



Middle East Studies Association of North America

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June 21, 1990

His Excellency Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al-Bashir
Head of State and Defense Minister
People's Palace, POB 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Your Excellency:

The Committee on Academic Freedom of the Middle East Studies Association is deeply concerned about the detention of leading professionals in the Sudan. The Middle East Studies Association is the association that comprises 2000 academic worldwide who teach and conduct research on the Middle East and North Africa. The association publishes the respected *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. The Association is committed to ensuring respect for academic freedom throughout the region.

The Committee on Academic Freedom is concerned that the detainees in the Sudan include a wide range of leading lawyers, doctors, engineers, journalists and professors. As an academic association, the Committee is concerned specifically about the well-being and whereabouts of the following university professors. To our knowledge, none of them has been charged with any offense. Moreover, we understand that they have been denied family visits and legal representation. According to our information, prison conditions are poor and medical care is limited or unavailable.

DR. ALI ABDALLAH ABBAS, English professor at Khartoum University, detained since August 4, 1989, in Kober prison in his capacity as the elected president of the Khartoum University Staff Association. Previously chair of the English Department and vice dean of the Faculty of Arts, Dr. Abbas was due to travel to the United States in fall 1989 on a Fulbright award to pursue his research on the leading Sudanese novelist Tayeb Salih.

DR. BASHIR OMER, Economics professor at Khartoum University and former minister under the elected government. A distinguished economist, who taught at Manchester University, Dr. Omer has been detained in Kober prison three times since July 1989.

DR. FARUQ KADUDAH, Dean and lecturer at Juba University, Dr. Kadudah has been detained since July 30, 1989, and is now held in Shalla prison.

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DR. KHALID AL-KID, lecturer in political science at Omdurman Ahlia University and columnist for "al-Maidan" newspaper, Dr. al-Kid has reportedly been detained since July 6, 1989, and is now held in Shalla prison.

DR. MOHAMMAD RAJAB, lecturer in the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Khartoum. Dr. Rajab has been detained since January 12, 1990, in Shalla prison. We understand that other professors from the faculty of Agriculture were arrested in early May, including DR. ABDIN MOHAMMED ZEIN AL-ABDIN and DR. KAMIL IBRAHIM.

DR. MOHAMMED SAYID AL-GADAL, Professor of History at the University of Khartoum and respected specialist on the period of the Mahdiyya. Dr. al-Gadal was reportedly detained on September 20, 1989 and is now held in Port Sudan prison.

DR. USHARI AHMAD MAHMOUD, lecturer in linguistics in the Faculty of Arts, University of Khartoum and editor of "al-Haqiqa". Dr. Mahmoud was detained on July 9, 1989, apparently in connection with his research and publication on the killing of Dinka tribespeople in al- Da'ien in March 1987 by Rizeiqat murahaleen. We understand he was moved from Kober to Shalla prison on April 1, 1990.

We respectfully request that your government publicly clarify information regarding the whereabouts and well-being of these scholars. In addition, we request to be informed of any evidence to suggest that they have committed any offense that is recognizably criminal according to international standards. In the absence of such evidence, we urge that they be immediately released. We also urge your government to allow the detainees regular access to family visits and legal representation, and we ask for assurances of their access to medical care.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Anne H. Betteridge
Executive Secretary

cc: His Excellency Brigadier-General Mohamed Saleh al-Zubeir, National Salvation
Revolution Command
Ambassador Abdalla Ahmed Abdalla, Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan
Ambassador James Cheek, Embassy of the United States of America
Mr. Jeff Lumstead, Sudan Desk, US Department of State
Mr. Steven Morrison, Africa Subcommittee, House Committee on International
Relations