

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/fear of torture or ill-treatment /
incommunicado detention

20 June 2003

SUDAN

Abbas El Tigani (m), aged 26] students
Gamar Eldin Mohammed Eisa (m), aged 35]

Students, Abbas El Tigani and Gamar Eldin Mohammed Eisa are being held in incommunicado detention at an unknown location, following their arrest in the capital Khartoum. There are concerns for their safety as they may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Abbas El Tigani was arrested on 29 May by plain clothed security officers. He is a final year student at El Nilein University in Khartoum and a member of the 10 strong Steering Committee of the Darfur Students Union. Following Abbas El Tigani's arrest, his fellow committee members have reportedly gone into hiding for fear of being arrested.

The Union represents all students from Darfur at universities around the country. It had been prevented from carrying out its work for the last two years by the government, which claimed that it was controlled by the opposition Popular National Congress Party. The Union had recently begun to work again and is preparing to elect its officials. The government however, is allegedly fearful that the elections could produce officials who do not support the ruling party.

Gamar Eldin Mohammed Eisa is also a student at El Nilein University. He was arrested on 10 June by plain clothed security officers from the coordination office for West Darfur State, in Khartoum. The reason for his arrest however is not known.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Sudanese authorities systematically use detention without charge as a means of silencing government critics and opponents. Those detained can be held for anything from a few hours to several years. Detainees are sometimes released then rearrested a number of times or else are released and ordered to report to a police station on a daily basis, when they are made to wait for hours before being seen. Many of those detained are also denied access to a lawyer.

Amnesty International is concerned about the pattern of detention and torture of students in Sudan. Following their release, many students have reported being harshly kicked and beaten by security personnel, who have often used hose pipes and gun butts. Detained students have also reported being made to sign an agreement not to engage in political activity before they are released. The security forces are also alleged to have put pressure on universities to dismiss students who oppose the government.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Abbas El Tigani and Gamar Eldin Mohammed Eisa, who have been held incommunicado since being arrested by the security forces in Khartoum;
- calling on the authorities to give assurances that the detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- urging the authorities to allow them immediate and unrestricted access to their relatives, legal counsel and any medical aid that they may need;
- calling on the government to abide by its commitments under Article 9 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and either charge the detainees with a recognizably criminal offence and give them a prompt and fair trial in accordance with international standards or set them free immediately;

APPEALS TO:

Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha
First Vice-President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegram: First Vice-President, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax : + 249 11 771651 / 779977
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 771479
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax : + 249 11 779383
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Dr Yasir Sid Ahmed
Advisory Council for Human Rights
PO Box 302
Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 11 779173 / 770883

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 August 2003.