



Sudan Defenders
Sudan Human Rights Defenders Coalition

Newsletter

Sudan Defenders

Monthly Newsletter | **APRIL 2026**



Three Years of War...

Between Humanitarian Collapse and Expanding Impunity

Preamble



The Sudanese Coalition of Human Rights Defenders – Sudan Defenders – issues its April 2026 monthly newsletter against a backdrop of a highly complex national context in Sudan, amid the ongoing deterioration of human rights conditions and the expanding risks faced by human rights defenders. This issue builds on the coalition's ongoing documentation and analytical efforts to monitor serious violations during the reporting period, using an approach grounded in international human rights reporting standards. This includes analysis of patterns and recurring violations, most notably: extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and unfair trials.

This issue places particular emphasis on documenting the escalating, systematic violations targeting human rights defenders in the context of the Sudanese war, including patterns of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, unfair trials, and the systematic restriction of civic space. The objective is to highlight the sustained targeting of human rights actors and to analyse its structural dimensions amid the deterioration of protection systems and the widening scope of impunity, reflecting the scale of risks threatening human rights work in Sudan at this critical stage.

The issue also sheds light on the increasing systematic targeting of defenders, including gender-based violence, shrinking civic space, and the undermining of protection mechanisms and the rule of law, within a broader environment marked by declining public freedoms and expanding impunity. In addition, this edition documents a number of human rights activities carried out by the coalition, including dialogues and initiatives addressing the role of civil actors in peace processes and conflict resolution. These efforts emphasise the importance of strengthening grassroots participation in peacebuilding, developing early warning tools, integrating human rights into education, and advancing legal and constitutional reforms that reinforce the rule of law and protect fundamental rights and freedoms.

At the institutional level, the coalition's Board of Directors continued its regular work, reviewing developments in the human rights situation, assessing past performance, examining key challenges in the current context, and adopting plans aimed at strengthening institutional effectiveness, improving monitoring and documentation tools, and enhancing the quality of human rights response in the coming phase.

Opening Editorial

APRIL
2026



Three Years of War...

Between Humanitarian Collapse and Expanding Impunity

The April 2026 issue of Sudan Defenders arrives at a critical juncture, as the war in Sudan enters its fourth year since its outbreak in April 2023, amid one of the country's worst humanitarian and human rights crises. This period is marked by escalating grave violations against civilians, the erosion of justice systems, and the expansion of impunity.

In this context, human rights defenders face an extremely dangerous environment characterised by arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and unfair trials, alongside increasing restrictions on civic space and the targeting of journalists and activists. These challenges are compounded by the overlap between armed conflict, hate speech, and societal polarisation. Despite the absence of minimum effective protection standards, defenders continue to carry out their roles with

courage and responsibility, building on the legacy of struggle shaped by the December Revolution and its foundational slogans: freedom, peace, and justice. This issue is based on field documentation and legal analysis grounded in reliable testimonies and data, aiming to highlight the scale of violations and their humanitarian and legal consequences, while exposing the depth of the structural crisis affecting the country, including declining trust in justice and protection institutions.

The continued resilience of human rights defenders in Sudan is not only an expression of humanitarian commitment but also a form of moral and legal resistance in the face of collapse, affirming that justice and human dignity remain indivisible and non-negotiable rights.

Chair of the Board of Directors



Updated Monitoring: **Escalation of Violations Against Human Rights Defenders in Sudan**

(Prepared on April 30, 2026)

Monitoring Developments: March – April 2026

Arrests and Unfair Trials within the Judicial System

Dongola

Munib Abdelaziz – Public Acquittal by Clear Judicial Ruling – Dongola Criminal Court

April 27, 2026

In a case carrying significant implications within a highly charged judicial environment, the Dongola Criminal Court in Northern State issued a ruling accepting the legal defences submitted by the defence team and dismissing the criminal case against prominent human rights and political activist Munib Abdelaziz. The decision was based on Article (141) of the Sudanese Criminal Procedure Act of 1991, after the court found insufficient evidence and indications presented by the prosecution to convict him. The dismissal included dropping all charges and prohibiting the reopening of the case unless substantial new evidence not available at the time of

adjudication emerges. The case had arisen within the context of a broader campaign targeting the activist following media statements and public criticisms he made via social media regarding serious human rights violations and the conduct of military operations in conflict areas. The prosecution had brought serious charges against him, including “spreading false news” and “incitement against the state” under Articles (51) and (66) of the Criminal Code—provisions historically used under the previous regime to target dissenting voices.



