

URGENT ACTION

HUNDREDS ARRESTED, WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

At least 140 opposition party members, human rights defenders, students and women rights activists were arrested and detained by the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) between 6 January and 10 February. This is in connection with sporadic protests around Sudan over the rise in the cost of food and medicines. Their whereabouts are unknown.

Women human rights defenders **Amel Habani**, a journalist and a recipient of the 2015 Amnesty International Ginetta Sagan Award, **Nahid Jabrallah**, the director of Sima Centre for Training and Protection of Women and Children's Rights, **Egbal Mohamed Ali**, and **Hanan Hassan Hussein**, members of the Sudanese Congress Party (SCP) and **Sarah Nugdallah**, the secretary general of the National Umma Party, were arbitrarily arrested and detained between 16 and 17 January.

Between 7 and 8 January, three SCP leaders were also arbitrarily arrested and detained including **Omer Yousef El Digair**, the chairperson, and **Almahi Suliman**, the chairperson of SCP in Sennar State. Other opposition party leaders were arrested between 16 January and 1 February. They include **Mohamed Mukhtar al Khatib**, the political secretary of the Sudanese Communist Party; **Mohamed Abdalla Aldoma**, the deputy chairperson of the National Umma Party; **Mohamed Farouk Salman**, a leading member of Sudan National Alliance – Forces; and two members of the Sudanese Communist Party central committee **Mohieldeen Eljalad** and **Sidgi Kabbalo**.

Three human rights defenders; **Amjed Farid**, also a medical doctor was arrested on 18 January, **Omer Ushari**, was arrested on 16 January and **Salih Mahmoud Osman**, also a Vice-Chairperson of the Darfur Bar Association, and a recipient of many human rights awards was arrested on 1 February.

They are among at least 140 opposition party members, human rights defenders, students and women rights activists arrested by the NISS in connection with sporadic protests organised by opposition activists condemning the rise in the cost of food and medicines since the beginning of January. The authorities have not revealed their whereabouts after several inquiries by their relatives.

Please write immediately in Arabic or your own language:

- Urging the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all those arrested detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and abandon any criminal proceedings against them;
- Urging them to reveal the whereabouts of all those arrested and ensure they have access to lawyers of their choosing, family visits and any medical treatment they may require;
- Calling on them ensure that they are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 MARCH 2018 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

Salih Mahmoud Osman, a human rights defender and the Vice-Chairperson of the Darfur Bar Association is the recipient of many human rights awards including the European Parliament's annual Sakharov Prize.

By the end of 2017, the Sudanese government endorsed a new National Budget for 2018, which includes more economic austerity measures and cuts in spending on health and education while increasing spending on the security sector. The new measures have significantly increased food and medicine prices. The price of a loaf of bread rose from 50 cents to 1 Sudanese pound (SDG) equivalent to 0.055 US dollar (official rate). This increase in the cost of living has sparked numerous public protests in several cities. Since the start of the protests at the beginning of January, over 319 people have been arrested across Sudan. At least 140 of them are still in detention and their whereabouts remain unknown.

Since the announcement of the new National Budget 2018, the Sudanese pound value has continued to depreciate. The exchange rate of the US dollar has gone up from 24 to 34 Sudanese pound on the parallel market since the beginning of February 2018.

The NISS maintains broad powers of arrest and detention under the National Security Act 2010 (NSA), which allows the NISS to detain suspects 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 or 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 amendment to Article 151 of the constitution 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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