

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 54/16/96

UA 185/96 Possible prisoners of conscience / Fear of torture 24 July 1996

SUDAN

Moneim Attia, engineer

Nagib Nejm al-Din, aged 46, medical doctor

Amnesty International has received reports that Moneim Attia, an engineer and former academic, and Nagib Nejm al-Din, a medical doctor, were arrested in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, on 8 and 13 July 1996 respectively. Neither man has been brought to a court or charged. Moneim Attia is currently reported to be detained in an unknown place in Khartoum; there are reports that Nagib Nejm al-Din was transferred to Kober Prison on or around 20 July after spending a week detained in the security headquarters in Khartoum. Amnesty International is concerned that the two men may be prisoners of conscience and that they are at risk of ill-treatment.

The arrests of Nagib Nejm al-Din, who was Secretary General of the Sudan Doctors' Union at the time of the 30 June 1989 coup that brought the current government to power, and Moneim Attia, who was previously detained for 11 months in 1990, appear to be part of a clampdown on persons suspected of supporting the banned National Democratic Alliance (NDA), an umbrella grouping of banned political parties and trade unions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There were a succession of public challenges to the government by the NDA in various cities in Sudan in June 1996. A public statement by the NDA, signed by leading political opponents living inside Sudan and issued in Khartoum on 10 June, called on the government to step down in favour of an interim administration. In late June a similar petition appears to have been issued in Wad Medani, Sudan's second city. These events were followed by at least 45 arrests of suspected political opponents, some of whom remain in detention (see UA 157/96, AFR 54/12/96, 28 June and follow-up AFR 54/14/96, 24 July; UA 170/96, AFR 54/13/96, 5 July and follow-up AFR 54/15/96, 24 July).

For further background information, see *Sudan: Progress or public relations?*, AFR 54/06/96, 29 May 1996.

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

- expressing concern at the detention without charge of Moneim Attia and Dr Nagib Nejm al-Din, reportedly arrested in Khartoum on 8 and 13 July 1996 respectively, who Amnesty International believes may be prisoners of conscience imprisoned for their suspected non-violent opposition to the Sudan Government;
- asking assurances that they are not being ill-treated;
- urging that they be given immediate and regular access to their families, legal representatives and any necessary medical attention;
- appealing for them to be released if they are not to be charged with recognizably criminal offences and brought promptly to a fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

1) His Excellency Lieutenant General Omar Hassan al-Bashir
President of the Republic of the Sudan
People's Palace

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PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

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

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Mr 'Abd al-Basit Sabdarat

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Ministry of Justice

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Minister of Justice 'Abd al-Basit Sabdarat, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: c/o 22411 KAID SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Salutation: Dear Minister

3) Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PO Box 873

Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

1. Mr Obeid Haj Ali

Chief Justice

Law Courts

Khartoum, Sudan

2. The Chairman

Human Rights Committee of the National Assembly,

National Assembly

Omdurman, Sudan

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 4 September 1996.