

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/soudan-one-more-al-midan-journalist-freed-16-02-2011,39474.html>

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Africa - Sudan

Partial release

## Three journalists freed, five others still detained

4 March 2011

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Reporters Without Borders notes that **Khalid Tawfig**, a graphic designer employed by the opposition weekly *Al-Midan*, was finally released on 28 February. He had been arrested along with five other members of its staff on 2 February.

Two senior members of the staff of the opposition daily *Rai Al Shaab*, editor **Ashraf Abdelaziz** and senior political reporter **Altahir Ibrahim**, were released on 6 February after being detained for a year.

Reporters Without Borders calls for the release of the five other journalists still detained in Sudan: *Al-Midan* trainee journalists **Mohamed Aldirderi** and **Samir Salaheldin**, *Al-Midan* reporter **Abdelazeem Albadawi**, *Gafar Alsabki Ibrahim* of *Alshafa* and **Abuzar Al Amin** of *Rai Al Shaab*.

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### 16-02-2011- One more Al-Midan journalist freed, four still held

Another *Al-Midan* employee, **Mohamed Rahma**, was released today after 14 days in detention.

Four are still being held. They are graphic designer **Khalid Tawfig**, trainee journalists **Mohamed Aldirderi** and **Samir Salaheldin** and correspondent **Abdelazeem Albadawi**.

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### 14-02-2011- Three Al-Midan employees freed, five others still held without charge

Reporters Without Borders is partially relieved that three employees of the opposition weekly *Al-Midan* who had been arrested on 2 February were released on 12 February. But it is very concerned about the five who are still being held. The detainees have been beaten and subjected to torture, including electric shocks and sleep deprivation.

They were arrested because of the coverage that *Al-Midan*, the Sudanese Communist Party's mouthpiece, gave to street protests on 30 January.

"The release of three *Al-Midan* employees after being held for 10 days proves just one thing, that they have not been charged and that there is nothing the authorities can officially reproach them for," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Jean-François Julliard said.

"We call for the immediate release of all the *Al-Midan* employees and all the other journalists detained in Sudan and we strongly condemn the mistreatment, torture and other forms of degrading treatment that detainees undergo in Sudan's prisons."

The three employees released on 12 February were **Kamal Karar** (an assistant to the editor),

**Ibrahim Mirghani** (the head of the newspaper's political section) and **Moawya Abu-Hashim** (a driver). The five still held are graphic designer **Khalid Tawfig**, trainee journalists **Mohamed Aldirderi** and **Samir Salaheldin**, correspondent **Abdelazeem Albadawi** and receptionist **Mohamed Rahma**.

Police and security agents used force yesterday to break up a peaceful demonstration by journalists in solidarity with their *Al-Midan* colleagues, arresting several news photographers after deleting their photos.

Julliard added: "The Sudanese security forces are using imprisonment as a means to intimidate journalists. Media freedom, freedom of expression and association, and the right to demonstrate peacefully are all being trampled on by this government although they are guaranteed by the 2005 constitution."

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#### **04.02.2011 - Government harasses opposition weekly, arrests journalists and several employees**

Reporters Without Borders firmly condemns government harassment and intimidation of the Arabic-language opposition weekly *Al-Midan*, the Sudanese Communist Party's mouthpiece, because of its coverage of street protests on 30 January. The security forces have kept it under constant surveillance for the past few days, seized copies of its latest issue, and arrested its journalists.

"The authorities are clearly persecuting this newspaper with the aim of reducing it to silence," Reporters Without Borders said. "The detained journalists must be released at once and must be allowed to go back to work without being subjected to further harassment."

"I express my great concern and deep solidarity with my colleagues and all the Sudanese journalists, calling upon the authorities to stop harassing them. I consider this attack is the worst of its kind in the history of censorship in Sudan", said Faisal Elbagir, an *Al-Midan* journalist and founder of Journalists for Human Rights (JHR), who was forced to leave his country in early 2009 because of his activities.

On the night of 31 January, security forces went to the place where the newspaper is printed and seized all the copies of the latest issue that were there. On 2 February, they surrounded the newspaper's headquarters and arrested anyone who came out, including its editor-in-chief assistant **Kamal Karrar**, who was roughed up. Layout designer **Khalid Tawfiq**, **Ibrahim Mirghani**, **Fatma Albashir**, **Fathia**, **Samir Salaheldin** and receptionist **Mohamed Rahma** were also arrested and the newspaper's archives were seized.

Reporters Without Borders already condemned the [arrests of journalists as they were covering the 30 January demonstrations that took place in several cities including Khartoum and Omdurman](#).

"We are appalled to see that, instead of defusing tension and listening to the demands from young people, who made up the bulk of the demonstrators, the authorities are stepping up the repression, especially as regards the media that covered the protests," Reporters Without Borders said.

"The already disturbing press freedom situation has visibly worsened in the past few days as the authorities try to suppress coverage of events. We urge the government to stop persecuting journalists and to stop obstructing the free flow of information."

Sudan is ranked 172nd out of 178 countries in the 2010 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index. Five journalists are in jail and about 10 have been arrested in the past week.

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