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Sudan

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The 1989 military coup that overthrew Sudan's democratically elected government brought to power Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al-Bashir and his National Salvation Revolution Command Council (RCC). Bashir and the RCC suspended the 1985 Constitution, abrogated press freedom, and disbanded all political parties and trade unions. In 1993 the RCC dissolved itself and appointed Bashir President. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in December 1993. All major opposition parties boycotted the elections, and there were allegations of official interference and electoral fraud. Bashir was selected for a 5-year term, and the National Congress/National Islamic Front (NC/NIF) won 340 out of 360 seats in Parliament in the deeply flawed process. In 1996 a subsequent election was held, which also was boycotted by the major opposition parties. Despite the adoption of a new Constitution through a referendum in June 1998, the Government continued to restrict most civil liberties. Since 1989 real power has rested with the NIF, founded by Dr. Hassan al-Turabi, who became Speaker of the National Assembly in 1996. In November 1998, the NIF renamed itself the National Congress (NC); NIF/NC members and supporters continue to hold key positions in the Government, security forces, judiciary, academic institutions, trade unions, professional associations, and the media. The major opposition political parties remain in self-imposed exile or otherwise barred from active roles. In December 1999, Bashir declared a 3-month state of emergency, dismissed Turabi, suspended the Constitution, and disbanded Parliament 2 days before it was to vote on a bill introduced by pro-Turabi legislators to reduce Bashir's presidential powers. In June 2000, Bashir expelled Turabi from the NC, which prompted Turabi to create a new political party, the Popular National Congress Party (PNCP). In December 2000, presidential and parliamentary elections were held; however, the seriously flawed elections were boycotted by the major opposition parties, and most international observer groups chose not to observe them. The state of emergency, which suspends basic civil liberties including freedom of expression and association, remains in effect and during the year was extended until December 2002. The judiciary is subject to government influence.

The civil war, which is estimated to have resulted in the death of more than 2 million persons and the displacement of more than 4 million, continued into its 19th year. The principal rebel faction is the southern, African, and non-Arab Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the political wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The SPLA remains the principal military force in the war. In the southern war zone, the SPLA controls large areas of the states of Equatoria, Bahr al Ghazal, and the Upper Nile and operates in the southern portions of Darfur, Kordofan, and Blue Nile. The Government controls a number of the major southern towns and cities, including Juba, Wau, and Malakal. The 1997 Khartoum agreement between the Government and the South Sudan Independence Movement/Army, which broke away from the SPLA in 1991, and several smaller southern factions remains largely unimplemented, and there was significant fighting between progovernment and antigovernment elements who had signed the 1997 agreement during the year. The SPLM/SPLA and most independent analysts regard the 1997 agreement as a tactical government effort to enlist southerners to the Government's side. In December 1999, Rieck Machar, a southern leader who had signed the agreement, broke away from the Government and in January 2000 formed a new rebel movement, the Sudan People's Democratic Front (SPDF). In 2000 the SPLM/SPLA and its northern allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) carried out military offensives in limited areas along the borders with Ethiopia and Eritrea and in large parts of the south during the year. There were no significant military offensives by the NDA during the year; however, government forces took military initiatives against NDA strongholds in Kassala State, and there were major military engagements between the Government and the SPLA in Blue Nile State and Bahr Al Ghazal State. Neither side appears to have the ability to win the war militarily, although oil revenues allowed the Government to invest increasingly in military equipment. The Bahr El Ghazal humanitarian cease-fire, which began in July 1998, was extended by both the Government and the SPLM several times in 1999, and in August 1999, the Government offered a comprehensive cease-fire, which in October 1999 it extended through January 15, 2000. However, the Government continued its bombing campaign during this period. The SPLM similarly extended its cease-fire through the same dates, but effectively limited its offer to the humanitarian cease-fire as agreed to in Bahr El Ghazal. In June 2000, fighting between the Government and the SPLM resumed, marking the end of the humanitarian cease-fire.

Since 1993 the leaders of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya have pursued a peace initiative under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) with mixed results. In 1994 the IGAD initiative agreed on the Declaration of Principles (DOP), which identifies elements that are necessary to reach a peace settlement. The Government finally signed the DOP in 1997 after major battle losses; however, no significant progress towards a peace settlement has been made.

In 1997 and 1998, the Government signed a series of "peace from within" agreements with several former rebel leaders, which called for the end of military conflict with significant rebel factions in the southern region and the Nuba Mountains; however, the Government has not complied with the agreements, and several SPLA,

SPDF, and other leaders and their factions that had joined the government side have returned to the SPLA or defected to carry out independent armed opposition activities and have taken military actions against the Government. In 2000 and during the year, foreign governments developed initiatives to facilitate reconciliation between the warring parties and proposed confidence building measures as a prelude to direct peace negotiations. During the year, the parties accepted some of the proposed confidence-building measures. Both sides took some steps toward peace during the year. The Government and the rebel movement agreed to a cease-fire in the Nuba Mountains, an international commission to investigate ways to end slavery, and the establishment of "days of tranquility" for humanitarian interventions.

In addition to the regular police and the Sudan People's Armed Forces, the Government maintains an external security force, an internal security force, a militia known as the Popular Defense Forces (PDF), and a number of police forces, including the Public Order Police (POP), a law enforcement entity that enforces Shari'a (Islamic) laws, whose mission includes enforcing proper social behavior, including restrictions on alcohol and "immodest dress." During the year, there were no reports of abuses committed by the POP. The Popular Police Force (PPF), which was made up of nominees from neighborhood popular committees for surveillance and services to enforce Shari'a laws, was disbanded in 2000. Members of the security forces committed numerous, serious human rights abuses. The security forces are under the full control of, and responsive to, the Government.

Civil war, economic mismanagement, more than 4 million internally displaced persons (IDP's) in a country of an estimated 30 million persons, and, to a lesser extent, the refugee influx from neighboring countries have devastated the country's mostly agricultural economy. The majority of the population is engaged only marginally in the formal or cash economy; approximately 86 percent of the labor force is engaged nominally in agriculture and the informal economic sector. Exports of crude oil and petroleum products, cotton, gold, sorghum, peanuts, gum Arabic, sugarcane, livestock, and meat accounted for 100 percent (approximately \$1.8 billion) of export earnings in 2000. The estimated gross domestic product (GDP) for 2000 was \$11 billion, and yearly per capita income is estimated to be approximately \$350 (91,000 dinar). Unemployment and underemployment remain serious problems that affect more than half of the work force. Private investment in the oil sector led to significant increases in oil production during the year. Reforms beginning in the early 1990's aimed at privatizing state-run firms and stimulating private investment failed to revive a moribund economy that maintains massive military expenditures and a large foreign debt of approximately \$21.5 billion. Despite privatization efforts, the Government remains heavily involved in the economy.

The Government's human rights record remained extremely poor, and although there were some improvements in a few areas, it continued to commit numerous, serious abuses. Citizens do not have the ability to change their government peacefully. Government security forces and progovernment militias continued to act with impunity and were responsible for extrajudicial killings. There were reports of government responsibility for disappearances. There were at least eight confirmed abductions of NGO workers by government forces and progovernment militias during the year. Government security forces regularly beat, severely flogged, harassed, arbitrarily arrested and detained, and kept in incommunicado detention opponents or suspected opponents of the Government. Reports of torture were less frequent than in previous years primarily in response to increased critical scrutiny by the international community. Security forces beat refugees, reportedly raped women abducted during raids, and on occasion reportedly harassed and detained persons on the basis of their religion. Prison conditions remained harsh and life threatening; prolonged detention under emergency laws with little or no judicial review was a problem; and the judiciary continued to be subservient to the Government. The national, regional, and local authorities did not ensure due process, and the military forces summarily tried and punished citizens. The Government established emergency tribunals in the western part of the country to try banditry cases, which resulted in seven reported executions of those convicted of armed robbery. The Government continued to infringe on citizens' privacy rights. The Government continues to conscript forcibly men and boys. The Government did not fully respect the laws of war, took few prisoners of war (POW's), and did not cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regarding access to or treatment of POW's in government custody. The Government continued to obstruct the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Cooperation with U.N.-sponsored relief program for the Nuba Mountains improved, and in November the Government allowed the delivery of humanitarian relief to SPLM and SPLA areas in the Nuba Mountains for the first time in more than 10 years; however, the Government continued to deny humanitarian flights access to certain areas of the country. Problems with relief flights in the south centered on the Government's frequent denials of visas and work permits to foreign humanitarian workers and aircraft clearances to the U.N.'s Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS).

The Government severely restricted freedom of speech and of the press, repeatedly suspended publications that criticized or disagreed with the government line, and harassed and detained journalists. Moreover, all journalists continued to practice self-censorship. The Government officially lifted formal press censorship and stopped daily monitoring of each publishing house; however, four publications remained under intensive scrutiny and continued to experience intimidation, interruption, and arrests of editors. The Government continued to restrict severely freedom of assembly, association, religion, and movement. In June the Government declared a ban on all rallies and public demonstrations in the country and announced that no permits would be authorized or issued; the ban remained in effect at year's end. In the context of the Islamization and Arabization drive, government pressure—including forced Islamization—on non-Muslims remained strong, including continued reports of forced conversion of non-Muslim children and displaced persons. Fears of Arabization and Islamization and the imposition of Shari'a fueled support for the civil war throughout the country. The Government continued to resist the presence and activities of human rights groups in the investigation of human rights abuses. Violence and discrimination against women were problems. Prostitution is a growing problem, and female genital mutilation (FGM) is widespread. Abuse of children remained a problem. Discrimination and violence against religious minorities persisted, as did discrimination against ethnic minorities and government restrictions on worker rights. Child labor is widespread. Abduction of women and children, and slavery and trafficking in persons remained problems. Government security forces and associated militias were responsible for abductions of women and children, use of forced labor (including forced child labor), slavery, and the forced conscription of male children.

Rebel groups continued to commit numerous, serious abuses. The SPLM/SPLA continued to violate citizens' rights, despite its claim that it was implementing a 1994 decision to assert civil authority in areas that it controls, and in many cases, has controlled for many years. The SPLM/SPLA was responsible for extrajudicial killings, beatings, rapes, arbitrary detention, and forced conscription of boys. SPLM/SPLA officials were guilty of, or complicit in, theft of property of nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) and U.N. agencies operating in the south. The ICRC reported in 1996 that the SPLA had begun to observe some basic laws of war; it takes prisoners on the battlefield and permits ICRC visits to some of them. However, the SPLA has not allowed the ICRC to visit prisoners accused by the rebel group of treason or other crimes.

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

There were reports of extrajudicial killings. There were reports in the Nuba Mountains, northern Bahr Al Ghazal, and other areas of government-supported killings of local officials who were suspected of supporting the SPLA. In their attacks on rebel forces, government troops killed a large number of civilians (see Section 1.g.). Government forces and allied militia pursued a scorched earth policy aimed at removing populations from the areas surrounding the newly built oil pipeline and other oil production facilities, which reportedly resulted in some deaths (see Section 1.g.). On numerous occasions, the Government bombed civilian facilities, which resulted in a number of civilian deaths, including of children (see Section 1.g.). Explosions of government-laid landmines resulted in some deaths (see Section 1.g.). There were reports that during raids and attacks on civilian settlements, government forces killed a number of persons, and there were reports that persons abducted during those raids at times were killed (see Sections 1.b. and 6.c.).

On March 16, security forces arrested Hassan Omar Bul Reish, an officer in the Turabi Popular National Congress party, at his home, beat him in front of his family, and took him to security offices in Kosti, in the White Nile region, where they reportedly continued to beat him; he later was taken to the Central Police Hospital, where he died the following day from his injuries. There was no reported action taken on the case by year's end.

On April 11, three persons reportedly were killed during clashes at the All Saints Cathedral between the police and demonstrators who were protesting the government order to move an April 10 Easter service (see Section 2.b.).

On August 20, at Gezira University, 115 miles south of Khartoum, police shot and killed two students during a fight among students after progovernment students, police, and security forces attempted to break up a political debate by the Arab Nasserist Socialist Party; a police car hit 1 student, and 16 others were injured in the incident.

Between January and October, government forces reportedly killed 62 persons and injured numerous others while conducting more than 125 aerial bombing operations in civilian areas. In June 10 persons were killed in government bombing raids ostensibly to liberate the southern town of Raga, which was controlled by the SPLA. On October 6 in Mangayath, 1 person reportedly was killed and 14 others were injured when government aircraft dropped 15 bombs on the village. On October 20, in the village of Sopo, government bombing killed 20 persons. On November 20, in the village of Akuem, government bombing killed 17 persons. On November 26, government bombing killed 2 persons in the villages of Maluakon and Madhol. Government bombing campaigns continued in the south at year's end.

