

A human rights defender at risk! Incommunicado detention of Mr. Mohamed Al Mahgoub

Paris-Geneva, April 14, 2009. The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), in the framework of their joint programme, the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, denounce the incommunicado detention of Mr. Mohamed Al Mahgoub, Director of the North Darfur branch of the Amel Centre for Medical Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture, and request his immediate and unconditional release.

On April 11, 2009, the National Intelligence State Security (NISS) arrested Mr. **Mohamed Al Mahgoub** at his house in Al Fashir. Since that date, he has been detained incommunicado in the NISS premises in Al Fashir. None of his lawyers nor his family has been able to visit him. According to the information received, his arrest was ordered by the NISS headquarters in Khartoum. Mr. Al Mahgoub has not been charged yet of any offence.

Prior to the arrest, on March 5, 2009, Mr. Al Mahgoub had been ordered by the NISS not to leave Al Fashir, on the basis of the National Security Forces Act 1999.

Mr. Al Mahgoub's arrest follows the closure beginning of March by Sudanese authorities of the Amel Centre - Alfashir and Nyala branch and the Sudan Social Development Organisation (SUDO), two organisations operating in Darfur, and the Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development (KCHRED). The three organisations were working in the provision of support to victims of human rights violations, in particular victims of torture and victims of the ongoing conflict in Darfur. The crackdown against human rights and humanitarian NGOs and human rights defenders has intensified in Sudan since November 2008 as the decision by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the request issued on July 14, 2008 by the ICC Prosecutor to issue an arrest warrant against President Omar Bashir approached. The ICC issued the arrest warrant against President Omar al-Bashir on March 4, 2009.

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders is deeply concerned that Mr. Mohamed Al Mahgoub may be subjected to ill-treatments and acts of torture.

Therefore, the Observatory calls upon the Sudanese authorities to :

- guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Mohamed Al Mahgoub;
- release him immediately and unconditionally, since his detention is arbitrary as it seems to merely aim at sanctioning his human rights activities;
- guarantee immediate and unconditional access to a legal representation of his choice, his relatives and any medical treatment he may require;

- put an end to any act of harassment against all Sudanese human rights defenders, in conformity with the provisions of the [1998 United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders](#) and with international and regional human rights instruments ratified by Sudan.
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For further information, please contact:

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L'OMCT a son siège à Genève, en Suisse. Elle coordonne le réseau SOS-Torture composé de 282 organisations régionales et internationales dans 93 pays sur cinq continents.

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