

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 54/057/2006

02 October 2006

UA 264/06 **Fear for safety/ fear of torture/ Incommunicado detention**

SUDAN **Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim, aged 52, Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) representative
Zakaria Ahmed Abulgasim, his brother**

Amnesty International fears for the safety of the two brothers named above, who are held in incommunicado detention by members of the Sudanese National Security Agency (NSA) - the Sudanese security services. Both are from Darfur, and Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim is a member of the SLA, one of the armed political groups which have been fighting against the Sudanese government in the region.

On the evening of 28 September, Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim was deported from Saudi Arabia, where he resides with his wife, to Sudan and was arrested by the NSA on arrival at the airport in the capital Khartoum. His whereabouts are unknown. The reason for his deportation and arrest was not made clear. However it is believed that he was arrested by the Saudi Arabia authorities after having spoken out in favour of the sending of a United Nations peacekeeping force to Darfur, during a meeting at the Sudanese embassy in Saudi Arabia. He was then reportedly held at the Sudanese embassy before being deported to Sudan.

Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim was a member of the SLA negotiating team at the Darfur peace talks in Abuja, which resulted in a peace agreement between the Sudanese government and only one of the factions of the SLA, the SLA Minni Minawi. Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim is part of the SLA faction called the "Group of 19" which has not signed the Darfur peace agreement. The Sudanese government has labelled the non-signatories of the peace agreement "terrorists".

Zakaria Ahmed Abulgasim was arrested by officers of the NSA in Khartoum, where he lives, on 15 September. He is held without charge, reportedly at an NSA office near Khartoum airport. The reasons for his arrest are unknown, but he may have been arrested because his brother is a member of the SLA. His family was able to speak to him on the phone once but was refused permission to visit him. Since the deportation of his brother, his family has received no further news on his situation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Political opponents and members of armed political groups in Sudan are often detained in prolonged incommunicado detention and tortured by the Sudanese security forces. When they are brought to trial, the trial is invariably unfair. The Sudanese security forces have also detained and tortured relatives of members of armed groups or those sharing the same ethnicity as the armed groups.

The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) is an armed political group in Darfur which took up arms against the Sudanese government in February 2003 over complaints of marginalisation and underdevelopment. In the conflict which followed, the Sudanese government and local nomad militias, known as the Janjawid, have killed tens of thousands of civilians, raped thousands of women, destroyed hundreds of villages and forcibly displaced some two million people.

On 31 August, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1706 to send UN peacekeepers in Darfur to protect civilians from attacks. The Sudanese government refuses to consent to the deployment of UN troops in Darfur. There are a number of UN agencies and UN human rights monitors operating in Sudan, including Darfur.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of the two brothers named above;
- asking the authorities to ensure that they are treated humanely and have access to lawyers, their families and any medical care they may need;
- calling on the authorities to release immediately and unconditionally Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim if he is detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- calling on the authorities to release immediately and unconditionally Zakaria Ahmed Abulgasim unless he is charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- calling for United Nations human rights monitors to be given free and confidential access to both detainees.

APPEALS TO:

(It may be difficult to get through to fax numbers in Sudan. Please keep trying.)

Mr Salva Kiir Mayardit
First Vice-President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 249 183 779977
+ 249 183 780796 (Please mark, "FAO First Vice-President")

Salutation: Your Excellency

Dr Lam Akol Ajawin
Minister of Foreign Affairs
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: + 249 183 779977

Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Muhammad Ali al-Maradhi
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
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

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 13 November 2006.