In May 2000, soldiers who defected from the armed forces testified before members of a fact finding human rights NGO that they were ordered to participate in ground attacks and were instructed to kill civilians in non-government and SPLA controlled villages in the Talisman oil concession area in the Western Upper Nile region in 2000; there were similar reports during the year. In 2000 Talisman officials had acknowledged that the Government launched helicopter gunship attacks on civilian settlements in the oil company's operational area.

There was no further investigation or action taken in the following cases in 2000: The unconfirmed November PDF attacks on the village of Guong Nowh, in which several persons were killed; the November NDA attack on Kassala in which 52 civilians and soldiers were killed during fighting between government and NDA troops; the September incident in which security forces in several cities in the north used tear gas and live ammunition to forcibly disperse some demonstrations and killed several persons; the June attack by government air and ground forces in the vicinity of a Catholic mission which reportedly resulted in the deaths of 32 persons, including of women and children; and the February reported PDF attack on several villages in eastern Aweil and Twic counties, northern Bahr El Ghazal, during which 156 civilians were killed.

There was no further action taken in the 1999 case of Abdallah Chol, Hassan Abu Adhan, and Gladino (Sam) Okieny, who died as a result of torture while in the custody of military intelligence personnel.

In June progovernment militia shot and killed the Episcopalian Deacon Abraham Yac Deng (see Section 2.c.).

Between October 23 and November 3, Aweil-based, progovernment militia reportedly killed 111 and abducted 198 persons during attacks on 18 villages and cattle camps in the Aweil area. On November 11, progovernment militia reportedly killed 5 persons and abducted 30 persons during an attack on the village of Malek Alel in the northern Bahr El-Ghazal region. There were no reports that the Government prosecuted or otherwise penalized the attacking militia or made efforts to protect civilian victims from attacks; government

forces provided logistic and transportation support, and weapons and ammunition, to progovernment militias.

Rebel forces reportedly committed political and other extrajudicial killings, particularly in areas of active conflict such as the Nuba Mountains and northern Bahr al Ghazal; however, details generally were unavailable. There were reports that in July and August 2000 in the Western Upper Nile, SPLA forces and SPDF forces killed at least 50 civilians and abducted more than 20 women and children in intraethnic fighting. There were no reports of any investigation or action taken against those responsible.

Rebel forces killed a large number of civilians during their attacks on government forces (see Section 1.g.). There were reports that SPLA forces and allied militias summarily executed persons in the southern part of the country. Rebel forces laid landmines indiscriminately on roads and paths that killed and maimed both soldiers and civilians (see Section 1.g.). In previous years, prisoners reportedly have died while in SPLA custody due to poor prison conditions; however, there were no reports of such deaths in custody during the year (see Section 1.c.).

There was no further information or action taken in the January 2000 case in which two relief workers were killed in an attack by unidentified assailants or the January 2000 case in which rebels believed to be from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a Ugandan armed opposition group in the south, attacked a humanitarian vehicle, killing eight aid workers.

In 2000 Human Rights Watch reported that the Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF), an NDA member, committed abuses against its soldiers accused of spying or defecting to another rebel group, including summary executions, torture, and detention of prisoners in a pit in the ground; the SAF continued to deny the allegations.

There was no further action on the 1999 case in which a local Red Crescent worker and three government officials who accompanied an ICRC team near the town of Kong in the south were killed while in the custody of the SPLA under circumstances that remain unclear. The SPLM alleges that the four were killed in crossfire during a rescue attempt. The SPLM neither arranged for the return of the bodies nor permitted an independent investigation.

Interethnic and intraethnic tensions continued into the early part of the year, resulting in numerous deaths (see Section 5).

In December 2000, supporters of the outlawed Takfeer and Hijra group killed 26 persons and injured 40 others at a Sunna mosque in Omdurman (see Section 5).

b. Disappearance

There were continued allegations that the Government was responsible for the arrest and subsequent disappearance of persons suspected of supporting rebels in government-controlled zones in the south and the Nuba Mountains. Persons arrested by government security forces often were held for long periods of time in unknown locations without access to lawyers or family members.

There were reports that during raids on civilian settlements, government and government-allied militias abducted persons, particularly women and children (see Sections 1.g., 6.c., and 6.f.). In the last 15 years, between 5,000 and 15,000 Dinka women and children have been abducted; between 10,000 and 12,000 persons, most of whom are Dinka, remained unaccounted for at year's end. Although reliable statistics generally are unavailable, observers believe that the number of abductions increased during the year. Observers believe that some of the abductees were sold into slavery, while others were used as forced labor or drafted into the military. In some cases, observers believe that the abductees escaped or eventually were released or ransomed, and that in other cases some were killed. In February 2000, the Government's PDF forces allegedly attacked and killed 16 civilians, stole cattle, and looted and burned villages.

In June Alladin Omer Ajjabna was arrested for converting from Islam to Christianity and detained incommunicado for 3 months; he reportedly was tortured. In September he was released on medical grounds, but was required to report daily to the security forces. On September 26, he was last seen telling friends that he was going to report to the government security office; his whereabouts were unknown at year's end.

There were at least eight confirmed abductions of NGO workers by government forces and progovernment militias during the year. Some persons were handed over to the Government and taken into custody (see Section 1.d.). On October 21, in South Kapoeta, Wilson Wani, an employee of OLS, was abducted; his whereabouts remained unknown at year's end. On November 2, in Bahr El Ghazal, military forces abducted Juliana Muiruri, a Kenyan citizen working for an NGO, and handed her over to the Government; she later was released.

There was no further investigation or action taken on the November 2000 unconfirmed PDF attack on the village of Guong Nowh and abduction of 24 persons, or the alleged February 2000 PDF attack on several villages in eastern Aweil and Twic counties, northern Bahr El Ghazal, and abduction of more than 300 women and children.

There was no further investigation or action taken in the February 2000 case in which a progovernment militia detained the two pilots, a U.N. worker, and a Sudanese relief worker for 1 week after a U.N. plane flew three commanders of the militia to a meeting with commanders of an antigovernment militia.

In 1996 the Government established the Special Commission to Investigate Slavery and Disappearances in response to a resolution passed by the 1995 U.N. General Assembly. The Commission technically still is functioning but has yet to produce a final report. In May 1998, the Government formed the Committee for the Eradication of the Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC). The Committee and UNICEF jointly sponsored a workshop on abductions in July 1999, during which the Committee recognized abduction as a problem that the Government could and should address. The Committee formed mechanisms to identify and return abductees. Several high-ranking government officials participated in the activities of the committee. Despite the existence of formal reports describing thousands of victims of abduction, the committee has had limited success. CEAWC has traced and retrieved more than 500 abducted children and women from slavery. Although approximately 300 individuals were returned to their homes in 2000, there were no reports that the Government returned abducted persons to their homes during the year. An additional 1,200 have been identified; however, the Government's refusal to allow flights into SPLA territory prevented their return. In addition the Government did not record the identity of the abductors in these cases and chose not to prosecute them.

In November the Government announced the establishment of special civilian tribunals in the border regions separating the south and the north of the country to prosecute persons involved in the abduction, transport, holding, and selling or exchanging of women and children from war zones (see Section 1.e.).

There continued to be reports of abductions by SPLA forces and allied militias. There was no further information available on reports in July and August 2000, in the Western Upper Nile, that SPLA and SPDF forces abducted more than 20 women and children during intraethnic fighting.

Between 3,000 and 10,000 Ugandan children have been abducted and forced to become soldiers or sex slaves for the LRA, which is actively supported by the Government (see Section 5).

There also were reports of periodic intertribal abductions of women and children in the Eastern Upper Nile (see Section 5).

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Constitution prohibits such practices; however, government security forces continued to beat and harass suspected opponents and others. In 1997 the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture described torture as a fairly extensive problem; however, during the year, reports of torture were less frequent than in previous years, primarily in response to increased critical scrutiny by the international community. Members of the security forces rarely, if ever, are held accountable for such abuses.

In June Alladin Omer Ajjabna reportedly was tortured in custody after he was arrested for converting from Islam to Christianity (see Section 1.b.).

After the July SPLA capture of Raga, government forces allegedly detained numerous persons, and there were reports that security forces tortured and beat them.

Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that security forces used "ghost houses," places where security forces tortured and detained government opponents incommunicado under harsh conditions for an indeterminate time with no supervision by the courts or other independent authorities with power to release the detainees; however, security forces kept in incommunicado detention opponents or suspected opponents of the Government in other locations during the year.

On July 13, authorities arrested Sebit Hassan Ramadan in the western region and took him to Buram, a police location, where they detained him for more than 2 weeks; he was beaten daily and given minimal amounts of food and water. During the year, members of the security forces arrested Osman Robo in El Daein; he reportedly was tortured in detention. There was no further information available on the case at year's end.

Security forces beat and otherwise abused youths and student leaders and others whom were deemed to be opponents of the Government.

Refugees were subjected to beatings and mistreatment by security forces (see Section 2.d.).

Soldiers, PDF members, and militia forces raped women (see Section 1.g.).

Security forces used excessive force, including beatings, tear gas, and firing of live ammunition to disperse unapproved demonstrations (see Section 2.b.).

There continued to be reports that security forces harassed and at times used threats and violence against persons on the basis of their religious beliefs and activities (see Section 2.c.).

Trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, persisted during the year (see Section 6.f.).

In accordance with Shari'a law, the Criminal Act provides for physical punishments including flogging,

amputation, stonings, and crucifixion—the public display of a body after execution. On January 23, five men who were convicted of armed robbery had their right hands and left feet amputated as punishment. There were seven reported execution sentences ordered by emergency tribunals during the year; for example, in December an emergency tribunal sentenced a man to amputation and execution for armed banditry (see Section 1.e.). In 2000 there were six reported cases of amputations of limbs as punishment under Shari'a law for aggravated cases of theft. In a 1999 case involving ethnic clashes in the Darfur region in the west (see Section 5), an emergency court sentenced 10 persons to hanging and subsequent crucifixion. These sentences had not been carried out by year's end.

Government forces and allied militias were responsible for injuring many civilians during attacks on rebel forces, during raids on civilian settlements, and during bombing attacks on civilian targets (see Section 1.g.). There were reports that persons abducted during raids were subjected to torture, rape, and forced servitude (see Section 6.c.).

The Government's "scorched earth" policy in the area surrounding the oil fields in Upper Nile resulted in a number of serious injuries (see Section 1.g.).

Explosions of government-laid landmines resulted in a number of injuries (see Section 1.g.).

In December 2000, authorities arrested Ghazi Suleiman, a human rights lawyer and activist, after he publicly criticized the arrest of NDA leaders and the expulsion of a foreign diplomat; he was released and rearrested after he publicly defended Turabi. Suleiman was detained without charge and reportedly was tortured and beaten in custody; his injuries required extensive medical treatment.

No action was taken against the members of the security forces responsible for torturing, beating, raping, or otherwise abusing persons in the following cases from 2000: The November beating of a foreign ICRC worker during an NDA attack on government forces in Kassala; the September incidents in which police used tear gas, batons, and live ammunition to disperse demonstrators and in some instances, beat or otherwise injured numerous individuals; the June beating in Hilla Kuku of a Catholic seminarian on the neck and wrist with a stick after he refused to remove a wooden cross that he was wearing; the June attack on Juba University in Khartoum using sticks and tear gas; the May raids by security forces on Alnasr Technology College in which they arrested, beat, injured students, and fired bullets in the air to disperse a student protest on education issues; and the February detention and beating of two students for political activity by security forces.

There was no investigation into, nor action taken, in the 1999 case in which prison officials tortured a convicted bank robber so severely while in detention that he was blinded.

Security forces, local police, and student militants supporting the Government attacked and injured students during the year (see Section 2.b.).

Landmines laid indiscriminately in years past on roads and paths killed and maimed both soldiers and civilians (see Section 1.g.).

Rebel forces were responsible for a number of civilian injuries and for raping women (see Section 1.g.). There continued to be reports of rapes by SPLA forces and allied militias. Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that SPLA rebels beat or otherwise punished prisoners during the year.

In previous years, Human Rights Watch reported that the Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF), an NDA member, committed abuses against its soldiers accused of spying or defecting to another rebel group, including torture, summary executions, and the detention of prisoners in a pit in the ground. SAF denied these allegations.

There were numerous injuries as a result of religious tensions. In December 2000, supporters of the outlawed Takfeer and Hijra group killed 26 persons and injured 40 others at a Sunna mosque in Omdurman (see Section 5).

