

URGENT ACTION

SUDANESE JOURNALIST FACES HARASSMENT

Faisal Mohammed Salih, a prominent journalist and columnist from Sudan who had been arrested by the National Security Service (NSS) was released on 8 May. However, he has since been re-arrested and released several times. He is currently free, but faces new criminal charges in relation to his writings.

On 19 April, **Faisal Mohammed Salih** gave an interview to Al-Jazeera and was interrogated about it by the National Security Services (NSS) on 25 April. For the following 13 days, he was asked to report almost daily to the NSS office, despite no further interrogations taking place once he arrived. On 8 May he did not go to the NSS office and was arrested at his home in Khartoum by NSS agents.

On 8 May, Faisal Mohammed Salih was detained incommunicado in the NSS office of Khartoum North for 12 hours without being given any food or water. On the evening of 8 May, he was released with the instruction to return to the NSS office on the following day. He refused, and was rearrested from his house on 9 May. During this second episode of detention, the NSS asked him to sign an order demanding that he return to their offices the following day. He refused.

On 15 May, Faisal Mohammed Salih was arrested once again and was brought to the Prosecutor in charge of crimes against the state. He was notified of new criminal charges for "failing to attend to the order of a public servant", under article 94 of the 1991 Criminal Code, in relation to his refusal to sign the NSS order.

These new charges add to previous charges of defamation that Faisal Mohammed Salih faces for an article he wrote in March 2011 about the rape of Safia Ishaag by the NSS in detention. During his detention, Amnesty International considered Faisal Mohammed Saleh a prisoner of conscience, held solely for exercising his right to free speech.

Please continue to write in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Sudanese authorities to drop all charges against Faisal Mohammed Salih;
- Demanding that the Sudanese government ends its harassment of Faisal Mohammed Salih;
- Calling on Sudan to stop harassing journalists and peaceful activists, and honour its commitment to freedom of expression enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which it is a party.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 JUNE 2012 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
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Mohammed Bushara Dousa
Ministry of Justice,
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue,
Khartoum,
Sudan
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Interior
Ibrahim Mohamed Hamed
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 873
Khartoum,
Sudan
Email: mut@isoc.sd
Salutation: Your Excellency

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 129/12. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR54/017/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Faisal Mohammed Salih is a prominent journalist from Sudan and the director of Teeba Press, an NGO working to train journalists. In the past ten years, he has written extensively on Sudan, notably for *Al-Akhbar*, *Al Adwa* and *Al Shahid*. In March 2011, he faced charges of criminal defamation and was accused of ruining the reputation of the NSS for reporting on the rape of Safia Ishaag, an activist, by NSS agents.

A raft of new tactics are being used to silence journalists in Sudan in a crackdown by Khartoum's authorities dating from the start of uprisings in North Africa in January 2011, Amnesty International said in a new briefing released on World Press Freedom Day.

Silencing Dissent: Restrictions on freedom of opinion and expression persist in Sudan explores how the authorities now censor journalists, including by confiscating newspapers after they have been printed; preventing vendors from distributing copies; and charging journalists and editors with spurious crimes.

Name: Faisal Mohammed Salih (also known as Faisal Mohammed Saleh)

Gender m/f: M

Further information on UA: 129/12 Index: AFR 54/021/2012 Issue Date: 18 May 2012