

PUBLIC

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18 June 2004

UA 202/04 Fear for safety/torture and ill-treatment/incommunicado detention

SUDAN Adel Abdallah Nasr al-Din (m), lawyer and human rights defender

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Human rights activist Adel Abdallah Nasr al-Din was arrested by the National Security and Intelligence Agency on 16 June 2004, and taken to the agency's centre in the town of Nyala where he is at risk of torture and ill-treatment. He is held incommunicado.

He was arrested at his office in Nyala, in Darfur, western Sudan. The agency gave no reason for arresting him, and he has not been charged with any offence. Amnesty International considers him a prisoner of conscience, held solely for his activities in defence of human rights as a member of the Nyala network of the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture (SOAT), which documents and campaigns against human rights abuses in Sudan. It has a network in Darfur, which is providing legal aid to victims of human rights violations there.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Conflict in Darfur has intensified since February 2003 when the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and later the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) took up arms against the government. They complained about lack of government protection for agricultural ethnic groups from attacks by nomad militias and the marginalisation and underdevelopment of the region. The Sudan government then gave free rein to the nomadic militias known as the *Janjawid* to attack the villages of the mainly agricultural ethnic groups, such as the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa. The *Janjawid* are now supported and funded by the government; they wear uniform and continue to attack, kill, rape and abduct civilians. About a million people have fled from their burnt villages and have taken refuge in towns in Darfur, while more than 110,000 have crossed the border into Chad.

Human rights activists and others who have tried to document human rights violations committed by the government of Sudan or the *Janjawid* have been arrested, frequently tortured, and held incommunicado without charge or trial for weeks or months.

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

- calling on the authorities to release of Adel Abdallah Nasr al-Din immediately and unconditionally, on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful expression of his opinions in defence of human rights;
- expressing concern for his safety while he is in custody, and asking for assurances that he will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- expressing concern that he is held incommunicado, and urging the authorities to allow him immediate and unrestricted access to his family, legal counsel and any medical attention he may need;
- calling on the authorities to put an end to the harassment and detention of human rights activists and members of civil society in Sudan, and to respect their obligations under international law.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

Mr Ali Osman Mohamed Taha  
First Vice-President  
People's Palace

PO Box 281  
Khartoum, Sudan  
**Telegram:** First Vice-President, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax :** + 249 11 771651 / 779977  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Ministry of Justice  
Khartoum, Sudan  
**Telegrams:** Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax:** + 249 11 771479  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
PO Box 873  
Khartoum, Sudan  
**Telegrams:** Foreign Minister, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax :** + 249 11 779383  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister

**COPIES TO:**

Dr Yasir Sid Ahmed  
Advisory Council for Human Rights  
PO Box 302  
Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax:** + 249 11 779173 / 770883

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 30 July 2004.