Torture in Sudan
Facts and Testimonies

A book compiled by

El-Nadim Centre for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence

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Summary

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Why this book?

Over the last ten years hundreds of Sudanese torture victims have reached out to El-Nadim center. This figure represents only the ones that succeeded in escaping from the clutches of those who imprisoned and tortured them, leaving behind others. No one knows how many victims exist and perhaps no one ever will. Some have become martyrs, some could not get away and a few, are still struggling.

Their stories accumulated over the years, bringing some testimonies that vary and others that are relatively alike. But all contain the same viciousness and extreme cruelty. We could see, quite literally, what we had previously read in both local and international reports asserting that the Sudanese government has reached a level of such brutality that has never occurred before in modern Sudanese history. Torture in Sudan is, today, more widespread than ever before, and not just because it embraces a wider area than previously, but also because of the random infliction of this inhumane torture. Everybody is at risk. Whether you are a political activist or

not, a member of the opposition or an uninvolved civilian, whether you are alone or part of a group is irrelevant.

We document in this book, amongst other things, the testimonies of those victims, or rather, those survivors, who were not crushed by the experience and who can now speak to the world against those who tortured them. We want to record for survivors of unspeakable torture their triumphs and admirable bravery, we record their courage: they started over, and remained strong. We write this book for the ones who couldn't pull through, the ones who collapsed under the cruelty of their torturers, the martyrs. We are working towards the day when the criminals who tortured them are held accountable for their actions, and punished for the suffering they inflicted. Though no punishment will compensate the lives that were lost it will be a triumph for their souls, a triumph for humanity as a whole, in hope of one day living in a better world.

Background on Sudan

In this chapter, Sudan's historical background, social and economic status, as well as its unique ethnical orientations is condensed. There are approximately 570 different tribes in Sudan, divided into 6 major ethnic groups, speaking nearly 113 languages in addition to Arabic. Arabs compose only 35% of total population. Sudanese society is mostly constructed according to either tribal or Sufi influences, both of which have had the most significant political stance despite the existence of modern political parties and various unions. This hegemony could be responsible for what is called "The Evil Cycle"; which designates the consecutive rotation between civilian

democracies and military dictatorships that occurred 3 times since Sudan gained independence, in 1956, up to 1989 when the Islamic Front staged a military coup and Omar El-Bashir took power.

This section singles out the problems of Southern Sudan in particular, where there is African culture and ethnicity as opposed to the strong Arab and Islamic influences present in Northern Sudan. Despite the present factors of cultural and ethnic division, our book clarifies that it is, in fact, the inequality in economic and social structure between north and south that intensified the dilemma. Usually, as was the case in Sudan, conflicts based on ethnicity erupt in deprived or remote areas. Unfortunately, rather than developing those areas and respecting their uniqueness, the Sudanese government resorted to military restraint in attempts to eradicate the conflicts forcefully. Consequently, the civil war in southern Sudan has continued from 1955, when it first started, until today. The only exception was from 1982 to 1983 when El-Nimery's decision to impose Islamic law on southern Sudan re-ignited the war.

Where do they come from?

The Sudanese government's violations of human rights

This chapter asserts all the proven and recorded violations and crimes committed by the present Sudanese government that have led to the complete deterioration of the human rights position in Sudan. These are facts that have been published by some reliable national and international organizations; Amnesty International

Organization, United Nations International Committee for Human Rights, and the UN special repertoires for observing human rights amongst others.

The government stepped out of its role by merging executive and legislative authorities and restricting the judicial system thus corrupting the Sudanese legal system and constitution. Thousands were dismissed from military, national security and state administrative posts. In addition, security forces were allowed to operate freely in the country. The government also damaged general liberties and basic human rights like the right of peaceful assemblies, or the right of free expression. Political parties and unions were dissolved, newspapers were restricted and censored. Fundamental personal and religious freedoms were severely encroached upon; women in particular suffered the most.

