

URGENT ACTION

DETAINED STUDENT ACTIVIST RISKS ILL-TREATMENT

Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed, the former chairperson of the Darfur Students' Association at the Holy Quran University, was arrested on 22 August in Khartoum by National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) agents. He is currently being held without charge at the NISS detention centre in Khartoum North. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment while in detention.

Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed, 23, the former chairperson of the Darfur Students' Association at the Holy Quran University, was arrested on 22 August by NISS agents at the gate of the Holy Quran University in Omdurman. He had just finished an exam at the university. According to information received by Amnesty International, Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed was stopped at the gate of the university by five plainclothes NISS agents who forced him into a Toyota pickup truck without a number plate and drove off with him.

A family member told Amnesty International they have not been allowed to visit him at the NISS detention centre. This lack of contact with the outside world considerably enhances Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed's risk of being subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed is one of the most active members of the Darfur Students' Association in Khartoum. Previously, he was arrested on 14 November 2015 after leading a peaceful sit-in at the university in protest against the university's decision to suspend the exemption of Darfuri students from tuition fees payment. While in NISS custody, he was severely beaten, threatened with death and racially insulted. Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed was released on 23 December 2015. Since his release, Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed has been under surveillance and even threatened with re-arrest by NISS agents.

In January, Amnesty International issued a report highlighting the plight of Darfuri students at the Holy Quran University. Amnesty International considers Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed to be a prisoner of conscience held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed, as he is being held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention;
- Calling on them to ensure that, pending his release, Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed is granted regular access to his family and a lawyer of his choice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 OCTOBER 2017 TO:

President

HE Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir
Office of the President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister for Justice

Idris Ibrahim Jameel
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue
Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister for Interior
Hamed al-Mannan
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 873
Khartoum, Sudan

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR MOHAMMED ABDALLA ALI ELTOM
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan, 3 Cleveland Row St James's SW1A 1DD, 020 7839 8080, info@sudan-embassy.co.uk

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the past few years, students from Darfur have experienced violations of their human rights throughout Sudan. Over the last few years, Amnesty International has been documenting the targeting of student political activists from Darfur by Sudanese security agents. The security agents have labelled these activists as armed group supporters. The armed conflict has become both an excuse and a mask for human rights violations not only in Darfur but also in the rest of the country.

Most of these human rights violations were triggered by Darfuri students' attempts to discuss the conflict in Darfur through public fora inside the universities or to address the issue of fee exemptions for Darfuri students based on various peace agreements in Darfur. However, these public forums and sit-ins have regularly been violently attacked by ruling party affiliated students, and always resulted in arbitrary arrests and detention as well as torture and ill-treatment of Darfuri students by NISS agents. This annual dispute has led to dozens of Darfuri students' being expelled from universities or banned from sitting exams for failing to pay fees.

In July 2017, more than 1,000 Darfuri students of Bakht al-Rida University in White Nile State officially dropped out of the institution citing unfair treatment by the university and the security agents in Bakht al-Rida. At Omdurman Islamic University, two Darfuri students were killed during violent clashes between the ruling party-affiliated students and Darfuri students on 31 August.

The NISS maintains broad powers of arrest and detention under the National Security Act 2010 (NSA), which allows suspects to be detained for up to four-and-a-half months without judicial review. NISS officials often use these powers to arbitrarily arrest and detain individuals, many of whom are then subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. Under the same Act, NISS agents are provided with protection from prosecution for any act committed in the course of their work, which has resulted in a pervasive culture of impunity. The constitutional amendment to Article 151 (NSA) passed on 5 January 2015 that expanded the mandate of the NISS has exacerbated the situation. The amendment transformed the NISS from an intelligence agency focused on information gathering, analysis and advice, to a fully-fledged security agency with a broad mandate to exercise a mix of functions usually carried out by the armed forces or law enforcement agencies. It gave the NISS unlimited discretion to decide what constitutes a political, economic or social threat and how to respond to such threats. Neither the NSA nor the revised Article 151 explicitly or implicitly require the NISS to abide by relevant international, regional and domestic law in the operation of its duties.

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