

URGENT ACTION

SUDANESE ACTIVIST DEPORTED, AT RISK OF TORTURE

Sudanese political activist Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef was deported from Egypt to Sudan on 9 October. Officers from Sudan's National Intelligence Service (NISS) arrested him upon his arrival in Sudan. He is currently detained at the NISS headquarters in Khartoum North. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef (aka Bushi), a 33-year old Sudanese national and political activist, was arrested by Egyptian security agents on 6 October from his apartment in Cairo. They neither showed an arrest or search warrant, nor explained the reason for his arrest. He was deported to Sudan on 9 October, where he was arrested by the NISS upon arrival. He remains in detention at the NISS headquarters in Khartoum North. His arbitrary detention by NISS puts him at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef was a political activist in Sudan for many years. His videos, which he posted on social media platforms including Facebook, were critical of the Sudanese government's policies and its human rights violations. He continued to be active online after moving to Egypt in 2017. Some of his videos went viral and received between 25,000 to 30,000 views. He had previously been detained on two separate occasions for several weeks in 2012 and in 2013 by the Sudanese authorities, but was released without charge. On 11 February 2017, he was detained again and subsequently released without charge on 30 April 2017. During his time in detention, he alleges that he was subjected to ill-treatment including, being threatened and blackmailed by NISS agents.

Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef's lawyer told Amnesty International that he could be charged with seven offences under Sudan's 1991 Criminal Law, including 'undermining the constitutional system' (under Article 50) and 'waging war against the State' (under Article 51), both of which are punishable either by the death penalty or life imprisonment. He could also be charged with Article 53 'espionage'; Article 64 'agitating hatred between sect'; Article 66 'the spreading of false information'; Article 69 'disturbing the public peace'; and Article 77 'public nuisance.' Amnesty International believes that Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef has been detained solely for his work as a peaceful opposition activist and considers him a prisoner of conscience.

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

- Calling on the Sudanese authorities to release Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef immediately and unconditionally;
- Urging them to ensure that Mohamed Hassan Alim Shareef is granted regular access to his family, medical treatment and a lawyer of his choice without delay;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JANUARY 2019 TO:

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

Minister for Justice
Mohamed Ahmed Salim
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue
Khartoum, Sudan
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:
Minister for Interior
Ahmed Bilal Osman
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 www.sudan-embassy.co.uk

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

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has documented dozens of cases and received numerous reports of the NISS crackdown on activities of anti-government political activists, human rights defenders and civil society activists in 2016 and 2017. Between November 2016 and February 2017, the NISS arrested dozens of opposition political party members and other activists who supported the civil disobedience action in November and December 2016 which was held in protest against the rise in fuel, electricity, transport, food, and medicine costs in Sudan. Detainees were subjected to various methods of torture and other ill-treatment including electric shocks, beatings, whippings, solitary confinement, and severe psychological pressure. This included threats of rape during interrogations. In many cases, activists have been held for weeks or months without being charged with any crime.

In 2018, at least 140 opposition party members, human rights defenders, students and women rights activists were arrested and detained by the NISS between 6 January and 10 February. This was in connection with sporadic protests in Sudan over the rise in the cost of food and medicines. In April 2018, they were all released without charge.

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 have been subjected to torture or other forms of 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 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.