The Islamic Front hid behind their claim to be following Islamic laws to justify the dictatorial unilateral methods they were in fact utilizing. It declared any objection to the government to be a blatant offense against God, deserving strict and cruel punishments. This eventually led to the spreading of tyranny and fear on a scale exceeding any other in Sudan's history. The crimes became fiercer and the government was committing illegal detentions, murders and cases of disappearances were often reported. Torture was widespread.

In regions where the civil war was eminent, especially in the south of Sudan and the Nubian Mountains the government's violations of international laws for human rights were steadily increasing in number and viciousness. The random bombing of those areas killed thousands of

civilians and forced others to flee from their homes and villages. The state was burning villages and forcefully evacuating them to procure safe non-populated areas. War crimes were repetitive; executions without trial, starving prisoners to death, deprivation of basic human necessities and aids, and killing prisoners of war-the Sudanese government hasn't officially declared having caught any prisoners of war, even now, after 10 years of conflict. The government has perpetuated numerous other crimes against humanity in Sudan: mass killings, genocide, slavery, and crimes of torture.

Sudanese refugees

The succeeding part explains what it means to be a Sudanese refugee, and retraces the refugee's journey leading up to his/her current situation. It also studies the social and psychological consequences of his/her experience.

Being a refugee is venturing into the unknown. The decision to emigrate from the home country, despite seeming so, is rarely a personal choice. This is attributed to the fact that emigration is not merely changing where one lives, but usually the emigrant is abandoning his heritage, memories and possessions with all they bear of emotional, social and cultural value. Hence, emigration is not optional, but a step a person is forced to take.

The United Nations Declaration of Refugees (1951) and its protocol defines a refugee as a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his

nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...". The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is the primary aid and protector for refugees worldwide, has issued reports stating that by the end of the year 2000 the number of Sudanese refugees registered in Cairo reached 2833 (1288 females and 1545 males). This figure, which is the official number recognized in Egypt, merely represents the tip of the iceberg. There are, in fact, 10,000 Sudanese Asylum Seekers waiting for their cases to be studied. In addition there have been 15,000 Rejected Cases over the last 3 years alone that have not departed from Egypt, and remain there illegitimately.

In reality, no one is certain of the exact number of the Sudanese living in Egypt. Who are they and what drove them to come to Egypt? No one knows what problems they had in the past, how those affected them, nor what they are suffering now. What are their hopes for the future?

Past experiences

Then, being a refugee means having endured several stages in life, painful and difficult ones. Stages of such immense suffering they are likely to have a significant effect on the psychological level.

Most refugees were victims of violence in one way or another. Perhaps they were directly violated, maybe they were threatened to be abused. Perhaps they were witnesses of violent acts. Usually these victims would have been forced to hold back their strong emotions, be

they sorrow or anger. Expressing any feelings could endanger your own life, or the lives of your loved ones. Here, utter repression of any negative emotion becomes necessary in order to stay alive.

Some forms of violence refugees endure:

- Organized violence by the government.
- Removal and evacuation
- Detention and slavery
- Civil wars
- Torture- which will be discussed in a separate chapter because of its significance and also because this is the area in which the Centre operates.

How do refugees live in Egypt?

Present experiences

Egypt signed the United Nations Refugee Agreement in 1981 and has since opened Egyptian doors to Sudanese refugees, showing co-operation by refraining from deporting them and allowing detainees to have visitors. Also, the state has issued residency permits. However, the Egyptian government still looks at Sudanese refugees as temporary residents, and does not allow them to work on Egyptian grounds. Egypt does not offer refugees shelter or residencies and does not present support or aid of any sort.

The Sudanese immigrant is expected to register as an Asylum Seeker in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees located in Cairo, a tedious operation that involves filling out complicated forms and is followed by

waiting for months to receive the designated date of an interview. The immigrant receives no help throughout this period of time. When the interview does finally take place, the immigrant meets skeptical employees who are usually suspicious about the validity of his story and experiences. Next, the period of awaiting the results and weighing out the consequences of rejection.