Port Sudan

Sudan | Journalist Abdelmonem Suleiman | Arrest Warrant and Charges Punishable by Death



April 26, 2026

Judicial authorities in Port Sudan issued an arrest warrant on April 26, 2026, against journalist and activist Abdelmonem Suleiman, accusing him of “inciting war against the state and undermining the country’s interests.” The warrant was issued by the Prosecution Office for Crimes Against the State and Counter-Terrorism, which granted him 72 hours to surrender himself. The charges are based on security-related legal provisions carrying severe penalties, including the death penalty. The move triggered widespread reactions, with the Journalists’ Union describing it as a “systematic attempt to silence voices.” Suleiman, in response, accused the authorities of reusing the same laws that were in place before the December Revolution, stating: “They fell yesterday and they will fall today, and all their crimes and lies will fall with them.” This development reflects growing tensions between freedom of expression and the ruling authority, highlighting the increasing pressure and risks faced by journalists and activists in Sudan.

Port Sudan

Abubakar Mansour – Death Sentence Upheld in Trial Marred by Violations – Court of Appeal under Port Sudan Authority



April 23, 2026

In a case that sparked widespread condemnation among human rights and legal communities, the Court of Appeal upheld, on April 23, 2026, the death sentence issued against lawyer and prominent

human rights defender Abubakar Mansour, after he had spent more than 517 days in detention without a fair trial. The case dates back to November 25, 2024, when a security force raided his home in Singa, Sennar State, and arrested him without clear legal grounds. He was later charged with “undermining the constitutional order,” “inciting war against the state,” and “collaborating with the Rapid Support Forces.” In October 2025, the Singa Criminal Court sentenced him to death by hanging, a verdict reaffirmed by the recent appeal ruling, despite serious violations of fair trial guarantees. Documented reports issued by the “Emergency Lawyers” group indicated that procedural violations included failure to fully hear key evidence, the complete absence of the defense team during the sentencing session due to lack of formal notification, and the absence of a clear judicial reasoning explaining the basis of conviction. The reports further revealed that a member of Mansour’s defense team, prominent lawyer Abubakar Al-Mahi, was arrested prior to a critical hearing in the case, in what was seen as part of a systematic effort to restrict the defense and undermine the ability to provide effective legal representation.

Khartoum (Al-Jarif East)

Hamid Al-Naeim – Humanitarian volunteer

prosecuted for a crime he did not commit – Joint Security Committee and Criminal Court



31 March 2026 (ongoing until 7 May 2026).

The case of humanitarian volunteer and medical doctor Hamid Al-Naeim, a key figure in the East Al-Jarif Emergency Room, represents a stark example of the targeting of humanitarian and medical workers amid the ongoing war. On 31 March 2026, he was arrested by a force affiliated with the Joint Security Committee in East Nile locality without a warrant or any clear legal justification. He spent more than 20 days in detention at an undisclosed security facility under conditions lacking basic legal safeguards. Following a broad rights campaign led by the “Emergency Lawyers” group and emergency rooms in Khartoum, Al-Naeim was released on bail (residence guarantee) on 22 April 2026. However, criminal proceedings against him continued, and on 26 April his first court hearing was held before the Criminal Court in East Al-Jarif (Al-

Huda district) on a serious charge of “collaboration with the Rapid Support Forces,” which carries severe penalties if proven. The hearing was adjourned to 7 May 2026 due to the complainant’s and key witnesses’ absence. This development raises serious human rights concerns about the judiciary being used as a tool to target humanitarian workers, particularly as Al-Naeim himself had previously faced repeated violations yet continued his life-saving humanitarian work in one of Khartoum’s most war-affected areas.

Port Sudan

Rahab Mubarak – Legal prosecution over human rights activity and media statements – State Security Prosecution



From 17 April 2026 to 29 April 2026 (ongoing).