Conditions in government prisons remain harsh, overcrowded, and life threatening. Built before the country's independence, most prisons are maintained poorly, and many lack basic facilities such as toilets or showers. Health care is primitive, and food is inadequate. Minors often are held with adults. There was a report in 1999 that 16 children who were living with their imprisoned mothers died of diseases. Female prisoners are held separately from men; rape in prison reportedly is rare. Prison officials arbitrarily denied family visits. High-ranking political prisoners reportedly often enjoy better conditions than other prisoners do.

The Government does not permit regular visits to prisons by human rights monitors. No independent domestic human rights organizations monitor prison conditions.

In previous years, prisoners reportedly have died while in SPLA custody due to poor prison conditions; however, there were no reports of such deaths in custody during the year. The SPLM allowed the ICRC to visit some POW's during the year and released some prisoners in poor health.

d. Arbitrary Arrest, Detention, or Exile

The Constitution prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention without charge; however, the emergency decree

superceded these constitutional provisions, and the Government continued to use arbitrary arrest and detention in practice. Under the Constitution and the Criminal Code, an individual may be detained for 3 days without charge, which can be extended for 30 days by order of the Director of Security and another 30 days by the Director of Security with the approval of the prosecuting attorney. Under the National Security Act (NSA), as amended in June, which supercedes the Criminal Code when an individual is accused of violating national security, an individual may be detained for 3 months without charge, renewable by the Director of Security for another 3 months. During the state of emergency, the Government is not constrained by the NSA and can detain individuals indefinitely without judicial review, which reportedly it has done. Critics argue that the state of emergency decree effectively allows indefinite detention of persons without trial and does not require formal charges during the period of detention. In December the state of emergency decree was extended for another year. In 2000 the Government used the state of emergency to detain more than 100 individuals. The Government arrested and detained numerous persons during the year.

Persons arrested by government security forces often were held incommunicado for long periods of time in unknown locations and denied access to lawyers or family members.

The law allows for bail, except for those accused of crimes punishable by death or life imprisonment. In theory the Government provides legal counsel for indigent persons in such cases; however, reports continue that defendants do not always receive this right, and that counsel in some cases only may advise the defendant and may not address the court. In some cases, courts have refused to allow certain lawyers to represent defendants.

In general the Government detains persons for a few days before releasing them without charge or trial; however, detentions of PNCP and NDA members generally were much longer. There were unconfirmed reports that security forces tortured, detained without charge, and held incommunicado members of the PNCP. In addition to detentions, government security forces frequently harassed political opponents by summoning them for questioning, forcing them to remain during the day without questioning, and then ordering them to return the following day. This process sometimes continued for days.

In January authorities arrested without charge between 10 and 12 civilians, including Ishmael Mohammed Hassan Ibrahim, the General Secretary of the dissolved Sudanese Union of Agriculturalists and a former general secretary of the Arab Union of Agriculturalists, after they inquired about a U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) fund. There was no further information available on the case at year's end.

On March 11 in Khartoum, security forces arrested three staff members of the Amal Center for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture, including Dr. Najib Nigim El Din, the Center's Director and a prominent human rights activist who provides medical treatment and rehabilitation for victims of torture. Two of the detainees were released the same day; however, Dr. Najib Nigim El Din remained in custody without charge at the high security prison outside of Khartoum at year's end.

On March 8, in a village in Eastern Upper Nile, a progovernment militia killed two civilians and abducted two Sudanese and two Kenyan relief workers employed by the Adventist Development Relief Agency; on March 16, the abducted workers were handed over to authorities and taken into custody in Khartoum (see Section 1.d.). In March the Government detained the two Kenyan relief workers for 6 weeks for illegally working in the country; they later were released to Kenyan authorities. The Sudanese workers were released from custody after international intervention.

On April 10 and 11, authorities arrested approximately 100 individuals, including Christian clergymen, and charged them with public disturbance during demonstrations protesting the cancellation of an Easter service (see Section 2.b.).

Authorities continued to detain political opponents of the Government during the year. On February 22, authorities arrested Hassan al-Turabi, NIF founder, along with several leaders of the PNCP and charged them with threatening national security and the constitutional order by signing a memorandum of understanding with the SPLM. Turabi was detained in a maximum security prison; Turabi and the PNCP alleged that he was mistreated, held in solitary confinement, and denied visitors. The charges were suspended, and he subsequently was placed under house arrest at a government guesthouse, where he remained in incommunicado detention without formal charges or a hearing before a magistrate at year's end. After Turabi's arrest, 95 other PNCP activists were arrested throughout the country. In July all but seven of the detainees were released from custody. Four of the released detainees were accused publicly of committing crimes against the State and forming a military alliance with a hostile rebel organization; however, they were not charged formally. In September and October 2000, authorities detained 120 other PNCP activists throughout the country; they were released in December after the Supreme Court ruled that the detentions were illegal.

Security forces continued to detain persons because of their religious beliefs and activities (see Section 2.c.).

In June Alladin Omer Ajjabna was arrested for converting from Islam to Christianity (apostasy), detained incommunicado for 3 months, and tortured; he disappeared in September (see Sections 1.b. and 1.c.). Generally detentions based nominally on religion were of limited duration; however, the Government routinely accused persons arrested for religious reasons of common crimes and national security crimes, which resulted in prolonged detention.

A number of journalists were arrested and detained during the year (see Section 2.a.).

There were reports that detainees were abused and tortured while in custody (see Section 1.c.).

In December 2000, government forces broke up a meeting of NDA representatives with a foreign diplomat, detained the diplomat briefly, eventually expelled the diplomat from the country, and arrested eight persons; one NDA representative and another person were released on bail. In December 2000, the Government arrested human rights activist Ghazi Suleiman and Ali Mahmoud Hassanein, head of the opposition Democratic Unionist Party, opposition lawyers for the NDA (see Section 2.b). The Government charged the NDA representatives with treason and sedition after they spent approximately 6 weeks in detention; Suleiman reportedly was tortured and beaten while in detention (see Section 1.c.). On September 30, the trials were suspended permanently and all of the detainees were released from custody; however, criminal charges were not dropped by year's end.

In December 2000, the Government arrested and detained 65 leading members of the Takfeer and Hijra group following an attack on a rival group's worshippers; most of the individuals remained in detention and had not been tried as of year's end (see Sections 1.a., 1.c., and 5).

In September 2000, security forces detained numerous persons while forcibly dispersing demonstrations in several cities in the north, including Kosti, Atbara, and Port Sudan (see Section 2.b.). In October 2000, police arrested and detained four students at a rally at the University of Khartoum (see Section 2.b.). There was no further information available on the case at year's end.

According to the NGO Sudanese Human Rights Group (SHRG), some of the following persons arrested in 2000 remained in detention at year's end: The more than 150 PNCP members who were detained after allegedly participating in demonstrations against the Government in September and October; a leading DUP member who was arrested in Khartoum in September; a lawyer who was arrested for political activities in Khartoum in August; leading members of the DUP and UMMA parties who were arrested and detained in June in Sennar City; five students in Omdurman who were detained in June; the more than 200 students arrested and detained at Juba University in June; six members of the Communist Party who were detained in May; the students arrested at Alnasr Technology College in May; Sid Ahmed Al-Hussein, deputy secretary-general of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), who was detained on several occasions in April; Dr. Tobi Madot, Chairperson of the Democratic Forces Front (JAD) who was detained in March; a lawyer and leading member of the National Democratic Alliance to Restore Democracy (NARD) who was arrested and detained in March; and two students who were detained and beaten because of political activities in February.

Police continued to arrest southern women for brewing alcohol, which is illegal. In the previous year, the police reportedly demanded bribes in exchange for releasing the women; however, there were no confirmed reports of such demands during the year.

The Government does not use forced exile; however, opposition leaders have chosen voluntary exile. For example, following the arrest of Turabi in February, PNCP leaders went into self-imposed exile.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The judiciary is not independent and largely is subservient to the Government. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, formerly elected by sitting judges, is nominated by a Judiciary Committee and appointed by the President. As the senior judge in the judicial service, the Chief Justice also controls the judiciary. On occasion some courts displayed a degree of independence. Appeals courts on several occasions overturned decisions of lower courts in political cases, particularly public order courts.

The judicial system includes four types of courts: Regular courts, both criminal and civil; special mixed security courts; military courts; and tribal courts in rural areas which apply customary law to resolve disputes over land and water rights and family matters. Islamic law is applied in the north. There continued to be reports that non-Muslims were prosecuted and convicted under Shari'a hudud laws. Courts do not apply formally Shari'a in the south. Within the regular court system there are civil and criminal courts, appeals courts, and the Supreme Court. Public order courts, which heard only minor public order issues, were suspended in 2000, and public order cases were heard in criminal courts. There also is a constitutional court.

The Constitution provides for fair and prompt trials; however, these protections are not respected in practice in many cases. Military trials, which sometimes are secret and brief, do not provide procedural safeguards, sometimes have taken place with no advocate or counsel permitted, and do not provide an effective appeal from a death sentence. Witnesses may be permitted to appear at military trials in cases that do not involve clemency.

Trials in regular courts nominally meet international standards of legal protections. For example, the accused normally have the right to counsel, and the courts are required to provide free legal counsel for indigent defendants accused of crimes punishable by death or life imprisonment. However, in practice these legal protections are applied unevenly.

On April 11, clashes broke out at the All Saints Cathedral between the police and demonstrators who were protesting the government order to move a Christian religious service; 53 demonstrators, including women and children, were tried in summary trials without access to counsel, flogged, and some were imprisoned for up to 20 days (see Sections 2.b. and 2.c.).

Special three-person security courts adjudicate a wide range of offenses, including violations of constitutional decrees, emergency regulations, some sections of the Penal Code, as well as drug and currency offenses.

Special courts, on which both military and civilian judges sit, handle most security-related cases. Attorneys may advise defendants as "friends of the court" but normally may not address the court. Lawyers complain that they sometimes are granted access to court documents too late to prepare an effective defense. Sentences usually are severe and implemented at once; however, death sentences are referred to the Chief Justice and the Head of State. Defendants may file appellate briefs with the Chief Justice.

In November the Government announced the establishment of special civilian tribunals, under the Ministry of Justice, in the border regions separating the south and the north of the country to prosecute persons involved in the abduction, transport, holding, and selling or exchanging of women and children from war zones. The tribunals were not established nor were administrative procedures promulgated by year's end. The tribunals were scheduled to begin operating in 2002.

During the year, the Government established emergency tribunals in the western part of the country to try banditry cases. The emergency tribunals were composed of civil and military judges. Defendants were not permitted access to legal representation. The emergency tribunals ordered sentences such as death by stoning and amputations during the year. Sentences ordered by emergency tribunals were carried out quickly with only 1 week allowed for appeal to the district chief justice; there were reports that persons were executed the day after sentencing. Emergency tribunals reportedly ordered seven executions during the year. For example, in December emergency tribunals convicted and sentenced four men to death (see Section 1.c.).

Lawyers who wish to practice must maintain membership in the Bar Association, which is NIF-controlled. The Government continued to harass and detain members of the legal profession whom it viewed as political opponents.

The Government officially exempts the 10 southern states, whose population is mostly non-Muslim, from parts of the Criminal Act; however, the act permits the possible future application of Shari'a law in the south, if the State assemblies so decide. No reports cited court-ordered Hudood punishments, other than lashings, in government-controlled areas of the south. Fear of the imposition of Shari'a law remained a key problem in the south.

Civil authorities and institutions do not operate in parts of the rebel-held south and the Nuba Mountains. Parts of the south and the Nuba Mountains fell outside effective judicial procedures and other governmental functions. According to credible reports, government units summarily tried and punished those accused of crimes, especially for offenses against civil order.

Magistrates in SPLM/SPLA-held areas follow a penal code roughly based on the 1925 Penal Code. In rural areas outside effective SPLM control, tribal chiefs apply customary laws. The SPLM has a nascent judicial system of county magistrates, county judges, regional judges, and a court of appeals. While officials have been appointed for most of these positions, the court system did not function in many areas due to lack of personnel, infrastructure, communications, funding, and an effective police force. Some cases were heard at the magistrate and county levels. The SPLM recognizes traditional courts or "Courts of Elders," which usually hear matters of personal affairs such as marriages and dowries, and base their decisions on traditional and customary law. Local chiefs usually preside over traditional courts. Traditional courts are particularly active in Bahr El Ghazal. The SPLM process of conducting a needs assessment for the courts continued during the year.

There are political prisoners in the country, although the Government maintains that it holds none. The Government usually charges political prisoners with a crime, allowing the Government to deny their status as political prisoners.