Excluding the minority who receive financial aid from relatives working abroad, the vast majority have no steady source of income, the financial aid given by the UN is strictly for those who have been officially granted refugee status, and even those only receive about L.E 250 each month per family (1$ = approx 7 LE). As for asylum seekers- whose waiting period is anywhere between 18 to 24 months- and rejected cases, they receive absolutely no support. Refugees have no choice but to accept unofficial jobs, where they are, again, underpaid and often exploited by business owners. Women are more likely to find jobs, often as housemaids, and are paid an average of L.E. 25 per day, while the men are usually employed as janitors, construction workers, security guards or street sellers. They end up making approximately L.E. 10 for a 10-12 hour working day. Not only are this community surviving on ridiculously low incomes, suffering from crowded living conditions and nutritional deficiencies, they are also deprived from any form of health care, fair educational opportunities as well as social or legal assistance.

Psychological problems facing Sudanese refugees

Refugees have pasts overflowing with cruel and violent events, their present is oftentimes hard and unfair, and their futures seem unpredictable and unsafe; they have

great social and psychological problems. There are many personal problems, but some feelings are common to all refugees. Separation from family and friends as well as losing their homes, possessions, jobs and prestige leaves almost all of them with an immense sense of grief. These feelings remain strong even when things seem to be getting better; an overwhelming belief that nothing can ever compensate what was taken away overrides. It is true that you can never replace having an identity, security, self-respect and everything else that attributes to human mental stability and how they perceive the world.

A refugee is in constant state of cautiousness, always expectant of nearby danger. Although these dangers may actually exist and are not figments of imagination, having them continually lurking in the back of one's mind allows fear and caution to dominate the person. Eventually the consistent worrying will prevail even when the threats are eliminated. The anguish refugees are constantly enduring is projected in all aspects of their lives. It is apparent in the way they socialize; they become temperamental, and cannot always control their reactions. The ability to concentrate decreases, become forgetful, and often want to be isolated. There are too many sleepless nights and absolutely no self-confidence or faith in others.

A community of refugees, like all communities, has some sub-groups that have special needs, and hence become more prone to problems under such severe circumstances. For example:

WOMEN

In all societies, and under a normal state of affairs, women are subjected to numerous kinds of prejudice and mistreatment. In cases of political instability and wars they are, again, often the targets for violence.

CHILDREN

It is essential for children to have stability and steadiness, not only when it comes to where they live but also involving relationships in the home, with parents, relatives or even with neighbors. These factors construct the environment, in which the child will develop and which affect him physically and mentally.

ADOLESCENTS

This age group desperately needs role models, with morals and values, which they feel comfortable interacting with and will turn to for guidance when they are forming their identities and developing their personalities. Events that happen before and during becoming a refugee often deprives adolescents of this person, whom they could look up to, or depend on, during the process of becoming an independent adult.

Torture

Torture is undoubtedly the most inhumane form of violence ever inflicted upon mankind. In this section of the book, we display what torture is, methods of torture and why repressive regimes choose to adopt these methods. The chapter explains the psychological turmoil and instabilities a victim of torture might have. It also

summarizes the center's work with victims from Sudan in the last decade.

The purpose of torture

Torture is an infamous tool by which political and social authority controls and represses the public, in order to safeguard their status and power and ensure the continuation of their rule. Initially, torture was utilized by these repressive regimes to retrieve information from the intended victim. These last few decades have witnessed torture become a means to destroy civilian individuals. This terrorizing of the community will spread fear throughout, finally resulting in an overall submission and oppression. Torturers realized they could devastate the human mind without killing the body. Torture depends on the destruction of the victim's personality and mental abilities, thus crippling the victim from functioning in life, whether on a personal or general level.

This can happen by the intermediacy of 2 stages:

1- Weakening the victim:

The victim is intended to be severely exhausted and an environment of unbearable fear and anxiety is deliberately created, all sense of hopefulness is deliberately extracted. The torturer's apparent strength and brutality will break the victim's resistance. When this level of weakness, defeat and dependence is reached, the torture is ready to move to the next stage.

