

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Sudan: Amnesty International's statement to the Human Rights Council

At a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) today, Amnesty International made an oral statement on the report of the Special Rapporteur about human rights in the Sudan.

The organization said that arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detention, torture and other forms of ill-treatment had increased in Sudan over the last year. These violations targeted civilians from all over Sudan and from Darfur in particular, including journalists, human rights defenders, women and children.

Dr Sima Samar, the Special Rapporteur, highlighted in her latest report the numerous gross and systematic violations of civil and political rights that persist in Sudan, and that have been exacerbated by the arrests and detentions that followed the Darfur-based Justice and Equality Movement's attack on Khartoum in May 2008, and around the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant against President Al Bashir in March this year. Amnesty International highlighted the situation of hundreds of disappeared civilians, mainly of Darfuri origin, who remain unaccounted for by the government since the arrests that followed the Justice and Equality Movement's attack on the capital.

Amnesty International also condemned the death sentences that were delivered to date against a total of 103 alleged Justice and Equality Movement members, including one 17 and one 16-year old. These individuals have spent months in incommunicado detention and have all gone through unfair trials under special courts that are in breach of international and national law. These individuals must be given access to fair trials in normal courts, and there should be no recourse to the death penalty.

The Special Rapporteur is the only existing mechanism that can monitor and report effectively on these and other serious violations to the Council. They would not otherwise come clearly and comprehensively to the Council's attention.

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Sudan was established to respond to a situation of gross and systematic violations of human rights in Sudan. Amnesty International urged the HRC to renew her mandate for at least one year at a time and to maintain it for as long as the gross and systematic violations persist.

Amnesty International is deeply disappointed that no open consultations have yet been held on the draft resolution on Sudan, and that this resolution is once again treated as matter of concern to a minority of delegations.

Public Document

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