

JOINT STATEMENT

SUDAN: Urgent safety concern for student activists detained incommunicado after Khartoum University protests

Paris-Geneva-Kampala, May 17, 2016. Sudanese authorities should immediately release and guarantee the safety of 12 student activists currently detained incommunicado and without charges by Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) in connection with protests on the University of Khartoum campus, FIDH, the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) said today. There are serious concerns for the safety of the students who have been denied access to their families and lawyers. Authorities have also refused access for lawyers to three other students who are currently detained incommunicado in police custody, accused of attacking a police officer during protests at the University of Khartoum.

On May 5, 2016, at around 2pm local time, a group of plain-clothed NISS officers, armed with Kalashnikov rifles and pistols, raided the offices of prominent human rights lawyer Mr. **Nabil Adib** in Khartoum. At the time of the raid, Nabil Adib, Chairperson of the Sudanese Human Rights Monitor (SHRM), a Khartoum-based human rights organisation, was holding a meeting at his legal offices with a group of students who had recently been dismissed or suspended from studies at the University of Khartoum following protests on the campus. 10 students, who were meeting with lawyers to discuss an administrative appeal to the dismissals, were detained from the office together with two lawyers and two female employees of the law firm.

During the armed raid, NISS officers ransacked the law office and seized legal files and equipment, including Nabil Adib's personal laptop, without providing a warrant and in violation of the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and the principle of lawyer-client confidentiality. Lawyers present in the office were forced to crouch beneath their desks during the raid and the two female employees were beaten.

"The violent raid on Nabil Adib's human rights law firm is the latest in a catalogue of attacks by Sudan's security agency against independent Sudanese civil society. Sudanese authorities must immediately cease all arbitrary restrictions and abuses against human rights defenders, student activists and others", said Mossaad Mohamed Ali of ACJPS.

The lawyers and employees were released at around 8pm the same day after interrogations at NISS offices in Khartoum North, but the 10 student activists remain detained incommunicado and without charge. Eight male students are currently detained at the political section of the NISS nearby to Shendi Bus Station in Khartoum North, while two female students detained during the raid have been transferred to a section of Omdurman Women's Prison run by the NISS.

In a separate incident two days later on May 7, two other student activists who were also dismissed from studies at the University of Khartoum, **Muafaq Mohamed Abdul Hafiz** and **Mohamed Omer Hamid**, were detained by the NISS in Um Dagarsy village, Al Jazeera state. It is thought that the two men, who were reportedly detained whilst on route to Al Gadarif state, have since been transferred to NISS custody in Khartoum, although authorities have refused to disclose their whereabouts.

There are also serious safety concerns for three students detained incommunicado in police custody in connection with the recent protests at the University of Khartoum. Requests by lawyers to visit their clients have been denied. **Asim Omer, Adam Hassan Mohamadien** and **Fatih Mohamed Abdu Ismail**, were arrested by the NISS in three separate incidents

between May 2 and 5, and later transferred to police custody. Lawyers have been informed that their clients are charged under Article 130 (murder) of the 1991 Criminal Act in connection with an attack on a police officer during a protest at the University of Khartoum.

The lack of access for lawyers and family members to the 12 students detained in NISS custody and three others now in police custody, together with the well-documented use by the NISS of torture and other forms of ill-treatment against detainees, gives rise to serious concerns for their safety.

“Our organisations call on the Sudanese authorities to immediately guarantee the safety of the student detainees, grant them immediate and unequivocal access to their lawyers and family members, and release them in the absence of valid legal charges consistent with international standards”, said Karim Lahidji, President of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

A total of 17 students were dismissed from study at the University of Khartoum following their participation in nationwide student protests that started at the University of Khartoum on April 13, 2016. Six students were dismissed permanently and 11 others suspended from studies for two years. On April 19 and 27, 2016, two student activists, Abubakar Hassan and Mohamed al-Sadiq Wayo were killed in two separate incidents when government forces used live ammunition to disperse demonstrators on two university campuses.

“We are deeply concerned by the systematic pattern of abuse by Sudan’s security agency and repeated resort to the excessive use of force by Sudanese authorities to suppress peaceful social movements. Sudanese authorities must immediately put an end to the on-going crackdown against student activists in the country and ensure justice and reparations for all victims of human rights violations”, Gerald Staberock, OMCT Secretary General.

Further information

Names of students detained incommunicado by the NISS following armed raid on Nabil Adib’s law office on May 5

1. Hassan Alday Mohammed, (m), University of Khartoum Faculty of Law, Level 4, dismissed from studies.
2. Mohammed Almahjoub Otaiba, (m), University of Khartoum Faculty of Law, Level 4, suspended from studies for 2 years.
3. Hamid Omar Digno, (m), University of Khartoum, brother of student Mohamed Omer Hamid who was dismissed from studies at the University of Khartoum.
4. Mudasir Tayseer Mudasir, (m), University of Khartoum Faculty of Science, Level 5, suspended from studies for 2 years.
5. Mai Adil Ibrahim, (f), University of Khartoum Faculty of Engineering, Level 4, suspended from studies for 2 years.
6. Hussein Yahya Haran, (m), University of Khartoum Faculty of Science, Level 4, suspended from studies for 2 years.
7. Badr Alddin Salah Mohammed, (m), University of Khartoum, Faculty of Economics, Level 1, suspended from studies for 2 years.
8. Wifag Gurashi, (f), University of Khartoum Faculty of Arts, Level 3, dismissed from studies.

The names of two other male students detained from Nabil Adib’s law offices are not disclosed.

Names of students detained in Al Jazeera State on May 7, currently detained incommunicado by the NISS in Khartoum

1. Muafaq Mohamed Abdul Hafiz, (m), University of Khartoum, dismissed from studies.
2. Mohamed Omer Hamid, (m), dismissed from studies.

Names of students detained incommunicado in police custody in Khartoum

1. Asim Omer, (m), University of Khartoum, arrested by the NISS in front of the University of Khartoum on 2 May 2016, later transferred to police custody.
2. Adam Hassan Mohamadien, (m), University of Khartoum, arrested by the NISS from a public garden in Omdurman on 5 May 2016, later transferred to police custody.
3. Fatih Mohamed Abdu Ismail, (m), University of Khartoum, suspended from studies for 2 years, location and date of detention unclear, currently in police custody.

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