

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety / fear of torture or ill-treatment /
incommunicado detention / medical concern

28 August 2003

SUDAN

Hayder Tamboor (m), teacher]
Nasr Eldin Tamboor (m), teacher] All of Fur
Yaqub Rahma Tanusi (m), shertai - tribal leader] ethnicity
Abud Mandy (m), merchant]
Four other men]

The four men named above and four others were reportedly arrested by officers from the military intelligence in Zalingey, West Darfur State, Western Sudan between 19 and 22 August. They were reportedly taken to the security forces' premises in Zalingey where they are being held incommunicado. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety and fears that they may be tortured or ill-treated.

The eight men, all of Fur ethnicity, were arrested individually, allegedly because they are suspected of supporting or helping the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA). They have not been charged with any offence.

Nasr Eldin Tamboor was reportedly transferred to a hospital in Zalingey on 26 August. There are reports that beatings by security forces officers worsened a kidney injury he had sustained prior to his arrest. He is reportedly chained to his hospital bed, under surveillance of security forces officers and is not allowed any visits. This reinforces Amnesty International's concern that the other detainees might be tortured or ill-treated in detention. Nasr Eldin Tamboor was previously detained incommunicado in Nyala prison, around August and September 2002, before being released without charge after about a month.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The security forces, now called the National Security Agency (NSA), are distinct from the army and police forces. The NSA includes internal security and external or military security, also known as intelligence and they deal with issues they consider to be a threat to the Sudanese government.

In February 2003, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), a group of farmers from the Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups, took up arms against the government, because of what they perceive as the lack of government protection of their people and the marginalisation of the region. Fighting between government forces and the SLA has intensified over the past few weeks, mainly in North and West Darfur.

Incommunicado detention by government security forces has been used extensively in Darfur to detain suspected government critics and since February, civilians suspected of supporting the SLA. People in the region also allege that those of Fur and Zaghawa ethnicity are increasingly arrested because they are of the same ethnic group as members of the SLA. Amnesty International is receiving reports of the increasing use of torture on people detained by the security forces in Darfur.

It is impossible to know how many people are currently held in Darfur, because of the absence of independent observers in the region and the practice of the security forces and the army not to release the names of those in their custody.

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

-expressing grave concern for the safety of Hayder Tamboor, Nasr Eldin Tamboor, Yaqub Rahma Tanusi, Abud Mandy and four other men who have been detained incommunicado at the security forces premises in Zalingey since between 19 and 22 August;

- urging the authorities to give public assurances that the detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the authorities to allow them immediate and unrestricted access to their relatives, legal counsel and any medical care they may need;
- calling on the authorities not to impede a proper medical investigation, diagnosis and treatment on Nasr Eldin Tamboor;
- calling for the government to abide by its commitments under Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and 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.

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 771025 / 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 770883
Salutation: Dear Minister

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 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 9 October.