

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 27/05 (AFR 54/016/2005, 2 February 2005) Arbitrary Arrest/ Fear for Safety/Torture

SUDAN **Abdallah Musa Abdallah (m), General Secretary of the Beja Congress in Red Sea State**
Dr Mahmoud Osman Ibrahim (m) aged 45, General Secretary of the Beja Congress in
Kassala
Hashim Ali Dura (m) (Port Sudan)
Abdel Rahim Ali Bur'i (m) (Port Sudan)
Aderob Bakkash (m), aged 22, student (Kassala)
Khalifa Omar Ohajj (m), aged 23, student (Kassala)
Ali Hussein Ali (m), aged 40, self-employed (Kassala)
Mohamed Samra (m), aged 40, self employed (Kassala)
Hussein Adam (m), aged 35 (Kassala)

New names: At least eight other men from the Beja ethnic group

The men named above and at least eight others reportedly remain detained incommunicado by security forces, following mass arrests of members of the Beja ethnic group. They may have been transferred to places of detention in other parts of Sudan. Amnesty International fears that they are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

The arrests follow demonstrations on 26 and 29 January in Port Sudan, eastern Sudan, predominantly by members of the Beja ethnic group, who were calling for equal opportunities and a share of power in the region. Demonstrations on 26 January were peaceful and culminated in a list of demands being presented to the Governor of Red Sea State, who was given 72 hours to respond (see AI press release, AFR 54/014/2005, *Sudan: Those responsible for indiscriminate Port Sudan killings must be brought to justice*, 31 January 2005).

However, on 29 January armed security forces reportedly used live ammunition against a demonstration which allegedly turned violent. They then attacked houses outside the area of the demonstrations, and reportedly threw grenades which wounded residents including children. At least 20 people were killed.

Scores of people of Beja ethnicity were arrested between 29 January and 13 February by members of the National Security and Intelligence Agency. The official Sudanese Media Centre stated on 3 March that 199 of those arrested had been released and that four would be sent to court. Amnesty International now has the names of eight other men arrested who continue to be held incommunicado at unknown locations. They are Dr Onour Siedy, arrested in Port Sudan 30 January, Mohamed Al-Amin Mohamed Tahir and Mohamed Habib Mohamed Tahir, both arrested on 13 February in Port Sudan, Dirar Mohamed Dirar, known as Shiba, arrested in Port Sudan, Hashim Odis, Omer Bamkar, Taj Alsir Badri and Mohamed Musa Issa. It is not known if any of those arrested have been charged with any offence.

The Minister of the Interior, Major-General Abdalrahim Mohamed Hussein, issued a decree on 17 February setting up a commission of inquiry headed by a judge to investigate the clashes which occurred in Port Sudan. It is not known whether the commission will report publicly on its findings, or when it will conclude its investigation.

The National Security Act 1999, amended in December 2000, gives the National Security Forces extensive powers. Under articles 31 and 33 of the Act, the security forces can detain people in prolonged

incommunicado detention for up to nine months. Amnesty International has received many reports of torture of detainees held incommunicado by the National Security Forces.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of at least 17 detainees (please name them) held incommunicado following the demonstrations in Port Sudan;
- calling on the authorities to immediately reveal the names and whereabouts of all of those detained following the demonstrations;
- calling for all those detained following the demonstrations to be given immediate access to their families, legal counsel and any medical attention they may need;
- seeking assurances that the detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- asking for them to be released or be promptly charged with a recognizable criminal offence and given a fair trial;
- welcoming the setting up of a commission of inquiry into the events in Port Sudan, and calling for it to include the continued incommunicado detention of these detainees in its investigation.

APPEALS TO:

Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha
First Vice-President
People's Palace, PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 183 771025
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 183 779383
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Khatem al-Sirr al-Wasila
Governor of Red Sea State
Governor's Residence
Port Sudan, Sudan
Fax: + 249 183 779977
Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

El Tayeb Harun Ali
Head of Complaints Committee
Human Rights Advisory Council
Fax: + 249 183 781343

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 19 April 2005.