

PUBLIC

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

SUDAN

**Abdul Majid Mosa Hassan (m), teacher, local secretary of the National Congress
(member of the Fur ethnic group)**

27 other men (17 from the Fur ethnic group and 10 from the Zaghawa ethnic group)

Abdul Majid Mosa Hassan and 27 other men were reportedly arrested by army personnel in the town of Kabkabyia, North Darfur state, between 4 and 5 August. All of them are being detained incommunicado and Amnesty International fears that they may be tortured or ill-treated in detention.

According to reports, the 28 men were arrested individually, either in their homes, in the streets or at the market in Kabkabyia, before being taken to the security forces premises in Kabkabyia. An unknown number were later allegedly transferred to the security forces premises in El-Fashir, North Darfur State. The reason for their arrest is not known.

Abdul Majid Mosa Hassan is a local secretary of the ruling political party, the National Congress. The 27 other men are said to include a number of merchants and influential members of the Fur and Zaghawa communities in Kabkabyia.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In February 2003, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), a group of farmers from the Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups, took up arms against the government, because of what they perceive as the lack of government protection of their people and the marginalisation of the region. Fighting between government forces and the SLA has intensified over the past few weeks, mainly in North Darfur. On 25 July, hundreds of people wearing government forces' uniforms launched an attack on the village of Shoba, near Kabkabyia. At least 51 Shoba inhabitants were killed and many villagers fled to Kabkabyia.

Incommunicado detention by government security forces has been used extensively, including in Darfur, to detain suspected government critics and, since February 2003, civilians suspected of supporting the SLA. People in the region also allege that those of Fur and Zaghawa ethnicity are increasingly arrested because they are of the same ethnic group as members of the SLA.

It is impossible to know how many people are currently held in Darfur, because of the absence of independent observers in these isolated regions and the practice of the security forces and the army not to release names of those in their custody.

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

-expressing grave concern for the safety of the Abdul Majid Mosa Hassan and 27 other men, arrested between 4 and 5 August in Kabkabyia, North Darfur state;

-urging the authorities to publicly reveal the whereabouts of the 28 men and calling for assurances that the detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated;

- calling on the authorities to allow them immediate and unrestricted access to their relatives, legal counsel and any medical care they may need;

-calling for the government 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;

- expressing your concern at the growing abuses against civilians in the Darfur region and urging the authorities not to respond to the situation by arbitrarily detaining people incommunicado.

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 (please keep trying)
Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Osman Mohamed Yusif Kubor
Governor of North Darfur
People's Palace
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Telegrams: Governor of North Darfur, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: + 249 731 42696 (please keep trying)
Salutation: Dear Governor

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 26 September 2003.

