

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 54/43/90
Distr: UA/SC

UA 501/90

DEATH PENALTY

14 December 1990

SUDAN

Colonel Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Salih

Amnesty International has learned that **Colonel Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Salih**, from the Cadet Military Academy in Jebeet (Eastern province near the Red Sea), was sentenced to death last week.

The army newspaper al-Quwat al-Musallaha said on Sunday 9 December that **Colonel Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Salih** had embezzled more than 14 million Sudanese pounds (three million US dollars at the official exchange rate). However, it did not say when he committed the crime or when he was sentenced. According to the same newspaper, the Sudanese leader General Omar Hassan al-Bashir confirmed a death sentence on an army colonel convicted of embezzlement.

No information is available about any trial which preceded this death sentence. Amnesty International is concerned that **Colonel Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Salih** may not have received adequate defence counsel, that is if there was a trial at all. The organization is also concerned because prisoners sentenced to death since the new military governing body, the National Salvation Command Council (NSRCC), took power in June 1989 have not been allowed proper legal representation at their trials, or appeal to a higher court.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Since the military takeover in June 1989, at least five people have been executed for illegal currency and drug trading. This is the first death sentence passed for embezzlement. Soon after they took power, the military authorities ordered everyone in possession of foreign currency to declare it to the government, and threatened severe punishment, including the death penalty, for those contravening the new currency regulations.

The government has increased the number of offences punishable by death to include drug-related offences, black-marketeering, contravention of currency regulations, corruption, embezzlement, incitement to opposition against the government and calling or organizing a strike.

On 14 April 1990 Arkango Agadad, one of two people sentenced to death in December 1989, was executed (see UA 499/89, AFR 54/30/89, 18 December 1989 and follow-up AFR 54/20/90, 25 April 1990). According to some reports he was not allowed any assistance from defence counsel before or during the trial. Moreover, like all others since June 1989, he was denied the right to appeal to a higher court.

Following recent strikes and demonstrations in Atbara, Port Sudan and Darfur, during which people protested against food shortages,

deteriorating working conditions and inflation, the military authorities have arrested many people. Trade unionists and prominent figures in the Umma Party have been the main targets.

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

- expressing concern about the death sentence reported to have been imposed on **Colonel Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Salih**;

- explaining Amnesty International's opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

- referring to Sudan's international obligation under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Sudan ratified in 1986, not to impose the death penalty except for "the most serious crimes", and as a quite exceptional measure;

- referring to basic safeguards adopted by the United Nations in May 1984 to protect the rights of anyone facing the death penalty, one of which stipulates that anyone sentenced to death should have a right of appeal to a court of higher jurisdiction;

- calling for the death sentence on him to be commuted.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Lieutenant General
Omar Hassan al-Bashir
Head of State and Chairman of
the National Salvation Revolution Command Council
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 Mohamed Saleh al-Zubeir
Vice President of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council
People's Palace PO Box 281
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Telegrams: Brig Gen Mohamed Saleh al-Zubeir, Khartoum, Sudan
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Lieutenant-Colonel Bakri Hassan Saleh
Member of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council
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Telegrams: Lt Col Bakri Hassan Saleh, Khartoum, Sudan
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COPIES 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 23 January 1991.