

URGENT ACTION

SUDANESE STUDENT ACTIVIST DETAINED

On 30 December 2011, student activist Taj Alsir Jaafar was arrested by security forces in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. He is being held incommunicado at an unknown location, and is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. He may be a prisoner of conscience, detained for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association. His mother has been threatened because of her attempts to see her son.

Taj Alsir Jaafar, aged 25, was arrested by security forces in Khartoum on 30 December on his way home from university. According to a witness, he was travelling on a bus when security forces forced him to get off. On 18 January, Taj Alsir Jaafar's mother was informed that he was being held by the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS). However, his exact whereabouts are unknown. After several attempts to find out the whereabouts of her son, Taj Alsir Jaafar's mother was able to take a package of his clothes to the NISS headquarters in Khartoum on 21 January. However, she was unable to see him. Since her son's arrest, his mother has been verbally threatened on at least two occasions by plain-clothed individuals believed to be linked to the security forces, and told not to inquire about her son. She may be at risk if she continues to do so.

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 Khartoum University. He is believed to have been arrested for participating in student protests from mid-December 2011 into January 2012, which 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.

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

- 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;
- Call on the authorities to ensure that Taj Alsir Jaafar is not tortured or otherwise ill treated and has access to his family, a lawyer and any medical treatment he may require;
- Urge the authorities to take action to protect Taj Alsir Jaafar's mother, in accordance with her wishes, following the threats against her;
- Call on the Sudanese government to immediately stop the harassment and intimidation of activists in Sudan and to respect their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 MARCH 2012 TO:

Minister of Justice

Mr Mohammed Bushara Dousa
Ministry of Justice, PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue
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
Fax: +249 183 770 621

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

From mid-December 2011 into January 2012, students at Khartoum University peacefully demonstrated in solidarity with the Manaseer, an ethnic group that were forcibly displaced from their land due to the construction of the Merowe dam, in River Nile state. The demonstrations were violently dispersed on 22 December by police and security forces using batons and teargas. Large numbers of students were arrested during and after the demonstrations. A number of students sustained serious injuries from the excessive use of force by security forces.

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

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