

URGENT ACTION

ONLINE ACTIVIST HELD INCOMMUNICADO OVER A MONTH

Ahmed Al-Dai Bushara Joudah, a journalist and social media activist, was arbitrarily arrested on 16 July in Omdurman, Sudan by National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) agents. He is currently being held without charge at the NISS detention centre in Khartoum North. He has been denied access to a lawyer and family. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment while in detention.

Ahmed Al-Dai Bushara Joudah, a social media activist, was unlawfully arrested by six NISS agents from his house in Omdurman on 16 July. He is being detained at the NISS detention centre in Khartoum North. The NISS has consistently denied him visits from his family or his lawyers. His family has presented the NISS with three applications to visit him, but their requests have been denied. This lack of contact with the outside world considerably enhances Ahmed Al-Dai's risk of being subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

According to his family, Ahmed Al-Dai suffers from a chronic stomach disease. They are concerned that he may not be getting the medical care he requires.

The 28-year-old Ahmed Al-Dai works as a sports commentator with various TV and radio stations in Sudan.

Since January 2018, Ahmed Al-Dai intensified his social media activism and shared many videos on Facebook critical of the Sudan government's economic policy. He has been calling on people to reject the new economic austerity measures imposed in January 2018 by the government leading to a rise in the cost of food and medicine. On 12 May, he was summoned by NISS and interrogated and questioned about his activism for 16 hours.

Previously, he was detained by NISS on 26 November 2016 and released without charge after 47 days. He was detained then because, through his Facebook page, he expressed his support for the November and December 2016 civil disobedience which was held in protest against the rise in fuel, electricity, transport, food, and medicine costs in Sudan.

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

- Urging the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Ahmed Al-Dai Bushara Joudah;
- Calling on them to ensure that pending his release, Ahmed Al-Dai Bushara Joudah is granted regular access to his family, medical treatment he requires and a lawyer of his choice;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is not subjected to torture and any other ill-treatment while in detention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 OCTOBER 2018 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
Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 873
Khartoum

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
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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. Those detained were subjected to various forms of torture and other ill-treatment including electric shock, beatings, whippings, solitary confinement, and severe psychological stress, such as threats of rape during interrogations. In many cases the activists are 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 is in connection with sporadic protests around Sudan over the rise in the cost of food and medicines. The protests began after the government introduced new economic austerity measures. 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, 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 to the country and how to respond to such threats. Neither the NSA nor the revised Article 151 require the NISS to abide by relevant international, regional and domestic law in the operation of its duties.

Name: Ahmed Al- Dai Bushara Joudah

Gender m/f: m

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