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The Constitution provides for the inviolability of communication and privacy; however, the Government routinely interferes with its citizens' privacy. Security forces frequently conducted night searches without warrants, and they targeted persons suspected of political crimes. During the year, authorities seized and occupied PNCP offices.

In the north, security forces also targeted persons suspected of making alcoholic beverages, which is illegal, by arresting them on the street and searching private residences (see Section 1.d.).

Security personnel routinely opened and read mail and monitored telephones. The Government continued to restrict the ownership of satellite dishes by private citizens through use of its licensing requirement and pricing.

Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that the Government systematically razed squatter dwellings.

Government forces pursued a scorched earth policy aimed at removing populations from around the newly built oil pipeline and other oil production facilities, which resulted in deaths and serious injuries (see Sections 1.a., 1.c., and 1.g.). Government armed forces burned and looted villages and stole cattle (see Section 1.g.).

The Government continued to conscript citizens forcibly for military service, including high school age children (see Sections 5 and 6.c.).

A Muslim man may marry a non-Muslim, but a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim, unless he converts to Islam (see Section 5); however, this prohibition is not observed or enforced universally, particularly in the south and among Nubans. Non-Muslims may adopt only non-Muslim children; no such restrictions apply to Muslim parents.

Non-Muslim prison inmates were pressured to convert to Islam, as were PDF trainees, children in government-controlled camps for vagrant minors, and persons in government-controlled peace camps (see Sections 1.g. and 2.c.).

Various government bodies have decreed on different occasions that women must dress according to modest Islamic standards (see Sections 2.c. and 5). Enforcement of female dress standards by the POP continues, but was reduced greatly during the year. Enforcement of public order generally took the form of verbal admonishment by security forces.

A wide network of government informants conducted pervasive surveillance in schools, universities, markets, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

The rebel SPLM/SPLA generally is not known to interfere with privacy, family, home, or correspondence in areas that it controls, although correspondence is difficult in war zones; however, rebel factions continued to conscript citizens forcibly including high school age children (see Sections 5 and 6.c.).

Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that the SPLA forcibly recruited Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda for service in their forces.

g. Use of Excessive Force and Violations of Humanitarian Law in Internal Conflicts

Since the civil war resumed in 1983, an estimated 2 million persons have been killed, and more than 4 million displaced internally as a result of fighting between the Government and rebels in the south, interethnic fighting, and famine. The civil war continued despite limited cease-fires, and all sides involved in the fighting were responsible for violations of humanitarian law. At year's end, the Government controlled virtually all of the northern two-thirds of the country but was limited to garrison towns in the south. During the year, government bombings continued, often killing or injuring innocent civilians and destroying homes, schools, and hospitals. Some government bombing intentionally was directed at civilian targets; most bombing was indiscriminate and resulted in deaths and injuries or destruction of property (see Sections 1.a. and 1.c.).

The Government also conducted bombing raids that targeted NGO's and often impeded the flow of humanitarian assistance to the south, most seriously in the Nuba Mountains. During the year, the attacks seriously jeopardized relief operations. For example, in January progovernment militia forces attacked the southern village of Chelkou and targeted and destroyed the ICRC operations base. In October government forces reportedly conducted more than 125 aerial bombardment operations on civilian areas, resulting in numerous deaths (see Section 1.a.). In October in the village of Mangayath in western Bahr al Ghazal, government military aircraft conducted bombing raids over a period of 3 to 4 days on civilians who had gathered at an officially approved World Food Program humanitarian drop site.

The Government and government-allied militia carried out raids and attacks on civilian settlements particularly in Bahr El Ghazal and Upper Nile regions. These raids were accompanied by killings, abductions, rapes, burning and looting of villages, theft of cattle, and significant displacement of civilian populations. Although the Government pledged to end this practice, there continued to be reports of such raids during the year (see Sections 1.a., 1.b., 1.c., and 6.c.). For example, in March approximately 3,000 progovernment militia attacked civilian villagers in the Wau area. There were reports that soldiers and militias attacked villagers in the Nuba Mountains, killed numerous persons suspected of supporting the SPLA, destroyed farms and crops, and forced persons from their land.

The Government and government-associated forces have implemented a scorched earth policy along parts of the oil pipeline and around some key oil facilities. These forces have injured persons seriously, destroyed villages, and driven out inhabitants to create an uninhabited security zone for the defense of the oil fields and installations.

Victims of government bombings, and of the civil war in general, often flee to government-controlled peace camps where humanitarian agencies provide food, water, and limited medical and educational services. Some NGO's reported that persons in the peace camps were subject to forced labor and at times pressured to convert to Islam (see Section 2.c.).

Government forces and allied militia forces in the south raped women and forcibly conscripted men and boys (see Sections 1.f. and 6.c.). Government forces routinely displaced, killed, and injured civilians, and destroyed clinics and dwellings intentionally during their offensive operations.

The Government does not fully apply the laws of war, and Government forces routinely kill rebel soldiers captured in battle. Only a small group of prisoners captured before the 1989 coup and a few soldiers taken in the east in 1998 and during the year reportedly are held as POW's in government-controlled areas. The Government does not concede that it holds POW's. It has not responded to ICRC inquiries about POW's and has refused the ICRC access to POW's.

In addition to bombings that have made humanitarian assistance difficult, the Government routinely has denied flight clearances. The Government banned all relief flights to Western Upper Nile and Eastern Equatoria in 2000; the ban remained in effect during the year. In July 2000, the Government informed OLS that it would require 7 days notice for all relief flights (previously 48 hours notice was required), thus reducing OLS's flexibility. In August and December, U.N. teams conducted preliminary humanitarian assessment visits to government and rebel-held areas of the Nuba Mountains. During the year, the Government on a number of occasions permitted polio eradication teams to visit the Nuba Mountains but denied access for other humanitarian assistance. Cooperation with the special relief program for the Nuba Mountains improved during the latter part of the year in response to critical scrutiny by the international community. During the year, government forces continued to obstruct humanitarian assistance. The Government frequently denied visas and work permits to foreign humanitarian workers and aircraft clearances to the U.N.'s OLS.

During a March 1999 visit by the U.N. Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, both the Government and SPLM/SPLA agreed to stop using anti-personnel mines. However, in the early part of the 2000, a government militia raided a relief center at Mading and placed landmines in an NGO compound forcing the permanent evacuation of the center. Reportedly the SPLA continued to lay landmines in Eastern Equatoria for defense purposes. Injuries continued to occur during the year from landmines previously laid by the Government to protect garrison towns and from landmines laid by the SPLA and its allies during the course of the war.

Government bombing killed and injured numerous persons in 2000; there was no investigation or action taken in regard to any incident.

In 2000 northern Muslim opposition groups under the NDA umbrella structure, which includes the SPLA, took military action against the Government. In 2000 the NDA attacked government garrisons, the oil pipeline, and strategic points near the Ethiopian and Eritrean borders. However, there were no reports of NDA attacks during the year.

The SPLA has taken a number of prisoners over the years. The SPLA often cooperates with ICRC and allows regular visits to prisoners; the SPLA continues to prohibit the ICRC to visit prisoners accused of treason or other crimes. Between April and June, the ICRC was allowed to visit 167 detainees held by the SPLA in Tam, Pagak, Alero, and Cueibet counties. Access to detention camps was impeded by the government denial or delay of flight clearances, and the SPLA introduced bureaucratic procedures that obstructed visits as well. On December 5, the ICRC returned to the Government 21 POW's who were in SPLM custody. The ICRC did not return any SPLA POW's held by the Government during the year. In 2000 the SPLA released a limited number of POW's for health reasons. Prisoners reportedly have died while in SPLA custody due to extremely poor prison conditions; however, there were no reports of deaths in SPLA custody during the year (see Section 1.c.). The ICRC has cooperated with UNICEF to remove a large number of child soldiers from combat situations and return them to civilian life.

There were credible reports of SPLA taxation and occasional diversion of relief supplies. During the year, attacks seriously jeopardized relief operations. There were a number of reported attacks on international relief operations by SPLA-allied forces during the year. For example, in February SPLA-allied forces reportedly attacked and burned the town of Nyal, looting and damaging the UNICEF compound there. The SPLM leadership has committed itself repeatedly to eliminating these problems; however, in practice it appears unable to impose consistently those commitments in the field. There were reports that the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA) diverted humanitarian food to the SPLA and that allied militias on both sides of the conflict diverted humanitarian food for their own use.

In March 2000, the SPLM/SPLA expelled 11 NGO's, which handled 75 percent of NGO-provided humanitarian aid entering the south, for refusing to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on NGO activities that had been under negotiation for several years. Several other NGO's that refused to sign left the area before the deadline. All but a few of the NGO's that were expelled or left before the deadline returned to the southern part of the country and later in 2000 signed the MOU (see Section 2.b.).

Rebel forces and militias in the south forcibly conscripted men and boys and reportedly raped women (see Sections 1.f. and 6.c.). Rebel forces and militias also routinely displaced, killed, and injured civilians, and destroyed clinics and dwellings intentionally.

On May 9, an ICRC airplane was shot at, and the Danish pilot was killed. There was no information available on who fired at the plane. The ICRC suspended all flights in the country pending an investigation; after the investigation was completed, flights resumed.

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

The Constitution provides for freedom of thought and expression, and freedom of the press "as regulated by law;" however, the Government severely restricts freedom of speech and of the press, especially on the basis of national security. Government detentions of journalists, intimidation, surveillance, and suspensions of newspapers continued to inhibit open, public discussion of political issues. Journalists practice self-censorship.

There are 14 daily Arabic newspapers, and there are 2 English newspapers, which generally represent the

viewpoint of southerners. Of the Arabic papers, one is government-controlled, several generally reflect the Government's viewpoint, and several are independent. A wide variety of Arabic and English publications are available; however, they are subject to censorship. In December the Government lifted official censorship; however, self-censorship continued, and four publications remained under intensive scrutiny and experienced intimidation, interruption, and arrest of their editors. All journalists, including the privately owned Arabic daily press, continued to practice self-censorship.

As a result of a limited easing of press restrictions that the Government began in 1997, some lively discussions of domestic and foreign policy were published in the press. Nonetheless, the Government still exercised control of news reporting, particularly of political topics, the war, and criticism of the Government, through the National Press Council and security forces. The National Press Council applies the Press law and is directly responsible to the President. It is charged with licensing newspapers, setting press policy, and responding to complaints. In the event of a complaint, it can give a newspaper a warning or suspend it for up to 15 days. It also can suspend a newspaper indefinitely and suspend journalists for up to 2 weeks. The National Press Council consists of 21 members: 7 selected by the President; 5 from the National Assembly; 7 directly elected by journalists from the Journalists' Union; and 2 selected by the Journalists' Union leadership. In February 2000, President Bashir fired five members of the National Press Council because they had been selected by the dissolved National Assembly (see Section 3). Observers believe the Journalists' Union is government-controlled. The National Press Council was active in suspending journalists and newspapers during the year.

In February a court fined the independent Al Rai Al Akhar newspaper and fined the editor and a journalist for libel against the local government after the newspaper published an article that alleged Khartoum State authorities were guilty of corruption. On February 4, authorities arrested, fined, and charged with libel Amal Abbas, the only female chief editor of a newspaper, the Al Rai Al-Akhar, for the publication of an article that accused the governor of Khartoum of corruption. Abbas was tried, convicted, and fined. She was detained briefly and then released.

During the year, restrictions on press freedom were imposed through the National Security Emergency decree. The Government suspended publications, detained journalists and editors, confiscated printed editions, conducted prepublication censorship, and limited government financial support (advertising government contracts) to progovernment media. On November 28, the Government announced the lifting of official press censorship on all but four opposition newspapers; on December 8, the Government lifted restrictions on all newspapers. Following the lifting of the restrictions, Internal Security censors no longer sat in publishing houses to approve press copies of articles; however, the Press Council continued to have the authority to suspend publications that contain articles considered objectionable by the Government.

Newspapers are prohibited from publishing articles about the war with the exception of information provided by the Ministry of Defense or official government statements.

In February the Government shut down and banned the PNCP newspaper Rai-al-Sh'ab (People's View).

In September the Government ordered the temporary suspension of the Khartoum Monitor on the basis of alleged inflammatory articles published in the newspaper.

On April 12, authorities arrested Alfred Taban, the publisher of the Khartoum Monitor, a leading southern-oriented English daily newspaper, and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) correspondent in the country at a press conference and detained him for 1 week at army headquarters. Taban reportedly was arrested or detained five times during the year. In October authorities arrested and detained for 3 days Taban and Nhial Bol, managing editor of the Khartoum Monitor, a newspaper that was critical of the Government's human rights record.

In May authorities prevented a journalist from the Al Sahafa daily newspaper from entering the hall for coverage of National Assembly discussions on the basis that the paper had published false reports against the Assembly.

