

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION ACTIVISTS ARBITRARILY HELD IN SUDAN

Three political opposition activists are being held in prolonged detention without charge following their arrests in Khartoum by the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) between January and February 2017. They are being detained because they supported protests in November 2016 against economic austerity measures. They are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Mohamed Hassan El Bushi, a member of Sudanese Ba'ath Party, was arrested by NISS on 10 February in Khartoum; **Amin Saad**, the Media Secretary of the Socialist Democratic Unionist Party /HASHAD, was arrested by NISS on 25 January after he attended a meeting by the political opposition umbrella group, the National Consensus Forces (NCF), in Khartoum; and, **Motaz Al Ajail**, a member of Sudanese Communist Party, was arrested by NISS on 9 January from his work place in Khartoum. All three political opposition activists are detained without charge at Kober Prison in Khartoum.

The detention of the three is linked to their public support for nationwide strikes on 27-29 November 2016, and then on 19 December 2016, in protest against the rise in fuel, electricity, transport, food, and medicine costs in Sudan and the government economic austerity measures that followed.

Mohamed Hassan El Bushi, 34, has been arrested several times in the last few years and his house raided by the NISS. In November and December 2016, he used his Facebook page to broadcast a live video stream in which he encouraged people to support the nationwide strike. Mohamed El Bushi's mother visited him in Kober prison on 25 March and reported that he complained of back pain yet had received no treatment. Amin Saad, 55-year-old, father of five, works as air operation manager in Khartoum as well as being a long-standing political opposition activist. His family has visited him several times in prison since his arrest. Motaz Al Ajail, also an art designer, had his computer and two printers confiscated from his work place by the NISS when they arrested him. His family visited him in Kober prison a week ago and found him in very poor health.

Amnesty International considers the three to be prisoners of conscience detained solely on the basis of the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Please write immediately in Arabic or your own language:

- Urging the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Amin Saad, Mohamed Hassan El Bushi, and Motaz Al Ajail as they are prisoners of conscience detained solely on the basis of the peaceful exercise of their rights;
- Calling on them to ensure that they are granted access to adequate healthcare and a lawyer of their choice pending their release;
- Urging them to ensure that they are not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment pending their release.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 MAY 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 of Justice

Awad Al Hassan Alnour
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue
Khartoum, Sudan

Salutation : Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister for interior
Ismat Abdul-Rahman Zain Al-Abdin
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

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INTERNATIONAL**



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 on the NISS crackdown on activities of anti-government political activists, human rights defenders and civil society activists in 2016 and early 2017. In November 2016, at least 23 members of Sudan's political opposition parties were arrested by the NISS. These arrests were a response to sporadic protests by activists and members of the political opposition against the rise in fuel, electricity, transport, food, and medicine costs in Sudan. Political activists also called for a three-day nationwide strike in November, followed by one day in December which were widely supported. Although some were released without charge during December 2016 and early January 2017, at least 10 activists and human rights defenders still remain detained without charge.

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, and many 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 (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.