



Sudan

2 November 2010

Arrest and arbitrary detention of human rights defenders

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources about the arbitrary arrest of Darfuri human rights defenders in Khartoum.

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in Sudan.

Description of the situation:

According to the information received, on October 30, 2010, between 4 and 4:30 p.m, three Darfuri human rights defenders were arrested in Khartoum.

The first arrest occurred in Suq al Arabia in downtown Khartoum, when National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) agents arrested Mr. Abdelrahman Mohamed Al-Gasim, a human rights defender from Tulus, South Darfur, Legal Aid and Training Coordinator of the Darfur Bar Association, currently based in Khartoum.

This arrest was followed by five others, i.e. these of Mr. Dirar Adam Dirar, a finance and administration officer with the HAND network, a coalition of nine grassroots Darfuri organisations, that publishes weekly human rights monitoring reports from Darfur, of Mr. Abdelrahman Adam Abdelrahman, Deputy Director of the HAND network, as well as of Mr. Manal Mohamed Ahmed, Ms. Aisha Sardo Sharif and Ms. Aziza Ali Edris.

Some of the members of the group had just attended a youth forum on social development hosted by Girifna, a pro-democracy student movement.

As of November 1, all six persons including the three defenders reportedly remained held within the NISS premises, and no charges would have been brought against them. However, Mr. Adam Abdelrahman would have appeared before the Attorney General and suspected of crimes against the State. It was also reported that Mr. Al-Gasim would be held separately from the other members of the group.

The Observatory expresses its deepest concern about these arbitrary arrests and detentions, which seem to merely aim at sanctioning the human rights activities of the three defenders.

The Observatory also fears that the three defenders might be subjected to acts of torture or ill-treatment during their detention.

Actions requested:

The Observatory urges the authorities of Sudan to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of the six persons above-mentioned including the three human rights defenders, as well as of all human rights defenders in Sudan;
- ii. Unconditionally release the six above-mentioned persons including the three human rights defenders, put an end to any kind of harassment against all human rights defenders in Sudan and, ensure in all circumstances that human rights defenders are able to carry out their work without hindrances;
- iii. Conform in any circumstances with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, in particular its Article 1, which states that "everyone has the right, individually or in association with others, to promote the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels", article 5(a), which states that "for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels, to meet peacefully", and its article 12.2 which provides that "the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration";
- iv. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Sudan.

Addresses:

- Mr. President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir, Office of the President, People's Palace, PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan, Fax: + 249 183 783223
- Mr. Mohammed Boushara Dossa, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, PO Box 302, Khartoum, Sudan; Fax: 249 183 764 168 / +249 183 770 883; Email: moj@moj.gov.sd
- Mr. Ali Ahmed Karti, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs/External Relations, PO Box 873, Khartoum, Sudan, Fax: 249183772941
- Mr. Ibrahim Mahmoud Ahmed, Minister of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Interior, PO Box 873, Khartoum, Sudan, Fax: +249 183 779383 / +249 183 776 554; Email: ministry@mfa.gov.sd
- Advisory Council for Human Rights, Rapporteur, PO Box 302, Khartoum, Sudan, Fax: +249 183 77 08 83
- Permanent Mission of the Republic of Sudan to the United Nations in Geneva, Avenue Blanc 51-53 (3rd Floor), 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, Tel: +41 22 731 26 63, Fax: +41 22 731 26 56 / +41 22 716 19 70, Email: mission.sudan@bluewin.ch
- Embassy of Sudan in Brussels, Avenue F.D. Roosevelt 124, 1050 Brussels, Belgium. Tel.:0032 (2) 647 51 59 / 0032 (2) 647 94 94, Fax: 0032 (2) 648 34 99, Email: sudanbx@yahoo.com

Please also write to diplomatic representations of Sudan in your respective countries.

*** Paris-Geneva, November 2, 2010

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need. The Observatory was the winner of the 1998 Human Rights Prize of the French Republic.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

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<http://www.fidh.org/Arrest-and-arbitrary-detention-of-human-rights>