The following journalists arrested in 2000 remained in custody at year's end: Osman Mirghani, journalist for Al Rai Al-Aam who was arrested in August for an article criticizing government education policy; Alwola Burhi Kaidani, a journalist for Al-Rai Al Akhar, who was arrested in August for an "anti-government" article; and Kamal Hassan Bakheit, Chief Editor of Al Sahafa and four of the paper's journalists arrested and detained in March for publishing poetry calling on Egypt to rescue the country from "the unjust war" and writing an article supportive of the NDA.

Radio and television are controlled directly by the Government and are required to reflect government policies. Television has a permanent military censor to ensure that the news reflects official views. There are no privately owned television or radio stations, although one television cable company is jointly owned by the Government and private investors.

In spite of the restrictions on ownership of satellite dishes, citizens increasingly have access to foreign electronic media; the Government does not jam foreign radio signals. In addition to domestic and satellite television services, there is a pay cable network, which directly rebroadcasts uncensored Cable News Network (CNN), the BBC, the London-based, Saudi-owned Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), Dubai-TV, Kuwait-TV, Gazira TV, and a variety of other foreign programming.

The Government often charged that the international, and particularly the Western, media have an anti-Sudan and anti-Islam bias.

Uncensored but potentially monitored, Internet access is available through two Internet service providers. There are an expanding number of Internet cafes in the country.

The SPLA and the NDA have provided relatively few opportunities for journalists to report on their activities.

Academic freedom is restricted. In public universities, the Government appoints the vice-chancellors who are responsible for running the institutions. While many professors lecture and write in opposition to the Government, they exercise self-censorship. Private universities are not subject to direct government control; however, professors also exercise self-censorship, and the educational curriculum and language of instruction are determined by the Government even in religiously based schools.

Security forces, local police, and student militants supporting the Government attacked and injured students during the year (see Section 2.b.). On August 16, two students were killed and 16 others were injured after a political debate was disrupted by progovernment students, policemen, and security officers (see Section 2.b.).

The Government officially requires that young men between the ages of 17 and 19 enter military or national service to be able to receive a certificate upon leaving secondary school; the certificate is a requirement for entry into a university (see Section 5). This decree effectively broadened the conscription base.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The continuing National Security Emergency decree and the Criminal Procedure Act, which requires government approval for gatherings involving more than five individuals, effectively eliminates the right of assembly, and the Government continued to severely restrict this freedom. The authorities permitted only government-authorized gatherings and routinely denied permission for or disrupted gatherings they view as politically oriented or potentially critical of or embarrassing to the Government or the ruling NC party. Islamic orders associated with opposition political parties, particularly the Ansar and Khatimia, continued to be denied permission to hold large public gatherings during the year. In June the Government declared a ban on all rallies and public demonstrations in the country, and announced that no permits would be authorized or issued; the ban remained in effect at year's end.

On April 10, police forcibly dispersed a crowd of worshippers in Green Square who arrived for an evangelical Easter service and protested its cancellation by the Government; police used tear gas, truncheons, and arrested persons (see Section 2.c.). On April 11, clashes broke out at the All Saints Cathedral between the police and demonstrators who were protesting the government order to move the April 10 service. Police fired at the protesters and used tear gas, live ammunition, grenades, canes and batons to disperse them. There also were reports that hand grenades were used inside the Cathedral. Authorities arrested approximately 100 persons, including Christian clergymen and charged them with public disturbance. After summary trials in April, 53 demonstrators, including women and children, were flogged, and some were imprisoned for up to 20 days.

On May 9, riot police and military police used tear gas and batons to disperse a demonstration by approximately 100 war veterans with disabilities and other retail vendors selling cigarettes and newspapers, which resulted in injuries. The vendors had been ordered to remove their stands 2 weeks earlier because they were considered to be an environmental hazard. The security forces charged them with resisting an order to remove their small retail stalls from downtown shopping areas; there were no reported arrests. Following negotiations with the authorities after the demonstration, the vendors were allowed a few additional days to comply with the government order. No action was taken against the police involved in the incident during the year.

On June 23 in Khartoum, authorities raided a workshop organized by the Gender Centre, arrested and released four speakers, and interrogated participants about their political affiliations. No action was taken against the authorities involved in the incident during the year.

On August 16 at Gezira University, progovernment students, policemen, and security officers disrupted a political debate organized by the opposition Arab Nasserist Socialist Party student group, which resulted in 2 deaths and 16 injuries. National Congress Party students wearing military-type uniforms and chanting Islamic jihad slogans reportedly marched onto the campus and interrupted the debate. Members of the police and security forces then allegedly joined with the PNCP students in the attack. No action was taken against the security forces involved in the incident during the year.

In December 2000, government forces broke up a meeting of NDA representatives with a foreign diplomat, detained the diplomat briefly, and eventually expelled him from the country; they also arrested seven NDA representatives. After approximately 6 weeks of detention, the Government charged the NDA representatives with a number of capital crimes, including treason, espionage, and sedition. There was no trial by year's end. In December 2000, the Government arrested human rights activist Ghazi Suleiman and Ali Mahmoud Hassanein, head of the opposition Democratic Unionist Party, opposition lawyers for the NDA (see Section 1.d.). Following the incident, the Government announced restrictions on diplomatic, international, and regional organizations' contact with any Sudanese political organizations, including the NDA, that the Government considered to be waging war against it. The Government routinely restricts travel by diplomats and foreign humanitarian workers into rebel-controlled areas without prior written permission from the Ministry of External Affairs; however, this restriction was not enforced systematically during the year.

No action was taken against the members of the security forces who forcibly dispersed the following

demonstrations and rallies in 2000: The October rally and protest held by the PNCP and Islamic students at the University of Khartoum; the September peaceful demonstration against the Khartoum governor's decree banning women from working in public places by the National Democratic Women's Association; the September demonstrations in several cities in the northern part of the country protesting poor economic conditions, lack of water and electricity, government failure to pay teacher salaries, and compulsory military conscription; and the unapproved political rally in June organized by the Independent Students Congress group of Sennar University.

The Government severely restricted freedom of association. In theory the law allows the existence of political parties. As a result, there were more than 20 officially registered political parties; however, the legislation includes restrictions that effectively prohibit traditional political parties if they are linked to armed opposition to the Government. Observers believe that the Government controls professional associations and trade unions, including some student organizations.

In March 2000, the SPLA implemented a MOU drafted in August 1999 that was the subject of negotiation between the SPLM, NGO's, and donors. It included items such as: Increased SPLA control over NGO interaction with local communities; SPLA control over the planning and distribution of humanitarian assistance; a requirement to work "in accordance with SPLA objectives" rather than solely humanitarian principles; the payment of "security fees;" and additional fees for services, including charges for the landing of aircraft carrying humanitarian aid and for NGO movement within SPLA-held areas. In March 2000, the SPLA expelled 11 NGO's, which handled 75 percent of NGO-provided humanitarian aid entering southern Sudan, for refusing to sign the MOU; several NGO's who refused to sign the memorandum left the area before the deadline (see Section 1.g.). Most NGO's returned by year's end, and most NGO's that provide assistance to the south reported that the MOU had little or no effect on their operations.

c. Freedom of Religion

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion; however, the Government severely restricts this right in practice. The Government treats Islam as the state religion and has declared that Islam must inspire the country's laws, institutions, and policies. The Constitution states that "Shari'a and custom are the sources of legislation."

Religious organizations and churches are subject to the same restrictions placed on nonreligious corporations. Religious groups, like all other organizations, must be registered to be recognized or to gather legally. Registered religious groups are exempt from most taxes. The Government does not treat all groups equally in the approval of registrations and licenses. Nonregistered religious groups find it impossible to construct a place of worship or to assemble legally and are harassed by the Government. Applications to build Islamic mosques generally are granted in practice; however, the process for applications for non-Muslim churches is more difficult. The Government did not authorize the construction of any churches in the Khartoum area or in the district capitals; the Government often claimed that local Islamic community objections restricted the issuance of permits. The Government reportedly is working on new legislation to replace the Societies Registration Act, but has not yet invited the participation of religious groups in drafting the legislation.

Authorities continued to restrict the activities of Christians, followers of traditional indigenous beliefs, and other non-Muslims, as well as certain Islamic groups.

Muslims may proselytize freely in the government-controlled areas, but non-Muslims are forbidden to proselytize.

Authorities sometimes harassed foreign missionaries and other religiously oriented organizations; and delayed their requests for work permits and residence visas. The Government generally is least restrictive of Christian groups that historically have had a presence in the country, including Copts, Roman Catholics, and Greek Orthodox, and is more restrictive of newer arrivals.

While the Government permits non-Muslims to participate in services in existing, authorized places of worship, the Government continued to deny permission for the construction of any Roman Catholic churches, although some other Christian groups have received permission. However, the Government permitted some makeshift structures to be used for Roman Catholic services.

There is a longstanding dispute between the Episcopal Church and the Government. In 1999 the Episcopal Church stated that the Government had moved to seize a portion of the property on which the church office in Omdurman stands; however, the Government did not seize the property, and the parties continued negotiations to resolve the dispute during the year. A government-run health care center had operated on the site since 1973. The Church claims that it has a freehold title to the land, while the Government claims that the land is leased. The Church claims that the courts will not act independently of the Government in the case. The Church sent a memo to the Office of the President concerning the issue, but the President's Office replied that it did not have authority over the case because it was a state rather than a federal issue. At a June 2000 court session, a decision on the matter was postponed until August 2000. The case still was unresolved at year's end. In December 1999, police injured five persons in a clash in northwest Khartoum over an Episcopal Church school. Local authorities claim that the school was built without a proper permit. Despite a court ruling in favor of the Church, the school eventually was taken over by the Government and reopened as a government school. The Government expropriated the Episcopal cathedral in Khartoum and converted it to a museum in the 1970's; the Catholic club was expropriated in the 1990's and converted to NIF/NC party headquarters.

The Khartoum State government in past years had razed some religious buildings and thousands of squatter dwellings around Khartoum, which largely were populated by displaced southerners, including Christians and large numbers of practitioners of traditional indigenous religions; however, this practice largely had ceased during the year. Earlier improvements in procedures to grant squatters legal title to land in other areas and to move squatters in advance of demolitions continued. In 1999 the First Vice President directed that demolition of churches and other Christian facilities in Khartoum be suspended and that a committee be formed under the Second Vice President to review the issue. Some church officials indicated that the number of church and school demolitions in squatter areas declined, apparently because the replanning of squatter areas largely is complete. However, the Government was trying to take over the unused part of a Christian cemetery in Khartoum in order to build shops; the dispute remained unresolved at year's end.

While non-Muslims may convert to Islam, apostasy (which includes conversion from Islam to another religion) is illegal and punishable by death under the Criminal Code; in practice converts usually are subjected to intensive scrutiny, ostracization, intimidation, and torture by authorities. In June Alladin Omer Ajjabna reportedly was tortured in custody after he was arrested for converting from Islam to Christianity (see Section 1.b.).

PDF trainees, including non-Muslims, are indoctrinated in the Islamic faith. In prisons and juvenile detention facilities, government officials and government-supported Islamic NGO's pressured and offered inducements to non-Muslim inmates to convert. Some persons in the government-controlled "Peace" camps for IDP's reportedly were subject to forced labor and at times pressured to convert to Islam (see Section 1.f.).

Children, including non-Muslim children, in camps for vagrant minors are required to study the Koran, and there is pressure on non-Muslims to convert to Islam (see Section 5). There are credible reports that some boys in vagrant camps and juvenile homes have been circumcised forcibly. There were credible reports that some children from Christian and other non-Muslim families who were captured and enslaved were forced to convert to Islam.

Certain provisions of Islamic law as interpreted and applied by the Government, and many traditional practices as well, discriminate against women. Various government bodies have decreed on different occasions that women must dress according to modest Islamic standards, including wearing a head covering. In January 1999, the governor of Khartoum State announced that women in public places and government offices and female students and teachers would be required to conform to what is deemed an Islamic dress code. However, none of these decrees have been the subject of legislation. During the year, there was minimal enforcement of the dress code. Women often were seen in public wearing trousers or with their heads uncovered. POP generally only issued warnings for improper dress. In September 2000, the Governor of Khartoum State issued a decree forbidding women from working in businesses that serve the public such as hotels, restaurants, and gas stations. He defended the ban as necessary under Shari'a law to protect the dignity of women (see Section 5). The issue was not brought before the courts, nor was the decree reversed; however, it was no longer a subject of public discussion, and the authorities did not enforce it; however, some employers removed women from their positions on this basis.

