

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture / Prisoners of conscience

11 March 1994

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and other names not known

Amnesty International is concerned about the reported arrest by security officials of around 30 individuals, including those named above, during the evening of 10 March 1994, the 28th day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The arrests took place at a house in Khartoum where relatives and friends were gathering to commemorate the anniversary in the Islamic calendar of the summary execution of 28 army officers on 24 April 1990.

It has been reported that some of those detained were assaulted by security officials at the time of their arrest. Their current place of detention is unknown and there are serious fears that they may be subjected to torture.

Amnesty International believes that they are prisoners of conscience arrested for engaging in their internationally recognized and fundamental rights to freedom of expression and association.

Two women, Zakia and Mahassin, widows of two of the executed officers, were also arrested but have since been released.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Twenty-eight army officers were executed on 24 April 1990, the day after they were arrested. They were convicted in summary military trials of involvement in a coup attempt. Since then the anniversary of their deaths has become a rallying point for opposition to the military government.

Women and children related to the executed officers were previously arrested in April 1992 when they were held in detention without charge for a number of weeks, following a peaceful demonstration commemorating the anniversary.

(see UA 107/92 (AFR 54/12/92, 1 April 1992) and follow-ups (AFR 54/13/92, 3 April; AFR 54/15/92, 6 April; AFR 54/16/92, 16 April; and AFR 54/18/92, 30 April).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters either in English or Arabic, or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the arrest on 10 March 1994 of around 30 individuals (naming some) who Amnesty International believes are prisoners of conscience imprisoned solely for exercising their internationally recognised rights to freedom of expression and association.
- requesting assurances that they are not being subjected to torture or ill-treatment and urging that their whereabouts in custody be made public and that they are granted immediate and regular access to their family, legal counsel and any necessary medical attention;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released.

APPEALS TO

1) His Excellency Lieutenant General

Omar Hassan al-Bashir

President of the Republic of the Sudan

People's Palace

PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Brigadier-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior

People's Palace

PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammed Husayn, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister

3) Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu

Minister of Justice and Attorney-General

Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr Jalal Ali Lutfi

Chief Justice

Law Courts

Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Hussein Suleiman Abu Salih

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PO Box 873

Khartoum, Sudan

Dr A. al-Mufti

Secretary of Human Rights Commission*

Khartoum, Sudan

* The Human Rights Commission is a government-backed body, nominally independent, but apparently created to counter what the government perceives as hostile human rights propaganda.

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 22 April 1994.