

# URGENT ACTION

## JOURNALIST HELD INCOMMUNICADO IN SUDAN

**On 3 November, Jaafar Alsabki Ibrahim, a Darfuri journalist working for the opposition newspaper *Al Sahafa*, was arrested by the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) from *Al Sahafa*'s office in Khartoum. Jaafar Alsabki Ibrahim's arrest is part of a wave of arrests that began on 30 October, and has now targeted nine known Darfuri activists and journalists. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.**

On the afternoon of Wednesday 3 November, the NISS raided the offices of *Al Sahafa* newspaper in Khartoum and took **Jaafar Alsabki Ibrahim** from the editing room. According to eye witnesses, the NISS refused to allow him to call his family before he was taken away. They confiscated his mobile phone and took him to an undisclosed location.

Jaafar Alsabki Ibrahim's arrest follows the arrests of eight other known activists from Darfur between 30 October and 3 November, and an unknown number of others whose identify, or present whereabouts remain unconfirmed.

All nine known detainees are from Darfur and are believed to be held by the NISS, in an undisclosed location. Reports suggest that one of them, **Abdelrahman Adam Abdelrahman**, has been subjected to torture. None of the detainees have had access to their family or a lawyer. None of their families have been informed of their whereabouts or reasons for their arrests.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Arabic or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to disclose the names and whereabouts of all those detained, including Jaafar Alsabki Ibrahim, Abdelrahman, Mohammed Al Gasim, Dirar Adam Dirar, Abdelrahman Adam Abdelrahman, Manal Mohammed Adam, Aziza Ali Idriss, Aisha Sardo Sherif, Abu Gasim Al Din and Zakaria Yacoub;
- Calling on the authorities to release all those detained or charge them with recognizable criminal offences;
- Urging the authorities to allow all the detainees access to legal representation as well as family visits and any medical attention they require;
- Calling on the Sudanese government to immediately stop the harassment and intimidation of human rights activists and journalists in Sudan;
- Calling on the 2010 National Security Act to be reformed to remove the excessive powers of the NISS, including the powers of arrest and detention without judicial oversight.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 DECEMBER 2010 TO:

#### President

HE Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir  
Office of the President  
People's Palace PO Box 281  
Khartoum, Sudan  
Fax: +249 183 782 541

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Minister of Justice

Mr Mohammed Bushara Dousa  
Ministry of Justice  
PO Box 302  
Khartoum  
Sudan

Fax: +249 183 764 168

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Minister of Interior

Mr Ibrahim Mohammed Hamed  
Ministry of Interior  
PO Box 873  
Khartoum, Sudan

**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 231/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR54/036/2010/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Torture or other forms of ill-treatment of human rights activists and journalists by the National Intelligence and Security Services is often reported in Sudan, particularly amongst Darfuris and when those detained are not given access to the outside world. Amnesty International documented many cases of torture and ill-treatment in detention against human rights activists and journalists, and amongst Darfuris, namely at the hands of the NISS.

The NISS continues to impose restrictions on freedom of expression in Sudan and to target journalists in relation to their writing. Journalists are often prosecuted for their peaceful expression of their opinions. In June 2010, six opposition journalists from *Rai Al Shaab* newspaper were arrested by the NISS. Some of them were tortured and otherwise ill-treated, three of them, Abuzar Al Amin, Al Tahir Abujawhara and Ashraf Abdelaziz were sentenced to five and two years in prison in relation to an article written by Abuzar Al Amin.

The 2010 National Security Act (2010 NSA), passed in December 2009, provides extensive powers of arrest and detention to members of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS). Under the same Act, NISS agents are also provided with immunity from prosecution for any act committed in the course of their work. The 2010 NSA maintained powers and immunities provided under the previous law, the 1999 National Security Forces Act. As a result of these laws, a culture of impunity has pervaded in Sudan and NISS members have been carrying out human rights violations with impunity.

Although Sudan's Criminal Procedure Code contains safeguards against incommunicado detention, Article 50 of the 2010 NSA stipulates that the NISS can arrest and detain any person for a total period of four and a half months without judicial oversight. The 2010 Act does not specify the grounds on which such detentions can be made. Such incommunicado detention without access to the outside world and without any outside inspection increases the likelihood of torture taking place.

Further information on UA: 231/10 Index: AFR 54/038/2010 Issue Date: 5 November 2010

