

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 59/04/98

5 October 1998

Further information on UA 255/98 (AFR 59/03/98, 24 September 1998) -
Incommunicado detention without charge or trial / Fear of torture

UGANDA/USA Sheikh Abduwel Abdullah Amin, imam of Tawhud mosque, Kampala -
(released)
Omar Ahmed Mandela, treasurer SC Villa football club
Hussein Abdul Mumir - (released)
Muhammed Diriya - (released)
Mohamed Gulam Kabba, former manager Alero Resource
Centre, in Adjumani - (released)
Hassan Noor - (in detention)
Ali Mahmood - (released)
Asuman Mahmood - (released)
Hassan - (released)
Mohamed Rashid Asuman - (released)
Salah - (released)
and seven others whose names are not known - (released)

and new names: Hajji Ali, shop-owner - (in detention)
Sharif, an employee of the above - (in detention)
Abdul Khadir, 15-year-old youth - (in detention)

Amnesty International welcomes the release, on 1 October 1998, of most of those mentioned above. The organization is concerned, however, that four others -- Hassan Noor, Hajji Ali, Sharif and a 15 year old boy, Abdul Khadir -- are still in incommunicado detention, without charge or trial, in contravention of Uganda's constitution and laws, since their arrest on 15 September 1998.

While there are no reports that the men released were tortured or ill-treated, there are concerns for the safety of the four who remain in detention.

At the time of their arrest by the Ugandan Anti-Terrorism Squad, working in conjunction with officials from the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), US officials said that those arrested were suspected of planning attacks on US interests in Uganda. On 24 September a Ugandan minister told a press conference that the men had confessed to being sponsored by the Sudan Government and to having links to Osama bin Laden, wanted by the US Government for the bombing of the US Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam on 7 August. This information does not appear to have been correct. The FBI personnel involved in the arrests have reportedly now left Kampala.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- welcoming the release of Sheikh Abduwel Abdullah Amin, Omar Ahmed Mandela and 16 others;
- expressing concern for the safety of Hassan Noor, Hajji Ali, Sharif and Abdul Khadir, who remain in incommunicado detention in an unknown location following their arrest in Kampala on 15 September 1998;
- seeking assurances that they are not being ill-treated;
- expressing concern that they have been detained without charge or trial for a period exceeding 48 hours in contravention of Ugandan law;
- urging that they be given immediate and regular access to family members, a lawyer of their choice, and any necessary medical attention;

- requesting that they be released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to trial;
- seeking assurances that Abdul Khadir is provided with all the safeguards for the protection of children contained in both Uganda's Children Statute (1996) and international standards.

APPEALS TO (Please note that fax tones may be difficult to obtain):

Major Tom Butime

Minister of Internal Affairs

Ministry of Internal Affairs

PO Box 7191, Kampala, UGANDA

Telegrams: Minister Internal Affairs, Kampala, Uganda

Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Eriya Kategaya

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PO Box 7048, Kampala, UGANDA

Telegrams: Minister Foreign Affairs

Faxes: + 256 41 232874

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Mr Philip Idro

Director

Internal Security Organization

Office of the President

PO Box 7168, Kampala, UGANDA

Faxes: + 256 41 235459

Telexes: 61048 RESIST / 61389 KAPITAL

When copying to the US authorities please add a covering letter:

- pointing out that FBI involvement in the arrest and subsequent detention, without charge or trial, of all 22 persons means that the US continues to have an obligation towards ensuring that the human rights of the four still detained are protected.

The Honorable Madeleine Albright

Secretary of State

Office of the Secretary of State

2201 C Street, N.W.

Washington DC 20520

Faxes: + 1 202 647 1533

Salutation: Dear Secretary of State

The Honorable William Cohen

Secretary of Defence

The Pentagon

Washington DC 20301-1155

Faxes: + 1 703 697 9080

Salutation: Dear Secretary of Defence

Louis J Freeh

Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Ninth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington DC, 20535

and to diplomatic representatives of Uganda and USA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 November 1998.