

PUBLIC

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19 June 2007

UA 156/07 Incommunicado detention/ fear of torture or ill-treatment

SUDAN **Alfatih Abdallah (m) journalist, Al Sudani daily newspaper**
Ghazafi Abdulmotalib (m), journalist, Al Ayam daily newspaper
Abuobaida Awad (m), journalist, Ray Alsha'b daily newspaper
Abualgasim Farahana (m), journalist, Alwan daily newspaper
Imad Mirghani Sid Ahmed (m), Lawyer
Alam Eldin Abdelgaum, (m) Lawyer
Dr Mohamed Jalal Ahmed Hashim (m), Lecturer at Khartoum University
Raafat Hassan Abbas (m), Freelance journalist
An unknown number of others

Those named above are being detained incommunicado and are at risk of torture and ill-treatment. They were arrested following protests against government plans to build the Kajbar Dam in Sudan's Northern State, which will reportedly affect more than 30 villages in the area.

At around 11pm on 13 June, journalists Alfatih Abdallah, Ghazafi Abdulmotalib, Abuobaida Awad, Abualgasim Farahana, and lawyers Imad Mirghani Sid Ahmed and Alam Eldin Abdelgaum were arrested by security forces in the city of Dongola, capital of Northern State. They had travelled together from the capital, Khartoum, to investigate the violence and arrests which had followed protests earlier that day against the plans for the Kajbar Dam. The six were reportedly transferred from Dongola to Kober prison in Khartoum on 16 or 17 June, though their exact place of detention is unknown.

Several members and associates of The Committee Against the Building of Kajbar Dam, a group campaigning on behalf of the communities which will be affected by the dam, were also arrested by security forces in Khartoum. Freelance journalist Raafat Hassan Abbas was arrested on 13 June and university lecturer Dr Mohamed Jalal Ahmed Hashim was arrested on 15 June. Both were reportedly arrested at their homes. It is not known where they are being held, or whether they or the other detainees have been charged with criminal offences.

Article 31 of the 1999 National Security Forces Act gives security forces the power to detain people for up to nine months without access to judicial review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 13 June a demonstration against the building of Kajbar Dam took place at Farraig village, 140 km north of Dongola. Police and security forces reportedly shot at demonstrators. Four people were killed and more than eight others were injured.

The Kajbar Dam is located on the third cataract of the Nile River. Local residents allege that the authorities failed to consult with them over the proposed dam construction..

In the same state, Merowe Dam one of the largest hydropower projects in Africa is being constructed. In 2004 the government of Sudan began the construction of the Merowe High Dam, also known as Hamadab Dam, in northern Sudan, about 350 km north of the capital Khartoum. Local residents and the local authorities responsible for the construction of the dam have clashed on several occasions, and several people have been arrested in relation to the building of the Dam. They have all been released.

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

- expressing concern for the men named above, who are detained incommunicado;
- urging the authorities to give the detainees immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers, and any necessary medical treatment;
- urging the authorities to charge the men with recognizable criminal offences, or else release them immediately;
- urging the authorities to repeal Article 31 of the National Security Forces Act, which allows detainees to be unduly held for up to nine months without access to judicial review.

APPEALS TO:

Prof. Al-Zubair Bashir Taha
Minister of Internal Affairs
Ministry of Interior, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 249 183 774339
+ 249 183 776554 (Please mark, "FAO Minister of Internal Affairs")

Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Muhammad Ali al-Maradhi
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302, Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 249 183 780796 (Please mark, "FAO Minister of Justice")

Email: info@sudanjudiciary.org

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Dr Abdel Moneim Osman Taha
Rapporteur, Advisory Council for Human Rights
Khartoum, Sudan

Email: human_rights_sudan@hotmail.com

Human Rights Committee
The Peoples Hall
Omdurman, Sudan

Fax: +249 187 560950

E-mail: info@sudan-parliament.org

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 31 July 2007.