Although the Government considers itself an Islamic government, restrictions often are placed on the religious freedoms of Muslims, particularly on those orders linked to opposition to the Government. Although in past years there were reports that Islamic orders such as the Ansar and the Khatimia regularly were denied permission to hold large public gatherings, these orders were allowed to meet as religious but not as political organizations during the year.

Religious minority rights are not protected, and Islam is the state religion; this confers a status of second class citizenship on non-Muslim adherents. In government-controlled areas of the south, there continued to be credible evidence of favoritism towards Muslims and an unwritten policy of Islamization of public institutions, despite an official policy of local autonomy and federalism. Some non-Muslims lost their jobs in the civil service, the judiciary, and other professions; however, such occurrences were less frequent than in previous years. Few non-Muslim university graduates found government jobs. Some non-Muslim businessmen complained of petty harassment and discrimination in the awarding of government contracts and trade licenses. There also were reports that Muslims received preferential treatment for the limited services provided by the Government, including access to medical care.

Sunday is not recognized as the Sabbath for Christians. Employers sometimes prevent Christians in the north from leaving work to worship.

The Government requires instruction in Islam in public schools in the north. The study of Christianity is available on an elective basis in some schools. In public schools in areas in which Muslims are not a majority, students have a choice of studying Islam or Christianity; however, Christian courses are not offered in the majority of public schools, ostensibly due to a lack of teachers or Christian students, and in practice this means that many Christian students attend Islamic courses.

Children who have been abandoned or whose parentage is unknown, regardless of presumed religious origin, are considered by the State to be both citizens and Muslims and can be adopted only by Muslims. Non-Muslims may adopt only other non-Muslim children. No equivalent restriction is placed on adoption by Muslims of orphans or other children. In accordance with Islamic law, children adopted by Muslims do not take the name of their adoptive parents and are not automatic heirs to their property.

Security forces harassed and detained persons because of their religious beliefs and activities; however, such

detentions on religious grounds occurred less frequently during the year than in previous years. Generally detentions based nominally on religion were of limited duration; because the practice of religion is not technically illegal, detainees could not be held formally on religious grounds indefinitely. Although in the past there were reports that the Government resorted to accusing, at times falsely, those arrested for religious reasons of other crimes, including common crimes and national security crimes, which resulted in prolonged detention, there were no reports of such occurrences during the year. Unlike in previous years, Catholic priests did not report that they routinely were stopped and harassed by police during the year.

In April Christian church authorities invited a German evangelist to address a rally in central Khartoum to celebrate Easter Mass and secured appropriate permits for the rally. On April 10, government authorities ordered church authorities to move the event to a venue that had insufficient space and was located on the outskirts of Khartoum in an area surrounded by mosques on the grounds that Islamic groups had made threats to disrupt the event. The leaders of the Episcopal Church and the Sudanese Council of Churches responded by sending a joint protest letter to the Government calling for the investigation of unfair treatment of Christians. On April 11, clashes broke out at the All Saints Cathedral between the police and demonstrators who were protesting the government order to move the event. Police forcibly dispersed the protestors, arrested approximately 100 individuals, and summarily tried them (see Sections 1.d., 1.e., and 2.b.).

The Government officially exempts the 10 southern states, in which the population is mostly non-Muslim, from parts of the law, which permit physical punishments, including lashings, amputations, and stonings, based on Shari'a. In a 1999 case involving ethnic clashes in the Darfur region in the west, an emergency court sentenced 10 persons to hanging and subsequent crucifixion. There was no further information available on the case at year's end. In 1999 and 2000 in the north, the Government reportedly carried out amputations under Islamic law for the first time; there were reports that six cross amputations (right hand and left foot) were carried out during the year. The Government reportedly carried out eight amputations as punishment for violent crimes that resulted in death. All those sentenced to amputations reportedly were Muslims. There were no reports of court-ordered Islamic law punishments, other than lashings, in government-controlled areas of the south. The act legally can be applied in the south, if the state assemblies approve it. Fear of the imposition of Islamic law is one of the factors that has fueled support for the civil war among opposition forces in the south.

As part of the civil war, the Government has engaged in a program of high altitude, indiscriminate bombing of southern areas, particularly in the states of Equatoria, Western Upper Nile, and the Nuba Mountains. The bombings hit schools, medical facilities, markets, and civilian buildings in these areas inhabited primarily by Christians and practitioners of traditional African religions. For example, in April Sudanese Air Force bombers attacked an airstrip in the Nuba Mountains and narrowly missed hitting a plane carrying Bishop Macram Max Gassis of El Obeid Diocese in the central part of the country. On May 25, government forces bombed areas populated by Catholics and Catholic churches in Tonj and Limon Hills in the Nuba Mountains. Between June 3 and 6, progovernment militia shot and killed the Episcopalian Deacon Abraham Yac Deng, destroyed the Episcopal Church in Ayien, and repeatedly attacked the predominately Christian population in Twic County. No action was taken against members of the security forces responsible for killing or injuring persons during bombings.

In June 2000, approximately 100 Christian secondary school students who had been training at a police unit in Jebel Awlia province in Khartoum State, said that they were abused physically and insulted by the police during the exercise. It was unclear whether these students were abused because they were Christian, and the national service coordination office in Khartoum State reportedly denied that there was a problem at the training camps. The students were not allowed to continue their compulsory military education because they left their duties to attend church.

In June 2000, a group of 12 armed police entered the priests' residence of the Catholic Comboni College secondary school with a warrant to search for illegal immigrants and foreign currency. The rooms of two priests and a medicine storeroom were searched. The police did not arrest anyone, and spoke with one priest. Police took a camera, a file of newspaper cuttings, five boxes of slides, a corrector tape, three floppy disks, and a bottle of whiskey. The items were accounted for at the time and returned 2 days later. A mobile telephone and cash are believed to have disappeared, but were not listed among the items taken by police during the search. No charges were filed in the case. The Catholic Comboni College has a religiously and ethnically mixed student body and generally operates without interference or harassment.

In past years, Human Rights Watch reported that Islamic student militias operating under the protection of security forces abducted and tortured a number of student activists. During the year, Islamic students harassed, beat, and otherwise abused non-Sudanese African students; part of the motivation for such acts appeared to be religious.

In SPLA-controlled areas, Christians, Muslims, and followers of traditional indigenous beliefs generally worship freely, although it appears that many of the region's Muslim residents have departed voluntarily over the years. The SPLM officially favors secular government and has a significant Muslim membership; however, the SPLM is dominated by Christians, and local SPLM authorities often have a very close relationship with local Christian religious authorities. However, there are Muslims who support the SPLM and SPLA, as well as rebels in the Nuba Mountains and other regions. The northern NDA alliance members and supporters are primarily Muslim.

The Government continues to insist that Shari'a form the basis of a unified state while southerners insist on a secular state.

d. Freedom of Movement within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation

The Constitution provides for these rights; however, the Government severely restricted them in practice. The

Government denied exit visas to some categories of persons, including political opponents, policemen, and physicians. The Government also maintains lists of political figures and other citizens who are not permitted to travel abroad.

Some former political detainees have been forbidden to travel outside Khartoum. Movement generally was unhindered for other citizens outside the war zones, but travelers who failed to produce an identity card at checkpoints risked arrest. Foreigners must register with the police on entering the country, seek permission to move from one location to another, and reregister at each new location within 3 days of arrival. Foreign NGO staffs sometimes had problems obtaining entry visas or work or travel permits once they had entered the country. Foreigners needed internal travel authorization and permits, which often were difficult to obtain and sometimes were refused, for domestic travel outside of Khartoum; however, foreign diplomats can travel to many locations under government escort.

The Government routinely restricts travel into many areas of the country, including the south. Restrictions were enforced strongly during the year.

In April the Sudan Commission for Humanitarian Affairs, a government body, accused some international NGO's and relief agencies of operating in the country illegally and engaging in "nonhumanitarian activities" (see Section 4).

The SPLA also requires that foreign NGO personnel obtain permission before traveling to areas that they control, although they generally granted such permission. NGO workers who have worked in government-held territory encountered problems receiving permission to work or travel in rebel-held territory. In March the SPLA drew up a MOU for NGO's to sign that restricted much of their work in the southern part of the country and, as a result, many NGO's left the country (see Sections 1.g. and 2.b.).

Women may not travel abroad without permission of their husbands or male guardians.

In November the Government prevented six NDA opposition members from attending a meeting in Eritrea. In December the Government denied exit visas for Khartoum-based NDA representatives to attend a meeting in Egypt.

In March 2000, more than 60 Ugandans, including 26 children, who escaped from LRA captivity in the southern part of the country were repatriated (see Sections 1.b., 5, 6.c., and 6.f.).

It is estimated that more than 4 million persons are displaced internally due to the civil war. Tens of thousands of persons, largely southerners and westerners displaced by famine and civil war, continue to live in squatter slums in the Khartoum area. The Khartoum State government plans to upgrade conditions in some camps, requiring the movement of populations to other areas so that roads may be built or enlarged and services established. The state government is in contact with foreign NGO's and U.N. agencies concerning this effort, and these foreign agencies are the primary sources for food rations, medical services, water, shelter, and educational services for displaced persons.

More than 380,000 Sudanese are refugees in neighboring countries; however accurate numbers are not known, and some estimates place the number at more than 1 million. Citizens have fled to Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic.

The law provides for the granting of refugee and asylum status in accordance with the 1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The Government cooperated with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian assistance organizations and accorded refugees generally good treatment. The UNHCR estimated that there were approximately 400,000 refugees, primarily from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Chad, Uganda, the DRC, and Somalia. Approximately 148,000 Eritrean and 8,900 Ugandan refugees are in camps, and approximately 193,000 additional refugees are scattered in urban areas throughout the country; however, accurate statistics were not available by year's end. The Government provides first asylum, although no statistics were available during the year.

In April 2000, the Government signed an agreement with the Government of Eritrea to repatriate longtime Eritrean refugees in Sudan. By year's end, 38,060 Eritrean refugees had been repatriated to Eritrea under the auspices of the UNHCR.

In August 2000, the UNHCR signed an agreement with the Government of Sudan and the Government of Ethiopia to repatriate pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees to their homeland by the end of the year; however, only some of the Ethiopian refugees were repatriated by year's end. Fewer than 2,000 Ethiopian refugees remained in the country at year's end.

There were some reports of the mistreatment of refugees, including beatings and arbitrary arrests by government officials. Refugees could not become resident aliens or citizens, regardless of their length of stay in the country. The Government allowed a large number of refugees to work.

Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that the SPLA forcibly recruited Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda for military service in their forces.

There were no reports that the Government forcibly returned persons to a country where they feared

persecution.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

Citizens had no genuine opportunity to change their government peacefully. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in December 2000; there were allegations of serious irregularities, including official interference, electoral fraud, inadequate opportunities for all voters to register, and inadequate election monitoring. All major opposition parties boycotted the election. Foreign observer groups chose not to act as election observers. Bashir was selected for a 5-year term, and the NC/NIF won 340 out of 360 seats in Parliament in the deeply flawed process. The new Parliament elected in December 2000 took office in February.

In December 1999, President Bashir declared a 3-month state of emergency, dismissed the speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Turabi, and disbanded Parliament 2 days before it was to vote on a bill introduced by pro-Turabi legislators to reduce Bashir's presidential powers. Bashir suspended the Parliament on the grounds that it was necessary for the unity of the country. The State of Emergency remained in effect throughout the year, and in December it was extended until December 2002.

The Constitution, which provides in theory for a wide range of rights, was passed by referendum in June 1998, and was implemented early in 1999. There was widespread skepticism about the Government's claims that the constitutional referendum passed with 96.7 percent approval and 91.9 percent participation. Critics of the Constitution charged that it neither was drafted nor passed with truly national participation. Some critics also objected to the statement that "Islamic law" would be among "the prevalent sources of law" in regard to amending the Constitution (see Section 5). The implementation of the Constitution has resulted in few changes in practice.

In 1989 the National Salvation Revolution Command Council (RCC) abolished all political parties and detained the major party leaders for a short period. In 1990 the RCC rejected both multiparty and one party systems and, 2 years later, established an entirely government-appointed Transitional National Assembly, based on a Libyan-style political structure with ascending levels of nonpartisan assemblies. The essentially powerless appointed legislature was replaced following the 1996 elections by an elected National Assembly.

In theory the law allows the existence of political parties (see Section 2.b.). The Government continued routinely to deny permission for and disrupt gatherings that it viewed as politically oriented (see Section 2.b.). Security forces arrested, detained, and on occasion, beat political opponents during the year (see Sections 1.c. and 1.d.). During the year, authorities seized and occupied PNCP offices.