2- Destroying the victim's personality:

The main aim is for the victim to suffer immense inner turmoil and constant worrying. An extreme sense of guilt

and shame overtakes him. There is no confidence in self and a powerful feeling of loss prevails. In the end, any inner psychological capacity that could help him fight external dangers is completely gone.

Psychological effects of torture

Victims of torture may live without complaints or symptoms for months or years: a period where feelings of pain and turmoil are denied or forcefully repressed. To remember the experience of anguish, fear, escaping or the memory of torture in particular, would cause more pain than the human is able to endure. Evading the whole ordeal is a natural human reaction.

In order to understand truly the side effects of torture on the human mind, one must first fully comprehend the nature of the shock it causes. The victim has undergone an experience that pushed him to the extremity of helplessness. Unable to avoid it or escape from it, the victim is under the absolute control of his tormentor, and has no way of removing himself from the situation. He is overcome by a feeling of weakness and hopelessness, aware that he cannot influence what is happening in any way. Responses or reactions of any form would be useless since they would not stop the pain and suffering. Torture is the ruining of logical experiences and meanings that the mind recognizes and uses to understand the events of life. It is an event in itself that is unnatural and cannot be perceived or understood in the same context as normal life experiences. Torture impedes the comprehension of logic, real issues lose their significance, principles and morals the victim once trusted and believed are suddenly unclear.

Psychological disorders caused by torture

***Psychosomatic disorders*:** the most abundant amongst victims, and includes chronic headaches, muscle and joint pain and disorders in the digestive and cardiac systems.

Behavioral disorders: changes occur in the victim's personality, for example, indifference, dependence, drug addictions, and impulsiveness.

***Mental and psychological disorders*:** the most common symptoms are clinical depression- often the victim is unable to enjoy himself, feels guilty or indifferent- tension and disturbed sleeping habits, post traumatic stress disorders with flashbacks as well as visual and auditory hallucinations.

Torture in Sudan according to El-Nadim files for the last 10 years.

- The total number of Sudanese patients that frequented El-Nadim since its opening in 1993 up to the end of 2002 was 1324.

- The earlier years brought us a modest number of victims, the majority being political figures and unionists. The Sudanese government targeted politicians, unionists and intellectuals to abuse mentally and physically, and continues to do so in the most inhumane manner. As years went buy, it became obvious that this form of terror is liable to be inflicted upon any and every member of society.

- The number of Sudanese victims approaching the centre gradually increased throughout the years, but in 1999 a large qualitative change occurred: Up until 1998 the

majority of victims that came to El-Nadim were inhabitants of the northern and central regions of Sudan, and most were politically active. When the civil war erupted, and grew, and the policy of burning and evacuating villages began to spread, the types of victims approaching were significantly diversified; they came from many other areas especially the south and the Nubian Mountains. Their stories often commence with a random attack, bombing and shelling by the government forces. Soldiers break loose in a panicked fearful village, firing at anything that moves. A village catches fire, forcing the villagers to abandon their homes. The survivors who could not escape are captured and taken to army camps where they are tortured and forced to work heavy labor, treated like slaves.

Forms of torture

This chapter describes the most important methods of torture, and the most commonly used in Sudan, according to the testimonies of the victims the centre has received.

***Beating**:* usually occurs during arrest or detainment, the prisoners are beaten all over the body. They are kicked, slapped, stomped on, hit with rubber hoses, sticks, the back of rifles and guns or whipped. These ‘welcome parties’ are to prepare the prisoner for his new environment as well as stripping him of his dignity in front of family, neighbors or colleagues.

***Insults**:* cursing, swearing, mocking and offending the victim, or the victim’s family and friends, as well as forcing him to commit humiliating acts.

***Detaining**:* Victims are imprisoned in extremely filthy, small unventilated rooms, sometimes they are crowded into metallic storage vaults or narrow lockers. Usually they are deprived of rest, sleep, food, and water- whether to drink or use for hygienic purposes- as well as medical attention and visitations.

