

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 20/91 (AFR 23/01/91, 21 January) - Fear of Torture

DJIBOUTI: Ali Aref Bourhan, former Prime Minister

Aref Mohamed Aref, lawyer, nephew of Ali Aref Bourhan  
Mohamed Daoud Chehem, civil servant, financial director  
Abdel-Kader, police officer  
Afada, army sergeant  
Ahmed Mohamed Badri, non-commissioned army officer  
Hassan Kader Dileyta  
Mohamed Ahmed Dini  
Hassan Ali Harsa  
Bourhan Mohamed Houmed  
Cheicko Mohamed

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Up to 100 members of the Afar community were arrested between 9 and 11 January 1991 in connection with an armed attack on a military barracks in Tadjourah during which a government soldier was killed. On 17 January Ali Aref Bourhan, Aref Mohamed Aref, Mohamed Daoud Chehem, an army officer and a police officer (names unknown) were charged with "undermining state security", murder and attempted murder, offences punishable by death.

Some 30 others were also charged with the same offences. It was alleged that some had been tortured while in detention.

No date has yet been set for the trial of the 35, the rest have been set free.

Amnesty International is preparing a delegation to visit Djibouti for talks with the government about these arrests, torture allegations and impending trial.

The Djibouti ambassador in Paris has replied to some UA participants enclosing a copy of the Minister of Interior's reply to Amnesty International's Secretary General which did not deal with all the issues raised, but at least indicated the government's sensitivity to Amnesty's concerns and appeals.

No further action is required at present. Thank you to all those who sent appeals which certainly had an impact on the government.