The federal system of government was instituted in 1995 and slowly is developing a structure of 26 states, with governors and senior state officials appointed by the President from Khartoum. The Government considers this strategy as a possible inducement to the rebels for accommodation through a principle of regional autonomy; however, southerners are underrepresented in the central Government, and local appointees are not viewed universally as representative of their constituencies. This underrepresentation remained a key obstacle to ending the rebellion.

The percentage of women in government or politics does not correspond to their percentage in the population, although they have the right to vote. There is one female Minister, who serves as a government advisor; one female State Minister, who serves on the Council of Ministers and is the former head of the legislative committee of Khartoum State; and there is one female Supreme Court judge.

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

The Government continues to resist the presence and activities of human rights groups in the investigation of human rights abuses. Due to government restrictions on freedom of association (see Section 2.b.), there is only one independent domestic human rights organizations—the Sudan Human Rights Organization. There is one local NGO that addresses health concerns related to the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) and other "traditional" practices (see Section 5). During the year, the Government conducted bombing raids that targeted NGO's and often impeded humanitarian activities in the south (see Section 1.g.).

Government-supported Islamic NGO's pressured imprisoned non-Muslims to convert to Islam. There were reports that Christian NGO's used their services to pressure persons to convert to Christianity during the year.

In September 1998, the U.N. named a new Special Rapporteur on Sudan, Leonardo Franco. Franco visited the country in February 2000 and filed a critical report with the UNHCR and the U.N. General Assembly. Gerhardt Baum, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, visited the country twice during the year and filed reports critical of human rights conditions.

The Human Rights Advisory Council, a government body whose rapporteur is the Solicitor General for Public Law, continued its role in addressing human rights problems within the Government. The Council is composed of representatives of human rights offices in 22 government ministries and agencies. While the council is charged with investigating human rights complaints, its effectiveness was hampered by lack of cooperation on the part of some of the ministry and agency offices. The government-sponsored CEAWC continued its activities on abductees during the year (see Sections 1.b. and 6.f.).

Section 5 Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Religion, Disability, Language, or Social Status

The Constitution prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, or religious creed; however, discrimination against women and ethnic minorities continued. Mechanisms for social redress, especially with respect to violence against women and children, are weak. The General Education Act stipulates equal opportunity in education for persons with disabilities.

Women

Domestic violence against women continued to be a problem, although, because reliable statistics do not exist, the extent is unknown. Many women are reluctant to file formal complaints against such abuse, although it is a legal ground for divorce. The police normally do not intervene in domestic disputes.

Displaced women from the south were vulnerable to harassment, rape, and sexual abuse. The Government does not address the problem of violence against women, nor is it discussed publicly. The punishment for rape under the Criminal Act varies from 100 lashes to 10 years imprisonment to death. In most cases, convictions are not announced; however, observers believe that sentences often are less than the maximum provided for by law.

Female genital mutilation (FGM), which is condemned widely by international health experts as damaging to both physical and psychological health, is widespread, especially in the north. An estimated 90 percent or more of girls and women in the north have undergone FGM, with consequences that have included severe urinary problems, infections, and even death. Infibulation, the most severe type of FGM, is the most common type. Usually it is performed on girls between the ages of 4 and 7 by traditional practitioners in improvised, unsanitary conditions, which cause severe pain, trauma, and risk of infection to the child. No form of FGM is illegal under the Criminal Code; however, the health law forbids doctors and midwives from performing infibulation. Women displaced from the south to the north reportedly are imposing FGM increasingly on their daughters, even if they themselves have not been subjected to it. A small but growing number of urban, educated families are abandoning the practice completely. A larger number of families, in a compromise with tradition, have adopted the least severe form of FGM, Sunna, as an alternative to infibulation. The Government neither arrested nor prosecuted any persons for violating the health law against infibulation. The Government does not support FGM, and in recent years it has introduced information about FGM in some public education curriculums. One local NGO is working to eradicate FGM.

Prostitution is illegal; however, it is a growing problem, including among university students, although there is no sex tourism industry. Slavery, forced labor, and trafficking persist, particularly affecting women and children (see Section 6.f.). There are numerous credible reports that government and government-associated forces abducted and sold women to work as domestic servants and concubines (see Sections 6.c. and 6.f.).

There are no specific laws regarding sexual harassment.

Some aspects of the law, including certain provisions of Islamic law as interpreted and applied by the Government, and many traditional practices, discriminate against women. Gender segregation is common in social settings. In accordance with Islamic law, a Muslim woman has the right to hold and dispose of her own property without interference. Women are ensured inheritance from their parents; however, a daughter inherits half the share of a son, and a widow inherits a smaller percent than her children. It is much easier for men to initiate legal divorce proceedings than for women. These rules only apply to Muslims and not to those of other faiths, for whom religious or tribal laws apply. Under Islamic law, fathers are favored in child custody cases.

Although a Muslim man may marry a non-Muslim, a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim unless he converts to Islam; however, this prohibition is not observed or enforced in areas of the south not controlled by the Government, nor among Nubans. Unofficial, non-registered marriages, known as orfy or traditional weddings, are valid legally but do not guarantee the wife's legal rights. For example, in an orfy customary marriage, a woman is not entitled to alimony or pension, has no judicial protection without official recognition by her spouse, and must file a legal petition to establish her children's parentage. Women cannot travel abroad without the permission of their husbands or male guardians; however, this prohibition is not enforced strictly for women affiliated with the PNCP.

A number of government directives require that women in public places and government offices and female students and teachers conform to what the Government deemed an Islamic dress code. This, at the least, entailed wearing a head covering. However, enforcement of the dress code regulations has been uneven. For example, in 2000 dress code enforcement was relaxed and, when it occurred, generally consisted of verbal admonishment by security forces. There were no reports that security forces used abuse to enforce the dress code during the year.

In May 2000, a presidential decree released 563 women who were in prison for violating the Public Order Law. Most were southerners who had been convicted of illegally making and selling alcohol in Khartoum—a traditional income-earning activity among southern women. Subsequent to the decree, police continued to arrest numerous women for the same violation, and reportedly the police demanded bribes in exchange for releasing the women.

Women generally are not discriminated against in the pursuit of employment; however, in September 2000, the Governor of Khartoum State issued a decree forbidding women from working in businesses that serve the

public, including hotels, restaurants, and gas stations. The Governor defended the ban as necessary to protect the dignity of women and to adhere to Shari'a law. There was no further public discussion of the issue during the year, and the authorities did not enforce the ban; however, some employers removed women from their positions on this basis.

Women enjoy equal access to education. Approximately 50 percent of university students are women, in part because men are conscripted for war.

Children

Education is compulsory through grade eight; however, local inability to pay teachers' salaries reportedly has resulted in declining attendance, because when teachers strike for back pay, the Government usually closes the school until a settlement is reached. There are wide disparities among states and some gender disparity, especially in the southern, eastern, and western regions. In the northern part of the country, boys and girls generally have equal access to education, although many families with restricted income choose to send sons and not daughters to school. Girls also withdraw from school early due to family obligations or early marriage. In the urban areas of the south, it is estimated that approximately 68 percent of primary school age children receive basic education. The male literacy rate is 57.7 percent, and the female literacy rate is 34.6 percent; however, this rate is for the country as a whole, and the literacy rate in the south reportedly is lower due to a lack of schools in many areas.

Although there is little data available on school-age children who are IDP's, it is believed that the majority are not enrolled in school.

The Government operated camps for vagrant children. Police typically send homeless children who have committed crimes to these camps, where they are detained for indefinite periods. Health care and schooling at the camps generally are poor, and basic living conditions often are primitive. All of the children in the camps, including non-Muslims, must study the Koran, and there is pressure on non-Muslims to convert to Islam (see Section 2.c.). There were reports that boys in these camps and in homes for delinquent youths were forced to undergo circumcision. Male teenagers in the camps often are conscripted into the PDF, including some girls in the south (see Section 1.f.). There were reports that abducted homeless and displaced children were discouraged from speaking other languages besides Arabic or practicing religions other than Islam.

FGM is performed frequently on girls (see Section 5, Women).

A considerable number of children suffered serious abuse, including abduction, enslavement, and forced conscription in the war zones. There continued to be credible reports that government and government-associated forces abducted children for purposes of forced labor, and trafficking of children persisted (see Sections 1.f., 6.c., 6.d., and 6.f.).

The Government forcibly conscripted young men and boys into the military forces to fight in the civil war. Conscription frequently was carried out by government authorities who raided buses and other public places to seize young men. The Government officially requires that young men between the ages of 17 and 19 years enter military service to be able to receive a certificate on leaving secondary school. Such a certificate is a requirement for entry into a university, and the decree effectively broadened the conscription base. On December 24, the Government announced that evading compulsory military service would be punishable by 3 years in jail; however, there were no reports of such sentences by year's end.

There were reports that the government-controlled militia leader, Paulino Matip, forcibly conscripted boys as young as 10 years of age to serve as soldiers.

In October 2000, the SPLA pledged to demobilize child soldiers from its forces, and in 2000, 116 boys were removed from the army and placed in school. There are credible reports that child soldiers continued to serve in the SPLA. There is evidence that SPLA-allied militias sometimes used children as young as 12 years of age in combat roles. During the year, the SPLA cooperated with U.N. agencies to facilitate the demobilization of child soldiers in its ranks. According to the U.N., 3,200 child combatants were demobilized by the SPLA in February; the SPLA reported that approximately 7,000 had not been demobilized by year's end.

During the last 10 years, thousands of Ugandan children have been abducted by the government-supported LRA (see Section 6.f.). The LRA forced many of the boys to become soldiers and the girls to become sex slaves for LRA commanders and soldiers. In December 1999, the Governments of Sudan and Uganda agreed to stop supporting each other's rebel armies and to return abductees. Subsequently, the Government assisted in repatriating a small number of individuals who had escaped from the LRA. In September 2000, both Governments agreed at the Winnipeg International Conference on War Affected Children to work for the speedy release and repatriation of LRA captives; however, implementation has proved problematic due to a lack of cooperation on the part of the LRA. The Government continued to support the LRA during the year. The LRA continued to operate in the south and to hold a large number of child abductees.

Persons with Disabilities

The Government does not discriminate against persons with disabilities but has not enacted any special legislation for them, such as mandating accessibility to public buildings and transportation. The General Education Act requires equal educational opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Religious Minorities

Muslims predominate in the north, but are in the minority in the south, where most citizens practice traditional indigenous religions or Christianity. There are between 1 and 2 million displaced southerners in the north who largely practice traditional indigenous religions or Christianity. Approximately 500,000 Coptic Christians live in the north. Traditionally there have been amicable relations between the various religious communities, although in previous years there were a small number of clashes.

There are reliable reports that Islamic NGO's in war zones withhold food and other services from the needy unless they convert to Islam. There were reports that Christian NGO's used their services to pressure persons to convert to Christianity during the year.

Non-Muslims legally are free to adhere to and practice their faiths; however, in practice the Government's treatment of Islam as the state religion creates an atmosphere in which non-Muslims are treated as second class citizens (see Section 2.c.). In government-controlled areas of the south, there continued to be credible evidence of prejudice in favor of Muslims and an unwritten policy of Islamization of public institutions, despite an official policy of local autonomy and federalism. In the past, some non-Muslims lost their jobs in the civil service, the judiciary, and other professions. Few non-Muslim university graduates found government jobs. Some non-Muslim businessmen complained of petty harassment and discrimination in the awarding of government contracts and trade licenses. There also were reports that Muslims receive preferential treatment for the limited services provided by the Government, including access to medical care.

In December 2000, supporters of the outlawed Takfeer and Hijra Muslim groups attacked a rival group's worshippers at a Sunna mosque in Omdurman during Ramadan prayers, killing 26 persons and injuring 40 others. The Government arrested and detained 65 leading members of the Takfeer and Hijra group; most remained in detention and had not been tried as of year's end.

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

The estimated population of 27 to 30 million is a multiethnic mix of more than 500 Arab and African tribes with numerous languages and dialects. Northern Muslims, who form a majority of approximately 16 million persons, traditionally have dominated the Government. The southern ethnic groups fighting the civil war (largely followers of traditional indigenous religions or Christians) total approximately 6 million and seek independence, or some form of regional self-determination, from the north.

The Muslim majority and the NIF/NC-dominated Government continued to discriminate against ethnic minorities in almost every aspect of society. Citizens in Arabic-speaking areas who do not speak Arabic experienced discrimination in education, employment, and other areas. The use of Arabic as the language of instruction in higher education discriminated against non-Arab speaking students. For university admission, students completing high school are required to pass examinations in four subjects: English language; mathematics; Arabic language; and religious studies. Even at the university level, examinations in all subjects except English language were in the Arabic language, placing nonnative speakers of Arabic at a disadvantage.

