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Sudan: Crackdown on peaceful protest continues

The Sudanese authorities must release over 50 protesters arrested during a peaceful anti-government demonstration in the capital Khartoum, Amnesty International said today.

Police and Agents of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) reportedly beat protesters in Abu Jenzir Square who were calling for an end to President Al Bashir's 21-year rule.

Among those arrested are prominent human rights activists, politicians and journalists. Some were arrested at their homes by the NISS.

The protest was part of ongoing demonstrations organized by youth groups and opposition parties inspired by the anti-government protests in North Africa.

"The Sudanese government must immediately release all demonstrators" said Erwin van der Borght Amnesty International's Africa Director.

"The authorities must also investigate all alleged cases of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in detention and hold the perpetrators responsible."

Yesterday, around 30 people including prominent human rights activists were reported to have been arrested during a peaceful march in Khartoum to celebrate International Women's Day. They were later released.

A dozen people are thought to remain in detention following demonstrations that began at the end of January this year.

Most of the detainees, mostly young male and female students, were reportedly tortured in detention.

Six cases of sexual harassment and abuse have been reported, including a case of multiple rape while in NISS detention.