

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/ Fear of torture

24 June 2003

SUDAN

**Killed: Abkr Mohammed Abdo Shain (m),] both aged 40, drivers and members of
Suleiman Mahmoud Nadi (m),] the Zaghawa ethnic group**

On 18 June, Abkr Mohammed Abdo Shain was reportedly arrested by the Sudanese military intelligence in Sarf Ommra, a village situated about 100 km east of Geneina, capital of West Darfur state. Amnesty International fears for his safety as Suleiman Mahmoud Nadi who was arrested with him, has reportedly been shot dead by the military intelligence.

Abkr Mohammed Abdo Shain was reportedly brought to El-Fashir, the capital of North Darfur state, after his arrest. He is being detained by military intelligence at an unknown location.

It is not known why the two men were arrested as they are said to have no known political affiliations. However, dozens of people have been arrested by government forces in the past few months on suspicion of having links with the newly formed Sudan Liberation Movement/ Army (SLM/A), an armed group which has been fighting government forces since February 2003 in certain areas of Darfur, western Sudan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There is very little information about people detained by the Sudanese military intelligence. It is generally not known why they are arrested, although it is presumed that arrests are related to conflicts between the government and Sudanese armed opposition groups. Detainees are usually held in secret locations without charge and there is no access to them.

The SLA, formed by sedentary groups in Darfur, says it is fighting the government because of the underdevelopment and marginalization of the region. It also accuses the government of failing to protect sedentary groups from attacks by nomads. Cattle and camel herders have attacked farming communities such as the Fur and the Zaghawa for several years, over scarce water resources and pasture. Dozens of villagers have been killed in such attacks.

At the end of March 2003, the government decided to respond by military force to this new armed group. The SLA attacked El-Fashir on 24 April and Mellit, a district capital in North Darfur on 11 May, but the government retook control of the two cities. At present, there are reports of fighting and heavy military presence in Kutum and Kornoy in Northern Darfur and around the Jebel Marra mountains. Civilians are reportedly not allowed to leave villages, use satellite telephones or four wheel drive vehicles. It is extremely difficult to get information about the situation of civilians in these areas. On 28 April, Amnesty International called for an international commission of inquiry into the deteriorating situation in Darfur and for human rights monitors to be sent into the region. None of these have happened so far.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately reveal the whereabouts of Abkr Mohammed Abdo Shain and give him unrestricted access to his relatives, lawyers and any medical help he may need;
- urging the authorities to give assurances that he will not be tortured or ill-treated;

- calling on the government to abide by its commitments under Article 9 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and either charge him with a recognizably criminal offence and give him a prompt and fair trial in accordance with international standards or set him free immediately;
- expressing concern at reports that Suleiman Mahmoud Nadi was shot dead by military intelligence;
- calling for an prompt, independent and impartial investigation into the circumstances of the reported killing of Suleiman Mahmoud Nadi and for anyone suspected to have committed human rights violations to be brought to justice, in accordance with international standards of fairness and without recourse to the death penalty.

APPEALS TO:

Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha
First Vice-President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegram: First Vice-President, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771651 / 779977
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771479
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 779383
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Osman Mohamed Yusif Kubor
Governor of North Darfur
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Governor of North Darfur, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: +249 11 771651/ 779977
Salutation: Dear Governor

Major General Suleiman Abdalla Adam
Governor of West Darfur
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Governor of West Darfur, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: +249 11 771651/779977
Salutation: Dear Governor

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 5 August 2003.