

# URGENT ACTION

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**20 June 2002**

## **Incommunicado detention/ Possible Prisoner of Conscience**

**SUDAN**      **Dr Toby Madut (m), member of the Democratic Forces Front (JAD) and co –  
chairperson of the Sudanese Human Rights Group (SHRG)**

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Human rights defender Dr Toby Madut was arrested by the Sudanese security services on 18 June. He is being held in incommunicado detention and may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Amnesty International will consider him a prisoner of conscience, unless he is released immediately and unconditionally.

On 17 June, the security services from Haj Yusif, an area on the outskirts of the capital Khartoum, reportedly visited Dr Toby Madut at the clinic where he works. They asked him to sign a statement agreeing to attend their office the following day. Dr Toby Madut would not sign the statement, after they refused to provide him with a copy. He was arrested the following day and taken to an unknown place of detention. His arrest may be linked to his participation a few days earlier in a meeting of the Democratic Forces Front, a non-registered political party advocating for democracy in Sudan.

Dr Toby Madut is a prominent advocate of the rights of Southern Sudanese and Internally Displaced People living in Khartoum. He is also part of the Sudanese Human Rights Group (SHRG), a local non-governmental organization which monitors human rights violations in Sudan. He is a leading politician from southern Sudan, and a member of the Democratic Forces Front (JAD), a non-registered political party advocating democracy in Sudan. He has been arrested and questioned several times before by the security services.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since President Omar al-Bashir came to power in 1989, political opposition, freedom of expression, assembly and association in Sudan have been severely curtailed. The Political Act, which came into force in January 1999, supposedly relaxed the ban on opposition parties. However, opposition parties not supporting the government are either banned or denied genuine political freedom. There is a consistent pattern of human rights abuses against those perceived to oppose the government, such as human rights defenders and activists.

The State of Emergency, renewed earlier this year, and the National Security Act, give the security services power to arrest and keep people in prolonged detention without charging them. Detentions without charge, and demands to report to the security services, have been used as a tactic of harassment and intimidation against those suspected of challenging the policies of the government.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic or English or your own language:**

- expressing concern at the incommunicado detention of Dr Toby Madut and seeking assurances that he will not be ill-treated or tortured;
- urging the authorities to reveal his place of detention immediately, and allow him access to his relatives, legal counsel and any medical aid he may need;
- stating that Amnesty International believes that he is being held solely for the peaceful expression of thoughts and beliefs and would consider him to be prisoner of conscience unless he is released immediately and unconditionally;
- calling for the security services to stop harassing and intimidating human rights defenders and advocates;
- calling for the National Security Act to be brought into accordance with international standards.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Lieutenant General Omar Hassan al-Bashir  
President of the Republic of Sudan  
President's Palace  
PO Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan

**Telegrams:** President al-Bashir, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax:** + 24911 771651  
**Salutation:** *Your Excellency*

Mr Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Ministry of Justice  
Khartoum, Sudan

**Telegrams:** Justice Minister, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax :** + 24911 788941  
**Salutation:** *Dear Minister,*

Mr Mustafa Osman Ismail  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
PO Box 873, Khartoum, Sudan

**Telegrams :** Foreign Minister, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax :** + 24911 777268  
**Salutation :** *Dear Minister*

Dr Ahmed al-Mufti  
Advisory Council for Human Rights  
PO Box 302  
Khartoum, Sudan

**Telegrams:** Dr Ahmed al-Mufti, Advisory Council for Human Rights, Khartoum, Sudan  
**Fax :** + 24911 770883  
**Salutation::** *Dear Sir*

**(These fax numbers may be difficult to get through to, but please keep trying)**

**COPIES TO:**

Mr Hafez al-Sheikh al-Zaki  
Chief Justice, Supreme Court  
Khartoum, Sudan

**and to diplomatic representatives of Sudan accredited to your country.**

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 August 2002.

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