As part of an organized campaign targeting lawyers and human rights defenders, the State Security and Anti-Terrorism Prosecution in Port Sudan initiated broad legal proceedings against prominent human rights lawyer Rahab Mubarak Sayed Ahmed, a member of the “Emergency Lawyers” group, starting 17 April 2026, just days after the third anniversary of the Sudanese war. The case escalated rapidly: on 18 April, a criminal complaint was opened under file number (50/2026) based on a security complaint; on 20 April an arrest warrant was issued giving her 72 hours to surrender; on 21 April the Bar Association dismissed her from the legal profession; and on 27 April she was placed on a list of so-called “fugitive accused persons.” She faces charges under Articles (50), (51), and (66) of the 1991 Sudanese Criminal Code, which carry the death penalty if convicted, including “undermining the constitutional order,” “waging war against the state,” and “spreading false information.” Reports indicate that the campaign

has extended beyond legal measures to include a coordinated smear and incitement campaign on social media and pro-government media outlets. International organizations, including Front Line Defenders, expressed deep concern, stating that the prosecution is directly linked to her legitimate work documenting human rights violations and monitoring the use of prohibited weapons in the conflict. This case reflects a growing pattern of using politically motivated criminal complaints to criminalize peaceful human rights work in Sudan.

Port Sudan

Mohamed Ezzeldin – Arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance for nearly a year – Port Sudan Authority



From 10 May 2025 to 30 April 2026 (355 days ongoing).

In one of the longest cases of arbitrary detention in Sudan, human rights lawyer Mohamed Ezzeldin remains in detention at Port Sudan prison for the 355th consecutive day after being arrested on 10 May 2025 under unclear circumstances that were never officially disclosed by security authorities. His prolonged detention has involved multiple violations of international human rights law, including early-stage enforced disappearance, transfers between different detention facilities, and repeated renewal of detention orders without being brought before an impartial judge or granted a fair trial. Additionally, late charges were filed against him under provisions of the 1991 Criminal Code carrying the death penalty, significantly increasing his legal risk. His health has severely deteriorated due to chronic illnesses (diabetes and high lipid levels), as well as other conditions developed during detention, amid a lack of adequate medical care or regular health monitoring. As of 30 April 2026, he remains in detention without any change in his legal status, while human rights organizations continue to demand his immediate release or, at minimum, access to a fair trial.

Miah Al-Nile Mubarak – Arrest during journalistic coverage and prosecution on serious charges – General Intelligence Service



28 March 2026.

The arrest of journalist Miah Al-Nile Mubarak represents one of the most serious violations of press freedom in the reporting period. On 28 March 2026, the General Intelligence Service affiliated with the Port Sudan authority detained her while she was performing her professional duties covering middle school examinations at a private school in Al-Shaqilab, Jebel Awlia locality, Khartoum State, despite her entry being based on an official invitation from the school administration. Over approximately 12 hours of detention, she was subjected to humiliating body searches, a full search of her phone and personal belongings, and prolonged interrogation involving serious accusations unrelated to journalism, including “collaboration with the Rapid Support Forces” and “transmitting military coordinates,” as well as “impersonating a journalist,” despite holding a valid press card. Investigations also revealed serious procedural violations, including intrusive questions about her family background and tribal affiliation, which were condemned by the Justice Committee and the Journalists’ Syndicate as a violation of privacy and human dignity. A criminal case was formally filed against her on charges of impersonation, and she was released after about 12 hours without any official explanation from security authorities regarding the detention or the legal basis for the accusations.

Dr. Ali Omar Mohammed – Academic arrested over social media posts – Kassala State Security Cell

9 April 2026.

In a case that reflects the continued restriction of freedom of expression and peaceful criticism in Sudan, the Security Cell in Kassala State arrested physician and academic Dr. Ali Omar Mohammed on 9 April 2026 over social media posts containing public criticism directed at the Secretary of the Governor of Kassala State. Human rights sources reported that the arrest was carried out following a raid on his home without presenting a judicial warrant and involved excessive use of force. He was taken to an undisclosed location and denied contact with his family or a lawyer. According to available accounts, he was subjected to physical and psychological ill-treatment during detention, while his family experienced severe psychological distress due to uncertainty about his whereabouts for many hours. His detention conditions and health status remain unclear as of the time of this report, with authorities lacking transparency regarding his legal status or the charges against him. This case illustrates the continued tightening of restrictions on academic and critical voices across multiple states in Sudan, amid exceptional circumstances that would require greater freedoms rather than further repression.

