

URGENT ACTION

EIGHT HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS DETAINED

Six staff members and a volunteer from TRACKS for Training and Human Development and the visiting director of Al Zarqa for Rural Development organisation have been detained since 22 May at the office of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) Prosecutor of crimes against the state in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. They have not yet been informed of the reasons for their arrest.

Six staff members and a volunteer of the training centre TRACKS and the visiting director of Al Zarqa for Rural Development organisation on 22 May reported to the NISS office in Khartoum centre following a summon issued on 19 May by the NISS. They were kept there for questioning for three hours before being transferred to the office of the NISS Prosecutor of crimes against the state in Al Amarat district, Khartoum. Five of them who are male; **Khuzaini Elhadi A. Rajab (staff), Shazali Ibrahim El-Shiekh (staff), Midhat A. Hamdan (staff), Alhassan Kheiri (staff), and Mustafa Adam (director, Al Zarqa organisation)** are being detained in a 3m by 5 m jail cell with twenty one other detainees at the NISS Prosecutor's office. **Khalafalla A. Mukhtar (director of TRACKS)** was in the same congested cell but due to failing health he was on 24 May transferred to a room which he shares with another detainee. The two females; **Arwa Elrabie (staff) and Raye Imany Leyla (volunteer)** are being kept under guard in the reception area of the NISS prosecutor's office during the day and sleep in one of the offices in the premises at night.

All eight detainees are fed two meals a day. The six men are allowed to visit the bathroom twice a day while the two women are allowed to visit the facilities regularly. The eight have not been informed of the reasons for their arrest and have yet to be charged. Their lawyer has only had access to the two women and spoken to them but has not spoken to the six men. Amnesty International believes that the arbitrary arrest and detention of the eight is due to the peaceful exercise of their rights and freedoms and thus considers them prisoners of conscience.

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

- Calling on the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release **Khalafalla A. Mukhtar, Arwa Elrabie, Khuzaini Elhadi A. Rajab, Raye Imany Leyla, Shazali Ibrahim El-Shiekh, Midhat A Hamdan, Alhassan Kheiri and Mustafa Adam** and refrain from any further harassment of these individuals;
- Urging them to ensure that during their detention, all eight detainees are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment;
- Urging them to ensure that all the detainees are allowed unrestricted access to their lawyer, family and allowed access to adequate medical care;
- Urging them to comply with their obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) particularly the obligations to respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights to freedom of association and expression.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 JULY 2016 TO:

President

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

Minister for Justice

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

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. IS 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
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Al Zarqa for Rural Development organization works on general development in the country and human development and offer training and workshops on these areas.

TRACKS for Training and Human Development provides training on a range of themes including information technology and human rights training for the private sector and national organizations. It is registered with the National Training Bureau, a division of the Ministry of Labour.

The NISS has harassed and violated the rights of the staff members of TRACKS on several occasions. Previously the NISS raided TRACKS' office on 29 February and confiscated nine mobile phones, and five laptops, as well as publications, flip charts and other office documents. Between 3-13 March, ten staff members, trainers and a volunteer had to report for daily questioning to the NISS office in Khartoum. Although the questioning ended on 13 March, the NISS had told the staff and trainers that they could be called to report to NISS office at any time. The ten staff members also included Khalafalla A. Mukhtar, Arwa Elrabie, Khuzaini Elhadi A. Rajab, Raye Imany Leyla, Shazali Ibrahim El-Shiekh, Midhat A. Hamdan, Alhassan Kheiri and Mustafa Adam.

A year before that, the NISS raided the TRACKS office in Khartoum on 26 March 2015 and interrupted a workshop on social responsibility. The NISS agents confiscated all laptops in the premises and detained Khalafalla Mukhtar, Director of TRACKS, for one day and Adil Bakheit, a trainer for about a month before releasing them on bail, after charging each of them with seven offences under the 1991 Penal code. These include; "joint acts in execution of criminal conspiracy, undermining the constitutional system, waging war against the state, calling for opposition to public authority by use of violent or criminal force, publication of false news and impersonating a public servant." The offences of waging war against the state and undermining the constitutional system carry the death penalty. The NISS Prosecution Chamber carried out investigations into TRACKS' activities. The confiscated equipment was sent to the criminal laboratories for forensic investigation. After 11 months, the NISS Prosecutor's office dropped the charges against TRACKS' director, and returned the confiscated equipment on 24 February 2016.

Amnesty International continues to document the intensified crackdown on activities of civil society organisations and human rights defenders in Sudan as well as the NISS's new tactic of summoning individuals to their offices daily to curtail their freedom of movement.

The NISS maintains broad powers of arrest and detention under the National Security Act 2010, 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 to subject them to torture and other 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 amendments passed by Parliament on 5 January 2015, which accorded sweeping powers to the NISS giving it unlimited discretion to interfere in political, economic and social issues, have exacerbated the situation.

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