

URGENT ACTION

STUDENT ACTIVIST RELEASED WITHOUT CHARGE

Sudanese student Taj Alsir Jaafar was released without charge on 23 February 2012 after being detained by the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) for almost two months. It is believed he was arrested for participating in student protests, including a peaceful sit-in at Khartoum University.

Taj Alsir Jaafar was arrested by security forces on 30 December 2011 in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, while on a bus on his way home from university. 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 in Kober Prison, Khartoum. They were subsequently allowed to visit him on two occasions for 15 minutes, and reported he had commenced a hunger strike on 11 February. He was detained for 55 days without charge or access to a lawyer and was released on 23 February 2012.

During his detention, Taj Alsir Jaafar's mother was verbally threatened on several occasions by individuals believed to be linked to the security forces, who told her not to inquire about her son. On receiving information from several sources that he had died in custody, she went to the NISS offices but reported to Amnesty International that the officers refused to confirm or deny the rumours and threatened to charge her with harassment.

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. 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.

Many thanks to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the second update of UA 21/12. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR54/009/2012/en

Name: Taj Alsir Jaafar
Gender m/f: Male

Further information on UA: 21/12 Index: AFR 54/011/2012 Issue Date: 24 February 2012

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