

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 420/91 Fear of "Disappearance"

3 December 1991

SUDAN Mirghani Kafi - nurse

Mirghani Kafi and a large number of other civilians of the Nuba ethnic group, possibly as many as 100 people, were reportedly detained without charge or trial by military intelligence officers and members of the Popular Defence Force (PDF), a government militia, in the town of Kadugli in the Nuba Mountains of South Kordofan in late September 1991. They were reportedly arrested on the grounds that they were supporters of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The arrests are thought to have been in retaliation for an attack by SPLA forces on an army and PDF column about 18 kilometres north of Kadugli town on 25 September 1991 in which three senior officers and several other soldiers from the army and the PDF were killed.

Many people arrested in Kadugli and other parts of the Nuba Mountains earlier in 1991 and other years have apparently disappeared, giving rise to serious concern for those arrested in September 1991. Two teachers at Kadugli Senior Secondary School, Ismat Hassan Khair al-Said from Miri and Yousif Galgadoun from Dilling, disappeared in early 1991. Others who have disappeared during 1991 include Hamdan Hassan Koury, a lawyer from the al-Lagori area, together with his father Hassan Koury Bagari, Mohamed Nowar Aso, a dental assistant, al-Sir Abdel Nabi Malik, an employee of the Soil Survey Department, Kamal Kano Kafi, a radio technician, and Ibrahim Marmatoun, an employee of the Water Department.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Nuba are an ethnic group occupying the remote mountain ranges of the southern part of South Kordofan. They regard themselves as non-Arabs and as culturally closer to southern Sudanese than to the Arab nomads whose stock graze the plains between the mountain Nuba communities. Many Nuba are Christians, although many others are Muslims.

The Nuba Mountains has been politically tense since the start of the current civil war in 1983. In 1985, informal pro-government militias were formed among some Arab nomadic communities which graze animals in the area, notably the Misseriya. These militias were responsible for massive raids into southern Sudan in which thousands of civilians were killed. Some Nuba have joined the SPLA, which became active in the area in mid-1987, and many, particularly those who are Christian or educated, have since been suspected by the authorities and pro-government militias of being sympathetic to the SPLA. In late 1989 the current military government created Popular Defence Forces (PDF) as a formal pro-government militia recruited largely from the ranks of previously existing

informal groups.

Members of the armed forces and militias have been responsible for frequent extrajudicial executions of Nuba, both following detentions and in attacks on villages apparently in revenge for incidents in which soldiers or militia members have lost their lives. In November 1987, for example, eight civilians were extrajudicially executed by soldiers at al-Gohan east of Kadugli. Sixteen others arrested with them had earlier been released. In November 1989, militia forces were reportedly responsible for the extrajudicial execution of 44 villagers in the Keiga Alkhel area northwest of Kadugli. There are reports that in January 1990 six civilians were extrajudicially executed by the armed forces in the Kallandi area in the northern Nuba mountains. Twelve others arrested with them were detained, apparently without charge or trial. In April 1991 in the same area, PDF members reportedly tortured and then extrajudicially executed Jibreel Salah and Jibreel Sendica.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the reported detention and apparent "disappearance" of Mirghani Kafi and other civilians in Kadugli since September 1991, asking the authorities for information about their whereabouts and asking for the names of all those taken into detentions with Mirghani Kafi;

- expressing concern that under such conditions of incommunicado detention a number of prisoners in Sudan are reported in the recent past to have been subjected to extrajudicial executions, torture and others forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by members of the security forces and militia;

- seeking assurances that Mirghani Kafi and the others have not disappeared while in detention, that they are being humanely treated, and that their families and lawyers be given access to them;

- urging that they be released immediately and unconditionally unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to trial.

APPEALS TO

1) His Excellency Lieutenant General **Your Excellency**
Omar Hassan al-Bashir
Head of State and Chairman of the NSRCC
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan
Telex: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

2) Brigadier-General al-Zubeir Mohamed Saleh **Dear Brigadier-General**
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior
and Deputy Chairman of the NSRCC
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan
Telegrams: Brig-Gen al-Zubeir Mohamed Saleh, Khartoum, Sudan
Telex: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

3) Brigadier Ahmad Mahmoud Hassan **Dear Brigadier**
Minister of Justice and Attorney-General
Ministry of Justice
Khartoum
Telegrams: Brig Ahmad Mahmoud Hassan, Khartoum, Sudan
Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

COPIES TO:

Mr Jalal Ali Lufti
Chief Justice
Law Courts
Khartoum
Sudan

Mr Ali Sahloul
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PO BOX 873
Khartoum
Sudan

and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 January 1992.