

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 54/030/2003

06 May 2003

UA 122/03

Torture/ Fear of Torture/ Incommunicado detention

SUDAN

Hana Mohamed Ali (f)]	
Mawahib Ali (f)]	
Huda Da'wood (f)]	
Intisar Abdel Rahman Fadl (f)]	
Mohamed Al Hassan Rahma (m)]	
Hassan Harri (m)]	
Mohammed Ahmed Khalid (m)]	all students at Zalingei University
Da'wood Abdel Rhaman (m)]	
Abdel Azim Daw El Beit (m)]	
Ashraf Alhilo (m)]	
Haythem Samba (m)]	
El Tayeb (m)]	
Tagelsir (m)]	
Al Noor (m)]	
Um Al Hassan Sharoofa (f)]	
Asha Sharoofa (f)]	

Fourteen of the students named above are reportedly being detained incommunicado in an office of the security services in the town of Zalingei, Western Darfur province. Amnesty International fears that they are being tortured in detention.

Two female students, Um Al Hassan Sharoofa and Asha Sharoofa, arrested and detained incommunicado with the others, have been transferred to hospital in Zalingei. This is reportedly for treatment of injuries sustained when they were severely beaten by security personnel in detention.

The 16 students were arrested after a student protest on 1 May at Zalingei University, over financial issues such as payment of grants and food and transport allowances. The riot police intervened, reportedly using tear gas and sticks against the students. One university building was burnt down during the protest. University authorities closed down the university on 3 May, reportedly at the demand of the security services.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since October 2002, student protests in Darfur and in the capital Khartoum have been the scene of human rights violations by the security forces. The students have been demonstrating over issues of financial accountability of universities or at the denial of students' right to organize in unions and political parties. Human rights violations against students have included use of excessive force by riot police and incommunicado detention and torture by the security services. Many students subsequently released have reported being harshly kicked and beaten by security personnel, often using hose pipes and gun butts. Some students also claim that they were threatened into giving information about their alleged political activities. Scores of students have also been dismissed from their courses by university authorities.

It is alleged that the security services may have arrested the students named above in connection with the unfolding armed conflict in Darfur between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA). The SLA took up arms in February 2003, accusing the government of keeping Darfur, an area in western Sudan, under-developed and marginalized and of failing to protect farmers against attacks. In the past year, dozens of civilians have been killed in attacks by cattle and camel herders against farming communities comprised largely of the Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups. Members of the security forces have also been

killed. In late April, the SLA attacked the airport in El Fasher, capital of North Darfur. Amnesty International is calling for an international commission of inquiry and monitoring to investigate the deteriorating situation in Darfur.

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

- expressing concern over the incommunicado detention of 14 students from Zalingei university, and at the reported beatings of two female students by the security services in Zalingei;
- calling on the authorities to give assurances that the 14 detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated while in detention;
- urging the authorities to allow the detainees immediate and unrestricted access to their relatives, legal counsel and any medical aid they may need;
- calling on the authorities to either charge the detainees with a recognizably criminal offence and give them a prompt and fair trial in accordance with international standards or set them free immediately, as set in Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) ratified by Sudan;
- asking the authorities to open an independent investigation into reports of beatings of two female students by members of the security and to bring to justice anyone found to have been responsible for torture or ill-treatment.

APPEALS TO:

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 799031
Salutation: Dear Minister

Major General Abdul-Rahim Muhammed Hussein
Minister of Internal Affairs
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: Minister of Internal Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 774339 / 776554 / 773046 / 770186 / 777900 / 773046 / 770186
Salutation: Dear Minister

General Ibrahim Sulayman
Governor of North Darfur
c/o People's Palace
Po Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: Governor of North Darfur, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771651/783223
Salutation: Dear Sir

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan

Telegram: Foreign Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 24911 779383
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Dr Yasir Sid Ahmed
Advisory Council for Human Rights

PO Box 302
Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 779173 / 770883

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 17 June 2003.