***Burning**:* by using cigarettes, skewers or chemicals. Sometimes melted plastic is poured over the victim.

***Breaking bones**:* most usually fingers are broken using a wrench or stick. Victims sometimes have their nails or teeth pulled out.

***Electric shocks**:* normally the electric charge will be applied to genitals or other sensitive areas of the body.

***Coercive inhaling of fumes** that damage respiratory systems and eyes, for example, fumes of Chili*

***Suspension**:* Victims are suspended from one arm, or both after tying them behind the back, at times weights are tied to the feet. They are sometimes suspended from their feet with heads down like slaughtered animals.

Victims are forced to stand in the sun or perform hard labor in military camps, or remain tied up for extensive periods of time. They are arranged into queues with strange names (the rabbit jump, plane take-off, lady Arak) where they are ordered to perform specific exercises or stand in complicated positions. Victims are punished if they get tired or fail to execute these exercises correctly

***Torturing of others**:* victims are enforced to watch or hear others, often friends or family, being tortured. They are

sometimes forced to engage in the torturous acts themselves.

***Mock executions**:* an experience of immeasurable psychological anguish, which becomes an unforgettable event for anyone who has undergone it. The torturers set up the exact situation of an actual execution, ensuring that the victim believes he is about to be killed.

***Sexual torture**:* this type of torment starts by forcing the victim to unclothe and remain naked for long time periods, occasionally harassing them physically and threatening to rape them. In many cases it elevates to actual rape whether by means of an instrument or a person. It could even develop into group rape. This happens to both men and women, but the rates remain higher in female cases.

Testimonies

Samples of testimonies of some survivors of torture that approached El-Nadim centre whose names have been changed due to the sensitive nature of their stories.

Haroon:

“I was born in one of the villages north west of Ginena, close to the borders of Chad. On 8/12/1998 my family and I, except for my younger brother who was at home, were in the fields. Suddenly we heard gun shots and older women came running towards us with my younger brother. They told us the army had attacked the village, they were shooting at the villagers and setting the houses on fire. They said everyone was running away trying to escape. We ran towards our home and found the flames had reached the sky and everything around us was burning. We could not reach our home in time; they were firing their

guns at us, and when we got there everything had been completely destroyed. 7 people from our village had been killed.

The village chief asked us to choose 6 people to go to the government and complain. He said that 3 nearby villages had been burnt down and that they would also send representatives. So, this committee went to the government and the authorities told them: you go back now and we'll be there after you. The next day 20 men came and searched our village and some nearby villages. They told us we had to support the military, that they wanted this area to be secure and that they were going to build a camp in the middle of the village that everyone had to stay in. They said it was forbidden for anybody to move outside the camp. We had no other choice.

Only 11 months later the army came back and attacked the village again. It was the middle of the night on November 10th 1999, they came from the East and they attacked all the villages on the way to ours. The sound of gunshots woke us up; they were firing in all directions randomly, and setting houses on fire. From a distance we could hear screams mixed up with the sounds of guns. We escaped before they reached us; we went to the western part of the village, where my father asked us to hide. He said he was going back to the house to fetch some things before they destroyed it. We waited for my father, but he was gone for a long time, so we decided to go back to the village. Everything had been burnt down when we arrived, and the whole area was covered with thick smoke, some houses were even still on fire. We headed towards our house in the midst of clouds of smoke, but found nothing;

it had been completely burnt. I saw my father lying on the ground, a lifeless body, and blood was rushing out of his back. While we were screaming two of our neighbors appeared, they too were just returning to the village. Together we collected the bodies so we could bury them. This is when my sister came and told us her husband had been shot dead by the army guns. She said that there were 10 other casualties including her brother in law. We finished burying our dead, and went with my sister to bury her husband, his brother and the rest of the victims. All the villagers were separated; some went to nearby villages, some fled to Chad. My family and I went to Beeda where my uncle lives.

