

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 54/35/95

UA 224/95

Prisoners of Conscience /  
Fear of Torture

20 September 1995

SUDAN Kamal al-Gizouli, lawyer and poet  
al-Bagir Hassab al-Rasoul, lawyer  
Abdallah Meshawi, lawyer  
Siddiq Yousif, retired engineer and trade unionist

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Amnesty International has received reports that Kamal al-Gizouli (photo) was arrested at his home on 17 September 1995. The other three named above are reported to have been arrested on or around 12 September. The four men are believed to have been detained as part of a security clampdown during anti-government street protests in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. All four are reported to hold left-wing political views; Siddiq Yousif and Kamal al-Gizouli, both former prisoners of conscience, were members of the Sudan Communist Party which, like all political parties, was banned when the current government seized power in a military coup on 30 June 1989. The men are reported to be detained without charge or trial by the security services in an unknown location. Amnesty International is concerned that they have been arrested because of their history of non-violent political activity and that they are at risk of torture.

Amnesty International's fears are heightened by the fact that the arrests took place as student demonstrations led to rioting on the streets of Khartoum and other cities. This has resulted in a widespread clampdown on political opponents by the authorities, who have accused communists, leftists and "foreigners" of being responsible for organizing the protests. There is no reliable evidence that the men named above played any role in the rioting. The authorities appear to have used events on the streets as a pretext to arrest prominent non-violent critics of the government.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Some of those detained in connection with the riots are believed to have been badly beaten. One young man was reportedly held briefly by security men who broke both his arms. An intermediate school student arrested on 12 September is understood to have been beaten in incommunicado detention before being dumped from a vehicle outside his home on the evening of 14 September. Siddiq Yousif's son Usama was among a group of 22 students arrested on 2 September - the incident that sparked the student protests that in turn led to the street demonstrations (see UA 222/95, AFR 54/33/95, 18 September 1995).

The demonstrations, which began on 11 September 1995, are the largest street protests to have taken place in Sudan since the military government seized power on 30 June 1989. They appear to have been sparked off by the arrest of 22 students and others on 2 September 1995 and widespread discontent with the economic situation. University of Khartoum students keeping vigil on the main university campus on 9 September, who were calling for the release of colleagues, were reportedly attacked by pro-government students. In the course of the demonstrations between 11 and 14 September, government supporters, some reportedly armed, attacked demonstrators and police and plainclothes security officials fired live ammunition and tear gas. At least five people are reported to have been killed - unofficial sources have claimed that as many as 40 people may have died - and many others wounded. Hundreds of people were arrested.

On 17 September the authorities announced the release of "all students arrested during the riots", but said that many would still face criminal charges. However, the announcement did not mention people other than students, nor students arrested before the demonstrations. In the past, official statements that all prisoners have been released have not always been correct.

On 18 September Sudanese state television showed a group of people, including a number of Ethiopian and Eritreans, whom it claimed had been arrested during the demonstrations. At least one showed signs of having been beaten. The television announced that 17 people had been detained for "plotting acts of sabotage and participating in those acts". It is not known if the men named above were included in the group.

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

- expressing concern at the arrest of Kamal al-Gizouli, al-Bagir Hassab al-Rasoul, Abdallah Meshawi and Siddiq Yousif, who Amnesty International believes are prisoners of conscience, detained on account of their history of non-violent opposition to government policies;
- seeking assurances of their physical safety and guarantees that they are not being subjected to torture or ill-treatment;
- 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: 22411 KAID SD**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

2) Brigadier Bakri Hassan Saleh

Minister of the Interior

People's Palace

PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

**Telegrams: Minister of the Interior Bakri Hassan Saleh, Khartoum, Sudan**

**Telexes: 22842 WZARA 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**

**Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddo

Minister of Justice and Attorney-General

Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Obeid Haj Ali  
Chief Justice  
Law Courts  
Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Angelo Beda Bambara  
Chairman of the Human Rights Committee  
of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA)\*  
Omdurman, Sudan

\* The TNA's Human Rights Committee was created by Sudan's government-appointed Transitional National Assembly in December 1992, apparently to counter what the government perceives as hostile human rights propaganda. The Committee's Chairman has said that it investigates reports of human rights violations.

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 1 November 1995.