

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 54/067/2003

UA 232/03

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

01 August 2003

SUDAN

**Hamdi Sebit (m), aged 26, engineering student
Michael Kustober (m), aged 27, education student
Mohammed Ibrahim (m), aged 29, sociology student**

Amnesty International is concerned about the safety of the three university students named above. They were arrested by security forces on 31 July at Juma University in Khartoum, and are being held incommunicado at an unknown location.

Hamdi Sebit, Michael Kustober and Mohammed Ibrahim are allegedly suspected of being affiliated to opposition parties. The three were involved in clashes which turned violent between students and the riot police on the Khartoum Campus of Juma University on 31 July. Scores of police armed with sticks reportedly interrupted a march of students who were protesting against the refusal of the Vice-Chancellor of Juma University to postpone student union elections until the registration of all students had been completed.

At least 20 students were reportedly injured in the clashes that followed. They were allegedly brutally beaten by police officers with sticks and hard metallic objects, before being transferred to Khartoum hospital. There are reports that approximately 60 students were arrested and detained by the police. A majority have reportedly been released on bail, having been reportedly charged with "disturbing public order". They are due to be taken to court on 2 August.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since October 2002, student protests in Darfur and Khartoum have resulted in human rights violations by the security forces. Violations have included the use of excessive force by riot police, incommunicado detention as well as torture by the security services. Many students subsequently released have reported being harshly kicked and beaten by security personnel, often using hose pipes and gun butts. Some also claim that they were threatened into giving information about their alleged political activities. Scores of students have also been dismissed from their courses by the university authorities.

Under the 1999 State of Emergency Act and the National Security Forces Act, the security forces can hold people in incommunicado detention without access to judicial review for up to nine months. Concerns are heightened as detainees are often tortured while held by security forces.

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

- expressing grave concern at the incommunicado detention of Hamdi Sebit, Michael Kustober and Mohammed Ibrahim, who were arrested at Juma University in Khartoum on 31 July;
- calling on the authorities to immediately publicly reveal the whereabouts of the students and to give assurances that they will not disappear or be tortured or ill treated;
- urging the authorities to allow the students immediate and unrestricted access to their relatives, legal counsel and any medical aid they may need.
- calling on the authorities to abide by its commitments under Article 9 of the 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;
- asking the authorities for independent investigations into allegations of excessive use of force by riot police against demonstrators;

-calling on the authorities to ensure that students will not face imprisonment solely for their peaceful opinions or activities in this incident.

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 (It may be difficult to get through, please keep trying)

Salutation: Dear Minister

Dr Nafie Ali Nafie
Minister of Federal Government
Office of the Presidents People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Federal Government Minister, Khartoum, Sudan

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 12 September 2003.