I had to work to feed us all. I bought a water pot and began getting water from the river on the back of a donkey so that I could sell it in the village. I was able to provide for the family. One day, on my way back from the river, an officer stopped me and told me I had to get water for the military camp. But they gave me extremely low pay. After transporting the water 10 times I was given 5000 Sudanese pounds, a sum that isn't enough to keep us from starving. But I continued to work for them for 7 months.

On 27/6/2000 I went to the official responsible for payments, asking for my salary for the previous period. He said 'today you have to go to the officer's room.' I asked him why I had to go, why he wouldn't just pay me. But he gave me the same response. I followed him to where he wanted me to go. The officer didn't reply to my salutation, instead he asked me my name, where I lived, which tribe I belong to and where my ID card was. I answered his

questions, saying that I was from the Masaleet tribe and stating why I had to leave my original village. But I had left my ID card at home. He accused me of transmitting information to the people from my tribe who were all working against the state. I wasn't speaking freely; the situation was very tense and I felt it could be dangerous. I tried to clarify that I had been bringing the camp water for a long time, and that everyone knew me. When I finished that last sentence a soldier standing behind me struck me below my neck with the bottom of his gun, and I fell to the ground. The officer asked him to stop hitting me and told me to stand up. Then he said, 'We found a paper saying that the camp will be attacked, and you are the only one who frequents the camp from the outside, so you must be responsible for this rumor.' Then he asked me again about my relationship with Masaleet accusing the whole tribe of being spies. I swore to him that there was no way of reaching the village, and the soldier hit me again. He aimed the rifle at my head, and threatened to kill me if I refused to confess that I was working for the rebels who want to overthrow the government in Masaleet, and that I came to Beeda solely to spy on the military. Again, I told the story of the fire, how everyone in the village had fled, and how I had no idea where they all went. He did not believe me. He pounded me with his army boots and stick all over my body. He kicked me in my chest and used the hand of his rifle to jab my spine. This continued for almost an hour. After the beating the officer asked the soldier to detain me. I was put in an incredibly small and dirty room. The only window was a small one, with bars, that was near the ceiling. I was left till the following day without food or water. The next evening they took me to the same

office. He repeated the same questions, threats and torture. I remained in this prison for almost a week, being interrogated day after day in the same time. The beating was repeated each time. But I had nothing to confess to, and they would not believe me. The last time the beating was more violent than before, 3 soldiers dragged me out of my room, pulling me from my clothes, into the officer's room. He insisted that, today, I must reveal the names and places of the people responsible for that paper, or I would definitely be killed. He ordered one soldier to whip me with a belt and another to beat me with his rifle. The officer limited himself to watching this scene and reciting his threats.

I returned to jail near midnight. I did not sleep, despite the overwhelming pain I was in; my body was swollen, I was exhausted and I could not move. But I was waiting for my execution. In the morning they took me out of my cell and tied my hands behind my back. They shoved me into an army car, after about 3 hours we arrived at a security office. There were 2 officers in the room we entered. One began with the same type of questions and accusations, then he listed the names of 3 men from the Masaleet tribe and asked me about them. He refused to believe I didn't know them when they were from my very own tribe, and again he threatened me! A guard attacked, kicking me and beating me with sticks and rubber hoses. My nose started to bleed. Then they took me to a cell and left me there. The questioning and the beatings happened every night. On the fifth night one of the soldiers struck my rib cage. I couldn't breathe. I was sweating heavily. I fell to the floor. I was neither unconscious nor totally conscious. A soldier carried me to my room because I couldn't move. I spent a

week lying on the ground, unable to move or speak because of the pain in my ribs. I was not eating at all, and if I tried I would vomit. I only drank water. I couldn't go to the toilet without help from a guard, and even that movement would be extremely painful. Even breathing became a huge problem. A few days later an officer entered to search the prisoners and ordered me to stand up. When I wasn't able to, he pulled me up from my arms and then let go. I fell down again. Then he left.

