was held for 24 hours for questioning. On 25 March 1993 he gave a speech during the 'Id al-Fitr feast to mark the end of Ramadan (the Islamic fasting month) in which he called for a return to a multi-party political system in Sudan. On 9 April 1993 a demonstration took place in Omdurman after Friday prayers led by Sadiq al-Mahdi. Dozens of people were arrested and subjected to beatings in the course of being interrogated.

In late May, in the days immediately preceding the 'Id al-Adha, the Muslim holiday marking the end of the period of pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca, the security authorities took control of the religious complex centred on the tomb of Mohamed Ahmad al-Mahdi in Omdurman, which is one of the most important Ansar shrines and religious sites in the country. A few days later, during the 'Id al-Adha, another important mosque in Khartoum North belonging to

the Khatmiya, the other major traditional religious order in Sudanese Islam, was also confiscated.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters either in English or Arabic, or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the arrest in late April 1993 of the individuals above (please select two or three names) who appear to be prisoners of conscience, imprisoned solely because of exercising their internationally recognised rights to freedom of expression and freedom of association;
- expressing concern at their continuing detention without charge or trial and fear that they may be subjected to torture;
- requesting assurances that they are being humanely treated and urging that their whereabouts in custody be made public and that they have immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers and any necessary medical attention;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released.

Page 2 of UA 182/93

APPEALS TO

1) His Excellency Lieutenant General
Omar Hassan al-Bashir
Head of State and Chairman of the National Salvation Revolutionary Command
Council
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) Brigadier-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior
and Deputy Chairman of the National Salvation Revolutionary Command
Council

People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammed Husayn, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister

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

Telegrams: Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr Jalal Ali Lutfi
Chief Justice
Law Courts
Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Hussein Suleiman Abu Salih
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan

Dr A. al-Mufti
Secretary of Human Rights Commission*
Khartoum, Sudan

* The Human Rights Commission is a government-backed body, nominally independent, but apparently created to counter what the government perceives as hostile human rights propaganda.

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 16 July 1993.