

# URGENT ACTION

## HIGH-PROFILE SUDANESE ACTIVIST ARRESTED

**Magdi Aqasha, leader of the prominent Sudanese activist group *Sharara* (Youth for Change), has been arrested by Sudan’s National Security Service (NSS) and is being held at an undisclosed location. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.**

**Magdi Aqasha** was transferred into the custody of the NSS on 27 June 2012. His family had just paid a fine to secure his release from a police station in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum.

The NSS arrested Magdi Aqasha on 24 June at the scene of a traffic accident that he was involved in. He had been driving on a public motorway in his car and was being followed by NSS agents travelling, on two motorbikes, and in two cars when an accident occurred, causing damage to one of the NSS’s motorbikes. The NSS asked traffic police to arrest Magdi Aqasha at the scene. The traffic police refused as they said Magdi Aqasha was not responsible for the accident. The NSS then arrested him, seized his car and detained him overnight at NSS offices. The following day he was transferred to police custody at Khartoum North Police Station and was told he would be detained until he paid the fine for the damaged motorbike.

Magdi Aqasha, thirty years old, is the leader and spokesperson of the *Sharara* (Youth for Change) movement. He is also a member of an opposition group, the Sudanese Conference party, and stood as candidate in the country’s last parliamentary election. His family believes he was arrested because the NSS believes he was involved in the recent protests that took place in Khartoum on 17 June in response to government austerity cuts, and which spread to other cities in Sudan. He has been arrested by the NSS on several occasions before for his involvement in peaceful demonstrations. Two months ago he was arrested with other activists and held incommunicado for three days, during which time he was beaten by NSS agents.

The climate of unrest in Sudan, and the ruthless crackdown on protests by the Sudanese authorities, increases the risk that Magdi Aqasha will be tortured or suffer other ill-treatment whilst in detention.

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

- Calling on the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Magdi Aqasha;
- Urging the Sudanese authorities to ensure Magdi Aqasha is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment, and that he has regular access to his family and lawyer of his choice;
- Demanding that Sudan stop the harassment of peaceful activists and journalists, and honour its commitment to freedom of expression as enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which it is a party.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 AUGUST 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 insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation  
 Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Inspired by protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa, Sudan has experienced frequent demonstrations since January 2011, calling for political change and an improvement in socio-economic conditions. In response the Sudanese authorities have frequently harassed, arrested and ill-treated peaceful protestors.

Since the latest outbreak of demonstrations on 17 June 2012, scores of activists, bloggers and journalists have been arrested and detained in an attempt by the authorities to stifle dissent and reporting on the protest movement, in violation of the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

The protest movement, dominated by student activists groups such as Girifna ("We're fed up") and Sharara (Youth for Change) has up till now been centred around universities in Khartoum and its neighbouring cities Omdurman and Khartoum North. However, demonstrations have also been reported in provincial universities, notably Blue Nile University in Damazin, as well as in residential areas of the capital.

Name: Magdi Agasha

Gender m/f: M

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