

# URGENT ACTION

## CALLER CLAIMS STUDENT ACTIVIST HAS DIED

**On 20 February, the mother of detained student activist Taj Alsir Jaafar received an anonymous phone call stating that her son had died. The Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) have refused to confirm this information. He has been on hunger strike since 11 February and his health has reportedly deteriorated. He has been detained without charge or access to a lawyer since his arrest in December 2011.**

At 2am on 20 February, **Taj Alsir Jaafar's** mother received a phone call from an unknown number telling her that her son had passed away. She suspects that the phone call was made by an NISS agent since they have previously called her from an unknown number. An hour after the call she went with her daughter to the NISS headquarters in Khartoum but the officers told her they could neither deny nor confirm the rumour. When she requested to see her son the NISS officers refused, saying that visits are only allowed every two weeks, and threatened to charge her with harassment. On 21 February, a Sudanese newspaper published on its front page that "The NISS denies the reported death of Taj Alsir and allows his family to visit him". However when his mother tried to visit him again later that day with the newspaper article, the NISS denied her access once more.

Prior to this, she had been verbally threatened on at least two occasions by individuals believed to be linked to the security forces, who told her not to inquire about her son. She may be at risk for continuing to request information.

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

- Call on the authorities to ensure that Taj Alsir Jaafar has immediate access to his family, a lawyer and any medical treatment he may require and to immediately notify his family of serious illness or death, in line with international standards;
- Call on the authorities to release Taj Alsir Jaafar immediately and unconditionally, if he is held solely for his participation in peaceful protests;
- If he is facing other recognizably criminal charges, unrelated to the peaceful protests, call for him to be tried promptly in proceedings that meet international fair trial standards;
- Urge the authorities to take action to protect Taj Alsir Jaafar's mother, in accordance with her wishes, following the threats against her.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 04 APRIL 2012 TO:**

Minister of Justice

Mr Mohammed Bushara Dousa

Ministry of Justice,

Al Nil Avenue, PO Box 302

Khartoum, Sudan

Fax: +249 183 764 168

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Minister of Interior

Mr Ibrahim Mohamed Hamed

Ministry of Interior

PO Box 873

Khartoum, Sudan

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**And copies to:**

President

HE Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir

Office of the President

People's Palace, PO Box 281

Khartoum, Sudan

Email: info@sudan.gov.sd

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 21/12. Further information:

[www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR54/003/2012/en](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR54/003/2012/en)

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## CALLER CLAIMS STUDENT ACTIVIST HAS DIED

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Taj Alsir Jaafar, aged 25, was arrested by security forces on 30 December 2011 in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, while on a bus on his way home from the University of Khartoum. He was initially held incommunicado in an undisclosed location. On 18 January his family were informed that he was in the custody of the NISS. They were first allowed to visit him in Kober Prison, Khartoum, on 29 January for a period of 15 minutes only. On 15 February they were able to visit him again for another 15 minutes. On this occasion, he told them he was on hunger strike. They were concerned to note that his health had significantly deteriorated.

Taj Alsir Jaafar is a student coordinator for the opposition party *The Movement of New Democratic Forces* (known as *HAQU*, meaning "right" in Arabic) at the University of Khartoum. He is believed to have been arrested for participating in student protests that took place from mid-December 2011 into January 2012 and included a sit-in at the university. If he is detained solely for participating in peaceful protests, Amnesty International would consider him to be a prisoner of conscience. He was previously detained by the NISS in 2009 and January 2011 for his activities as a student activist and was allegedly tortured in detention in 2009. He was released without charge on both occasions.

Inspired by protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa which began in Tunisia at the beginning of January 2011, hundreds of demonstrators throughout Sudan took to the streets calling for democracy and an improvement to their socio-economic conditions. The police and the NISS in Sudan responded by frequently arresting and ill-treating peaceful demonstrators. Student movements and organizations are regularly targeted by the NISS.

The 2010 National Security Act provides the NISS powers to search and seize assets and to arrest and detain people for up to four and a half months without judicial oversight. Furthermore under the same act, NISS agents are provided with immunity from prosecution for any act committed in the course of their work.

Name: Taj Alsir Jaafar  
Gender m/f: male

Further information on UA: 21/12 Index: AFR 54/009/2012 Issue Date: 22 February 2012