

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 20/013/2007

10 December 2007

UA 326/07 Incommunicado detention/fear of torture

CHAD Haroun Mahamat Abdoulaye (m), Sultan of the *département* of Dar Tama
Abdelkarim Mahamat Toraye (m), *Préfet* (governor) of the *département* of Dar Tama
Brahim Idriss Ibrahim (m), army officer
Youssuf Abdekarim Abdoulaye (m), army officer
Yakoubaye Oumar Adam (m), army officer
Abdelaziz Moussa (m), army officer
Ali Kaikit (m)

The seven men named above were arrested in the eastern town of Guéréda (eastern Chad) on 30 November. They are believed to be detained incommunicado, and have not been brought before a judge. They are at grave risk of torture and being disappeared.

Some of the seven are members of the former armed opposition movement *Le Front Uni pour le Changement Démocratique* (FUC), United Front for Democratic Change. They were arrested during or soon after a meeting with President Deby to discuss the disarmament of former FUC elements based in the eastern town of Guéréda which have so far refused to disarm..

On 7 December, during an interview with the broadcaster Radio France Internationale, a government spokesperson confirmed that the men had been arrested, but did not say where they were held.

The seven belong to the Tama ethnic group: the FUC was mainly made up of Tama people. Haroun Mahamat Abdoulaye is a Tama leader, the Sultan of Dar Tama. The seven have family ties with the former Minister of Defence, Mahamat Nour, who was sacked by the president on the day they were arrested, after seeking refuge at the Libyan embassy in N'Djamena. They have also family ties with a dozen soldiers and civilians who are believed to have been abducted by government agents in the capital, N'Djamena, in mid-April 2006. These army officers and civilians were detained by Chadian security forces because they allegedly were involved in, or had knowledge of, an attack on N'Djamena by the FUC and other armed opposition groups. They have not been seen since.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned that the seven men arrested in Guéréda on 30 November will face the same fate of those arrested in April 2006 in N'Djamena, in particular because the authorities have refused to disclose their whereabouts and failed to respect their rights as detainees.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since early 2000, Chadian armed opposition movements have waged low-intensity warfare which has been exacerbated by the spill-over of thousands of refugees from Sudan in 2003 and the politically contentious 2005 constitutional changes which, in 2006, enabled President Idriss Deby to be re-elected for a third term .

On 24 December 2006 the government reached a peace agreement with the FUC. As a result of this agreement, FUC leader Mahamat Nour was appointed Minister of Defence on 4 March 2007 and the FUC elements joined the national army.

In October 2007, fighting broke out in Guéréda between Chadian soldiers and FUC elements which claimed the army had tried to disarm them by force. Because of this fighting, a state of emergency was declared in the area of Guéréda. It is well established in human rights treaties and in customary international law that

some rights, such as the right to freedom from torture, may never be suspended under any circumstances, in particular during states of emergency.

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

- urging the authorities to reveal immediately what has happened to the seven men (naming them) and why they have been detained, and promptly inform their families and legal representatives;
- urging them to ensure that the seven are given immediate access to their lawyers, families and any medical attention they may require;
- urging them to release the men unless they are to be charged with recognizably criminal offences and brought promptly to trial in accordance with international fair trial standards.

APPEALS TO:

President

Son excellence Idriss Deby Itno
Présidence de la République
BP 74

N'Djamena

Fax: +2352514501

Email: presidence@tchad.td

Salutation: Monsieur le président/Dear President Deby

Minister of the interior

M. Ahmat Mahamat Bashir
N'Djamena

Fax: +2352522139

Salutation: Monsieur le ministre

Minister of justice

M. Albert Pahimi Padacket
BP 426/5495
N'Djamena

Fax: +2352522139

Email: justice@intnet.td

Salutation: Monsieur le ministre/Dear Minister

Minister of human rights

Mme Fatime Issa Ramadane
BP 426
N'Djamena

Fax: +2352522139

Email: justice@intnet.td

Salutation: Madame la ministre/Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Chad accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 January 2008.