

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 252/94 Fear of torture / Possible prisoners of conscience 30 June 1994

SUDAN Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi, President of the Central Foundry Workers Trade Union

Ali Khalifa, engineer, Secretary General of the Professionals Union of Trade Unions

Siddiq Yusuf, retired engineer

Mohamed Babiker Mukhtar, Secretary General of the Employees Union

El Hag Osman, trade unionist

Suliman al-Khidir, businessman

The six people named above were arrested near Khartoum at the beginning of June 1994. Their current whereabouts are unknown, and Amnesty International fears for their physical safety, particularly following reports of torture.

Furthermore, the organization believes they may be prisoners of conscience, detained because of their trade union activities and their peaceful opposition to the policies of the military government.

The detainees are reported to be members of the Sudan Communist Party and trade unionists. Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi, Siddiq Yusuf and Suliman al-Khidir have all been detained on previous occasions by the current government of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir. Their detentions were believed to be connected with their trade union activities. Ali al-Mahi al-Sakhi was adopted by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience after his arrest in 1991.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Political prisoners are held without charge or trial in Sudan on the basis of Constitutional Decree Two of 30 June 1989 which established a State of Emergency. The decree bans the "showing of any political opposition by any means to the regime of the Revolution for National Salvation".

Anyone detained by the Sudanese security authorities is at risk of ill-treatment, in particular those held in secret detention centres known as "ghost houses". Those whom the authorities suspect may have information about opposition activities are at risk of severe torture. In the past the authorities have blamed torture and ill-treatment on undisciplined security officials. Amnesty International's information, however, suggests that torture and ill-treatment is systematic.

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

- expressing concern at the arrests of the six people named above, who Amnesty International believes may be prisoners of conscience, imprisoned on account of their trade union activities;
- seeking assurance of their physical safety and guarantees that they are not being subjected to torture or ill-treatment;
- urging that their whereabouts in custody be made public and they be granted immediate and regular access to their families, legal counsel and any necessary medical attention;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to a fair trial.

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: 22385 PEPLC SD or 22411 KAID SD

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Brigadier-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior

People's Palace

PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Brig-Engineer 'Abd al-Rahim Muhammed Husayn, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22842 WZARA SD or 22604 IPOL SD

Salutation: Dear Deputy Prime Minister

3) Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu

Minister of Justice and Attorney-General

Ministry of Justice, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Mr 'Abd al-Aziz Shiddu, Khartoum, Sudan

Telexes: 22459 KHRJA SD or 22461 KHRJA SD (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr Jalal Ali Lutfi

Chief Justice

Law Courts

Khartoum, Sudan

Mr Hussein Suleiman Abu Salih

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PO Box 873

Khartoum, Sudan

Dr A. al-Mufti

Secretary of Human Rights Commission*

Khartoum, Sudan

* The Human Rights Commission is a government-backed body, nominally independent, but apparently created to counter what the government perceives as hostile human rights propaganda.

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 11 August 1994.