

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 328/93

Rape, Torture, Extrajudicial Executions

16 September 1993

DJIBOUTI:

Kamil Houmed Souleh, postal worker, 36,

Abakari Baragoita, 40

Hamadou Daoud Ali

~~Ali Dabale Hemed~~

Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed, 55, keeper of a well

Mohamed Dimbio Ahmed, nomad, 45

and many others

Amnesty International has received information about gross human rights violations, including rape, torture and extrajudicial executions by the Djibouti security forces. These have taken place in the context of violent reprisals against suspected civilian opponents of government forces in reprisal for losses inflicted by the *Front pour la restauration de l'unité de la démocratie* (FRUD).

The FRUD has been fighting the government in the north and southwest of the country since 1991. Major human rights abuses by government troops have been reported on previous occasions, and most recently in late August and early September 1993 in the districts of Tadjourah, Mabla and Obok in the north and in Dikhil district in the southwest. The six men named above are among dozens of unarmed civilians who were shot dead by the security forces in northern Djibouti in early September 1993 - the first two in Randa town on 5 September and the rest in other parts of Tadjourah district between 7 and 12 September.

Women and men from these areas, who belong to the Afar ethnic group from which the FRUD derives most of its support, have been victims of gross human rights abuses. The names of several female rape victims have been given to Amnesty International but are not being published for fear of reprisals. Thousands of Afars have fled to Ethiopia as a result of government attacks and reprisals, and food shortages due to the disruption of food supplies to Afar areas.

Troops recently rounded up hundreds of Afar men, killing some who resisted and detaining others in military camps, particularly in Randa and Assagueila, where there are reports of torture and ill-treatment of detainees, including beatings and denial of food. Some local political and religious leaders who complained to the government were arrested but it seems that most may have been quickly released.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In July 1993, after a long period of virtual cease-fire when peace talks continued under French government mediation, government forces launched a new offensive and recaptured some northern towns and villages, although the FRUD still claims to control rural areas. Fighting escalated in late August 1993, when President Hassan Gouled Aptidon visited France for talks with the French government, which provides military aid to Djibouti.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters either in French, English or your own language:

- expressing deep concern at the gross human rights abuses mentioned above, including extrajudicial executions, rape and torture (cite some names, especially Kamil Houmed Souleh, brother of a prominent human rights activist);
- calling for immediate impartial investigations into the reports of killings of suspected government opponents, rape of women and torture of civilian detainees by the security forces in the course of military action against the FRUD;
- urging that immediate instructions be given to the security forces that unlawful killings, rape and torture are crimes which will be punished;
- seeking assurances that the human rights of detainees are being protected: that they are being treated humanely, given access to relatives, lawyers and medical doctors, and are either charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released without delay.

APPEALS TO

1) Son Excellence Hassan Gouled Aptidon
Président de la République
La Présidence
BP 6

République de Djibouti

Telegrams: Président Hassan Gouled, Djibouti

Telexes: 5871 DJ

Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République

2) Monsieur Ismail Ali Youssouf
Ministre de la défense nationale
Ministère de la défense nationale
BP 1905

République de Djibouti

Telegrams: Ministère de la défense Youssouf, Djibouti

Telexes: 5871 DJ

Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

3) Monsieur Ahmed Boulaleh Barreh
Ministre de l'intérieure
Ministère de l'intérieure
BP 2086

République de Djibouti

Telegrams: Ministère de l'intérieure Barreh, Djibouti

Telexes: 5871 DJ

Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

4) Monsieur Ougoureh Hassan Ibrahim
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
BP 12
République de Djibouti

Telegrams: Ministère de la Justice Ibrahim, Djibouti Telexes:
5871 DJ

Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

COPIES TO

Monsieur Mohamed Ali Afkada
Procureur Général
BP 12
République de Djibouti

Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

and to diplomatic representatives of Djibouti accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 October 1993.