The following night, 10/7/2000, the guard took me to a hospital, I was not allowed to speak with any other patients, and only that guard was with me. The doctors examined me, told the nurses what medication to given, and asked if I was feeling better. They never asked what had happened to me. A week later I felt a bit better. On the 18th of July while the sheets were being changed I asked to use the toilet. The guard came with me. While we were in the bathroom we heard shouts and sounds of fighting coming from the hospital gates. The guard headed towards the door, and wasn't paying attention to me. Immediately I thought of escaping. I hid in a village and a few days later, sent to my mother asking her for my ID card and some money. I traveled secretly from one village to another and from one city to another. I was finally able to get out of Sudan on the 26th of July 2000.'

Saa'deya

(A 35-year-old widow and a mother of 6)

"I worked in a communications company in Sudan, and was a member in the worker's union. During that time the privatization law was enforced and I was nominated with a

number of unionists to discuss with the workers the necessity of accepting the decree of premature retirement. I told the workers about the new law and we talked about its consequences. They refused to concept of early retirement. A few days later the government asked my colleagues and I not to go to work. On 12/10/1993 we were arrested, accused of encouraging the workers to rebel against the early retirement law. This was the first arrest, and we were detained for 10 days.

They took me from my house. They started being violent with me when they entered my house; they were swearing at me and beating me in front of my children. In detention camp I experienced different kinds of torture. They blindfolded me for 6 consecutive days, I was in solitary confinement. They put out cigarettes in my back, on my body and limbs. They plunged my hand in hot oil and removed the nails of the other hand with a wrench. I was forced to witness the torturing of others and do violent things. The scars on my body are still here to testify that all this happened. The whole time they were asking for information about my husband.

I was taken into detention again in January of 1994, this time for 14 days. They whipped me, and the marks still show today even though this was years ago. This time, I was raped so violently that I was bleeding severely. It caused me to lose consciousness; I almost died.

My husband heard about what had happened, he left Khartoum and returned, risking his own arrest. He was so afraid that I would be left to die in prison that he obeyed their orders and signed a document stating that he would inform them of any information they desired.

My health was so deteriorated, I could easily have died, and this was what convinced them to let me go, but only after they made me sign a confession saying that I had tried to kill myself. I was still bleeding, the burns were infected and my health in general was worrying. I was admitted into Khartoum Public Hospital, but the doctor's efforts to heal me were unsuccessful and I was continually getting worse until one of the doctors advised me to go to Egypt; the attention I needed is not provided in Sudan. About a year passed while I waited for the authorities to permit my traveling to Egypt to seek medical attention. When I was finally approved it was for Syria, but the journey would pass through Egypt. This was on 26/3/95

My husband came with me and when I reached Egypt I decided to stay in it. I went straight to El-Kasr El-Einy from the airport. My treatment continued for 5 weeks, and when I was released I lived with my husband in Egypt.

I told my husband about what happened in the detention camp, about how I was raped by the security officers. My husband couldn't accept this. He did not comprehend it, he was unable to stay with me, 6 months later he went to Kenya, leaving me and the six children. Later I heard that he died there.

The Sudanese security administrations were not satisfied with what had already been done to me; they came after me even in Egypt. They repeatedly appeared at my house threatening to torture me and kill my children if I continued to contact the Sudanese opposition located in Egypt. I filed a complaint in the Nasr City police station and I went to the UNHCR requesting protection and refugee status. On my way to the UNHCR I discovered that they had been

observing all my actions. One of them stopped me and told me that my daughter would be raped before I got home if I was to mention anything that happened to me in Sudan. To revitalize his threats he recited my full name, my son's name and where I live. My concern for my daughter overpowered me and I didn't report any of what I had been put through in Sudan.

I had to go to the Sudanese embassy to request a new passport after I had lost mine. A man met my in the embassy, the very same man who had threatened me in front of the UNHCR. He told me the same words of threat he had before, this time he wanted me to return to Sudan. In the end of 1996 my daughter went to the Sudanese embassy to get her own passport. They asked her about the family, when they realized she was my daughter they harassed her sexually. She fell into a terrible state of depression. The horror of the torture is always on my mind, whether I'm awake or asleep. I live in constant panic and fear because of the incessant lack of security. My fear for my children is the greatest of all.