

PUBLIC

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"Disappearance"

19 July 2001

CHAD

Abel Karim Abbo Sileck, aged 21, Student

Abel Karim Abbo Sileck has "disappeared" after being taken away by two men believed to be members of the Chadian security forces. Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

The two men reportedly took Abel Karim Abbo Sileck from his home in the Arboutsoulba district of the Chadian capital, N'Djaména, at around 11pm on 26 June. He has not been seen since. He is rumoured to be detained somewhere in N'Djaména, but there is no confirmation of his whereabouts.

The reason for his arrest is not known. Abel Karim Abbo Sileck is reportedly not involved in opposition activities. However, he may have been arrested on suspicion of having links with the Chadian armed opposition, since at least one member of his close family is known to be involved with the opposition.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Torture and ill-treatment is routine in Chad, particularly in the early stages of detention. Detainees are at greater risk of ill-treatment, torture or extrajudicial execution when held incommunicado or in unauthorized or undisclosed places of detention. They are also at particular risk when arrested by unidentified units of the security forces - a practice which has been common in Chad in the past. Those suspected of having links with armed opposition groups may be especially vulnerable, particularly as the security forces operate virtually with total impunity.

Armed conflict is sustained in the north of the country, where government troops are fighting the armed political group *Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad* (MDJT), Movement for Democracy and Justice, which is led by Youssouf Toujoumi, a former minister of defence and justice. Several other opposition groups are also sporadically active in the north. There was a brief resurgence of conflict in the south during 2000.

President Idriss Déby was re-elected in presidential elections in May 2001. Demonstrations protesting at the results were violently repressed by the security forces, and two opposition leaders were briefly detained. They were ill-treated in custody.

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

- expressing concern that Abel Karim Abbo Sileck has "disappeared" after being taken from his home by two unidentified men believed to be members of the Chadian security forces;
- urging the authorities to reveal where he is held, and to take immediate steps to protect and guarantee his safety;
- calling for him to be granted immediate access to family, lawyers, doctors and humanitarian and human rights organizations;
- asking the authorities to clarify why he has been arrested;
- expressing concern that it appears he may have been arrested purely because of his family links, and urging that - if this is the case - he be immediately and unconditionally released.

APPEALS TO: Chadian fax numbers can be difficult to reach. Please be patient and keep trying.

President of the Republic and Head of State

Général Idriss Déby
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
BP 74 N'DJAMENA

Chad

Fax: + 235 51 45 01/ 52 44 73

Salutation: Monsieur le Président

Telegrams: President Déby, N'Djaména, Chad

Minister of Defence and Reintegration

Monsieur Mahamat Nouri
Ministre de la Défense nationale et de la Réinsertion
Ministère de la Défense nationale
N'DJAMENA

Chad

Fax: + 235 52 45 06

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Telegrams: Ministre Defense, N'Djaména, Chad

Minister of the Interior, Security and Decentralisation

Monsieur Abderahman Moussa
Ministre de l'Intérieur, de la Sécurité et de la Décentralisation
Ministère de l'Intérieur
N'DJAMENA

Chad

Fax: + 235 52 58 85, or via Ministry of Foreign Affairs on + 235 51 91 22

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, N'Djaména, Chad

Minister of Justice

Monsieur Mahamat Ahmat Al Habo
Ministre de la Justice et Garde des Sceaux
Ministère de la Justice
N'DJAMENA

Chad

Fax: + 235 52 21 39 (If a voice answers, say you would like to send a fax)

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, N'Djaména, Chad

COPIES TO:

Rédacteur en chef, *N'Djaména Hebdo*, BP 4498, N'DJAMENA, Chad, Fax: + 235 51 53 14, Email: ndjh@intnet.td

Rédacteur en chef, *Le Temps*, BP 1333, N'DJAMENA, Chad, Fax: + 235 51 99 24

and to diplomatic representatives of CHAD accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 August 2001.