

URGENT ACTION

THREE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FREED

Three human rights defenders Khalafalla A. Mukhtar, Midhat A. Hamdan and Mustafa Adam have been released after being sentenced to time served by a court in Khartoum, Sudan. The three, who were released on 6 March, had been in detention since their arrests on 22 May 2016. Earlier in January, the court dropped all charges against Arwa Elrabie, Al Hassan Kheiry and Raye Imany Leyla.

Three human rights defenders **Khalafalla A. Mukhtar**, the Director for TRACKS for Training and Human Development (TRACKS), **Midhat A. Hamdan** (TRACKS staff) and **Mustafa Adam**, the director of Zarqa Organisation for Rural Development (ZORD) were on 5 March sentenced to one year in prison and fined 50,000 Sudanese Pounds (\$ 7,776) each. The court was satisfied that the period they had served in detention was sufficient punishment and they were released on 6 March after they paid the fines imposed.

The court found Khalafalla A. Mukhtar and Midhat A. Hamdan guilty of 'Dissemination of false information' under Article 66 of Sudan's 1991 Criminal Act. Mustafa Adam was found guilty of 'Espionage' under Article 53 of Sudan's 1991 Criminal Act.

The court dropped all charges against **Arwa Elrabie** (TRACKS staff), **Al Hassan Kheiry** (TRACKS staff) and **Raye Imany Leyla** (TRACKS volunteer) on 19 January. No criminal charges have been brought against other TRACKS staff **Khuzaini Elhadi A. Rajab** and **Shazali Ibrahim El-Shiekh** since their release on bail on 6 June 2016.

The human rights defenders associated with TRACKS were detained on 22 May 2016 after reporting to the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) office following summons issued to them on 19 May 2016. Arwa Elrabie (TRACKS staff), Al Hassan Kheiry (TRACKS staff) and Raye Imany Leyla (TRACKS volunteer) were released on bail on 5 and 6 of June 2016, while Khalafalla A. Mukhtar, Midhat A. Hamdan and Mustafa Adam remained in detention.

Over the past two years, TRACKS, a Sudanese NGO which provides training on a range of themes including: IT, capacity building, human rights, has been raided twice, on 26 March 2015 and 29 February 2016 by NISS officials. The NISS have detained several TRACKS staff and affiliates, and brought criminal cases against them following each raid, charging them with a number of offences including crimes against the state, espionage which carry the death penalty.

No further action is requested of the UA network. Many thanks to those who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 128/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/4267/2016/en/>

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