There were periodic reports of intertribal abductions of women and children in the south, primarily in the Eastern Upper Nile. The abductions are part of traditional warfare in which the victor takes women and children as a bounty and frequently tries to absorb them into their own tribe, and there are traditional methods of negotiating and returning the women who are taken in these raids.

There were unconfirmed reports that in July and August 2000 in the Western Upper Nile, predominantly Nuer SPLA forces and predominately Nuer SPDF forces killed at least 50 civilians and abducted more than 20 women and children in intraethnic fighting.

In March 1999, at a grassroots peace conference in Wunlit, Bahr El Ghazal, representatives of the Nuer and Dinka tribes signed a peace covenant. The Dinka and the Nuer are the two largest tribes and had been on opposite sides of the war since 1991. The Wunlit accord provided concrete mechanisms for peace, including a cease-fire, an amnesty, the exchange of abducted women and children, and monitoring mechanisms. The Wunlit accord greatly reduced conflict between the Dinka and Nuer tribes in 2000 and during the year. Thousands of Nuer IDP's have fled into Dinka lands from Upper Nile, and generally they were well received.

A similar attempt in April and May 2000 in Lilir to broker peace on the East Bank among various ethnic groups, including Dinka, Nuer, and Murle clans was less successful, and some of the conflicts between these groups continued.

Although details generally were unavailable, there were credible reports of civilian casualties as a result of ongoing fighting between ethnic Dinkas and Didingas in the New Cush and Chukudum areas in eastern Equatoria (see Section 1.a.). Interethnic tensions continued to result in some deaths during the year. Interethnic tensions eased in May and June 2000 with the departure of some Dinka to Bor County as part of a relocation program to return them to their homes after having been displaced by the war, and reconciliation initiatives by the New Sudan Council of Churches reduced some of the incidents. There were reports of conflicts among various clans of the Nuer tribe and between the Nuer and the Dinka tribes.

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. The Right of Association

The Constitution provides for the right of association for trade unions; however, the RCC abolished the pre-1989 labor unions, closed union offices, froze union assets, forbade strikes, and prescribed severe punishments, including the death penalty, for violations of its labor decrees, and there is a continuing ban under the emergency decree on labor unions not sanctioned by the Government. The threat of worker unrest was a strong motivation for the Government's extension of the emergency decree in December. The government-controlled Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation (SWTUF) functioned during the year; all other unions are banned. The Government dismissed many labor leaders from their jobs or detained them, although all of those arrested during the year were freed by year's end. Approximately 95,000 trade union members reportedly were dismissed from their jobs by the Government during purges of the civil service in the 1990's.

The SWTUF is the leading blue-collar labor organization with approximately 800,000 members and a leadership that is government-approved.

In April the employees of the Islamic bank in Khartoum went on strike after salary negotiations with management broke down to protest against the dismissal of various employees, some of whom were trade union members because of their union activities. The bank management declared the strike illegal and hired new employees to replace the striking workers.

There were some teacher strikes in 2000, some lasting several months, to protest the government's failure to pay salaries. During some of the strikes, police and security forces used tear gas and live ammunition to disperse demonstrators; the security forces killed several persons, and detained and beat numerous individuals (see Sections 1.c. and 2.b.). No action was taken against the responsible members of the security forces.

The Government continued to dismiss summarily military personnel as well as civilian government employees whose loyalty it considered suspect. The government committee set up in 1995 to review cases of persons summarily dismissed since the 1989 coup continued to function in theory; however, it has released no results since May 1996.

Unions remained free to form federations and affiliate with international bodies, such as the African Workers' Union and the Arab Workers' Union.

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

A 1989 RCC government decree temporarily suspended the right to organize and bargain collectively. Although these rights were restored to labor organizing committees in 1996, government control of the steering committees meant in practice that the Government dominates the process of setting wages and working conditions. The continued absence of labor legislation allowing for union meetings, the filing of grievances, and other union activity greatly reduced the value of these formal rights. There were credible reports that the Government intervenes routinely to manipulate professional and trade union elections in favor of its own supporters. The Constitution provides for the right of organization for economic or trade union purposes; however, the emergency decree continued to supercede the constitutional provisions. Although local union officials have raised some grievances with employers, few carried them to the Government.

A tripartite committee comprising representatives of the Government, the SWTUF, and business sets wages. Specialized labor courts adjudicate standard labor disputes; however, the Ministry of Labor has the authority to refer a dispute to compulsory arbitration. A labor code was implemented in December 2000 that reinforces government control.

The law does not prohibit antiunion discrimination by employers.

In 1993 the Government created two export processing zones (EPZ's); it later established a third at Khartoum International Airport. In 2000 only the EPZ at Khartoum International Airport was open. The labor laws do not apply in the EPZ's.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The Constitution prohibits forced or compulsory labor; however, slavery persists, particularly affecting Dinka women and children from northern Bahr al Ghazal. The taking of slaves, particularly in the war zones, and their transport to parts of central and northern Sudan continued.

There have been frequent and credible reports that militia raiders, supported by government troops, took women and children as slaves during raids in Bahr El Ghazal State and the Upper Nile (see Sections 1.a. and 1.c.). The Government did not take any action to halt these practices or to punish the perpetrators and continued to support some tribal militias with horses, weapons, and ammunition. The majority of the victims were abducted in violent raids on settlements carried out by government-affiliated militias accompanying and guarding troop trains to the southern garrison town of Wau. During the raids, the militias, which frequently are not paid by the Government for their services, exact their own remuneration from the villages. Civilians often were killed, and villages were destroyed. Following the raids, there were credible reports of practices such as the sale and purchase of children, some in alleged slave markets, and the rape of women. Abductees

frequently are forced to herd cattle, work in the fields, fetch water, dig wells, and do housework. Abductees are subjected to torture and rape, and at times, are killed. These practices all have a pronounced racial aspect, as the victims are exclusively black southerners and members of indigenous tribes of the Nuba Mountains.

The Government continued to deny that slavery and forced labor exist, but acknowledges that abductions occur. The Government also denies involvement or complicity in slavery, and states that hostage taking often accompanies tribal warfare, particularly in war zones not under government control. However, in 1998 the Government formed the Committee to Eliminate the Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC) and pledged to end the practice of hostage-taking. Despite the creation of CEAWC, reports of abductions and slavery continued during the year. During the year, the Government refused to approve flight clearances for the transfers of the abductees, which has prevented additional reunifications, and the Government did not record the identity of the abductors or forced labor owners and chose not to prosecute them.

The law prohibits forced and bonded labor by children; however, the Government does not enforce it effectively. There continued to be credible reports that government or government-associated forces took children as slaves.

Both the Government and rebel factions continued to conscript men and boys forcibly into the fighting forces (see Sections 1.f. and 5). There were reports that the PDF seized underage boys from the streets in Khartoum. Conscripts face significant hardship and abuse in military service, often serving on the front lines with insufficient military training. The rebel factions continued to force southern men to work as laborers or porters.

Between 3,000 and 10,000 Ugandan children have been forced to become soldiers or sex slaves for the LRA, a Ugandan armed opposition group in the south, which is supported actively by the Government (see Section 5).

d. Status of Child Labor Practices and Minimum Age for Employment

The legal minimum age for workers is 18 years; however, the law is not enforced in practice. Children as young as 11 or 12 years of age worked in a number of factories, particularly outside the capital, including the factories at Um Ruwaba that produce edible oils. In addition severe poverty has produced widespread child labor in the informal, unregulated economy. In rural areas, children traditionally assist their families with agricultural work from a very young age. The Constitution provides that the Government protect children from exploitation; however, it resulted in no changes in practice. The Government has not taken any action to investigate abuses or protect child workers.

The law prohibits forced and bonded labor by children; however, the Government does not enforce it effectively, and there were credible reports that children are taken as slaves (see Sections 6.c. and 6.f.).

Child labor exists in SPLM/SPLA-held areas, particularly in the agricultural sectors. Child labor in such areas is exacerbated by lack of schools, extreme poverty, and the lack of an effective legal minimum age for workers.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

The legislated minimum wage is enforced by the Ministry of Labor, which maintains field offices in most major cities. Employers generally respect the minimum wage. Workers who are denied the minimum wage may file a grievance with the local Ministry of Labor field office, which then is required to investigate and take appropriate action if there has been a violation of the law. In January 1999, the minimum wage theoretically was raised from approximately \$9 (24,000 Sudanese pounds) per month to approximately \$11 (3,000 Sudanese dinars or 30,000 Sudanese pounds) per month; however, most government offices continue to pay the old rate. The Sudanese Workers Trade Union Federation requested the Minister of Finance to execute the increase retroactively, and the Minister promised to increase the minimum wage when submitting the next government budget; union officials reported that the minimum wage was increased during the year. The minimum wage is insufficient to provide a decent standard of living for an average worker and family.

During the year, there were credible reports that some workers, including teachers and municipal workers, were not paid their regular wages for months at a time.

The workweek is limited by law to six 8-hour days, with a day of rest on Friday, which usually is respected.

Although the laws prescribe health and safety standards, working conditions generally were poor, and enforcement by the Ministry of Labor was minimal. The law does not address the right of workers to remove themselves from dangerous work situations without loss of employment.

Legal foreign workers have the same labor rights as domestic workers. Illegal workers have no such protections and, as a result, typically work for lower wages in worse conditions than legal workers. Southern IDP's generally occupy the lowest paying occupations and are subject to economic exploitation in rural and urban industries and activities.

f. Trafficking in Persons

Although the law does not prohibit specifically trafficking in persons, the Constitution specifically prohibits

slavery and forced labor; however, slavery, forced labor, and trafficking continued to be problems, especially affecting women and children (see Sections 5 and 6.c.). The taking of slaves, particularly in war zones, and their transport to the central and northern parts of the country, continued. Credible reports persist of practices such as the sale and purchase of children, some in alleged slave markets.

Trafficking generally is initiated by government-affiliated militias accompanying troop trains to the southern garrison towns of Aweil and Wau. The militias abduct women and children as remuneration for their services. The militias keep some of the abductees for domestic servitude, forced labor, or as sex slaves; others are given to relatives or other members of their tribes for similar purposes. The majority of the abductees are taken to the government-controlled part of the country.

Libyans have been implicated in the purchase of Sudanese slaves, particularly women and children who were captured by government troops.

Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that the SPLA forcibly recruited Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda for service in their forces.

There are credible reports that intertribal abductions of women and children continued in the southern part of the country; abductees were absorbed into tribes or kept as domestic servants or sex slaves.

During the past 10 years, between 3,000 and 10,000 Ugandan children were kidnaped by the LRA, taken to the southern part of the country, and forced to become sex slaves or soldiers. There also were reports in previous years that the LRA had sold and traded some children, mostly girls, or provided them as gifts, to arms dealers in Sudan. In December 1999, the Government agreed to cease supporting the LRA; however, the Government continued to support the LRA during the year. In 2000 there were talks between both Governments aimed at repatriation of the abductees (see Section 5). The LRA continued to operate in the south and to hold a large number of child abductees during the year.

In 1996 the Government established the Special Commission to Investigate Slavery and Disappearance; however, the Commission had not produced a final report by year's end. In 1998 the Government formed the CEAWC, under the Ministry of Justice and comprised of government officials from different ministries and departments, which oversees traditional chiefs who attempt to identify and locate abductees (see Section 1.b.). Since its creation, approximately 300 abductees have been returned to their homes; however, 10,000 to 12,000 slaves remain in captivity at year's end, the majority of whom are Dinkas. During the year, the Government's refusal to approve flight clearances for the transfers of the abductees prevented additional reunifications. Furthermore, the Government did not record the identity of the abductors or forced labor owners, and chose not to prosecute them during the year.

Government-affiliated militias and tribesmen continued to engage in raids and abductions during the year. The Government tolerates, if not encourages, the abductions as a contribution to the war effort.

In November the Government announced the establishment of special civilian tribunals in the border regions separating the south and the north of the country to prosecute persons involved in the abduction, transport, holding, and selling or exchanging of women and children from war zones. The tribunals were not set up nor were administrative procedures promulgated by year's end. They were scheduled to begin operating in 2002 under the Ministry of Justice.

Although laws against rape, abduction, and unlawful detention exist in the penal code, the Government has not attempted to identify or prosecute traffickers or others who commit criminal acts against abductees. Abduction of minors is punishable by a maximum of 10 years imprisonment; kidnaping is punishable by up to 7 years; unlawful detention is punishable by up to 3 years; and forced labor is punishable by up to 1 year.

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