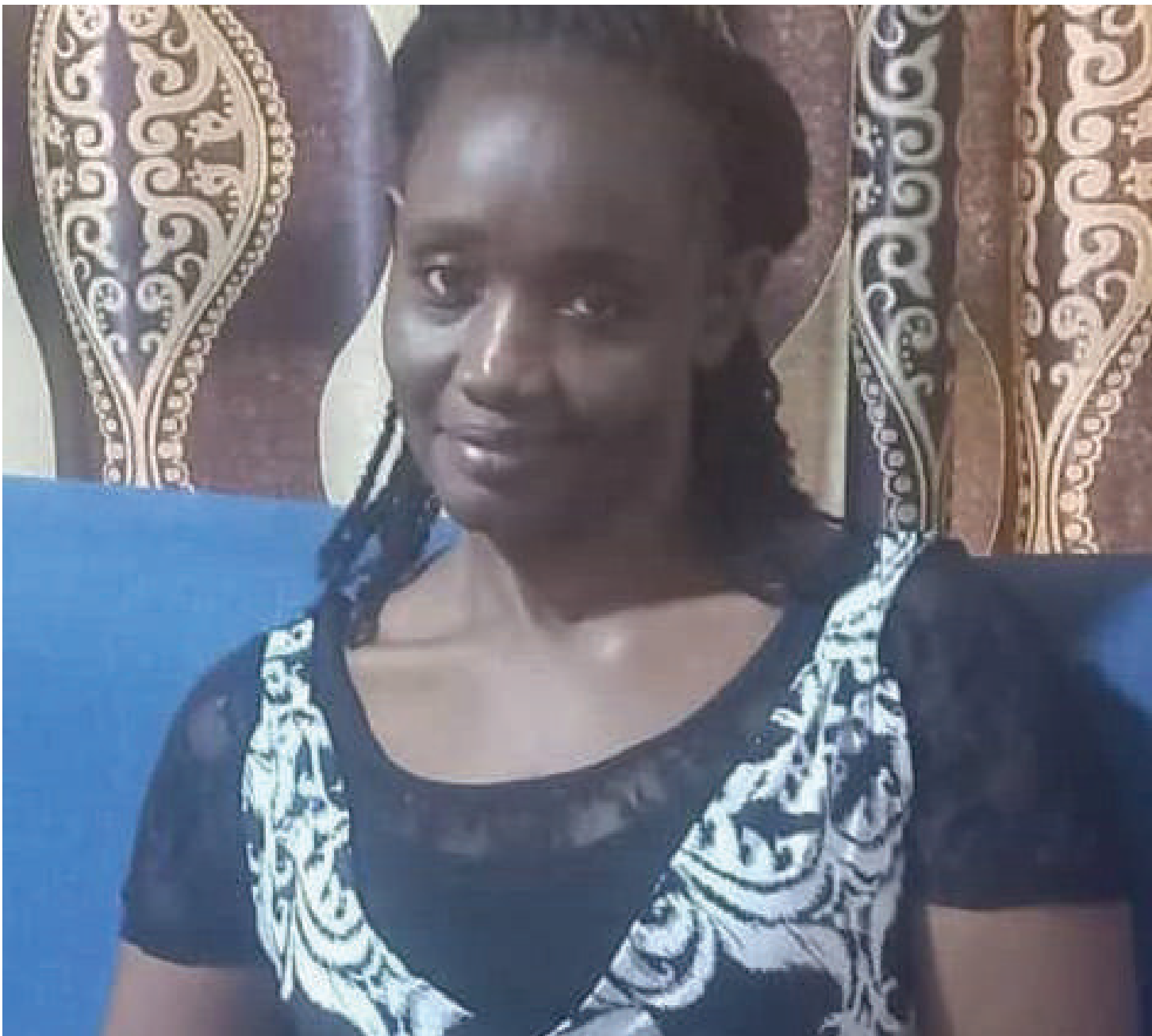


Kauda, South Kordofan – Nuba Mountains (areas under SPLM-N control)

Najwa Musa Kenda – Detention of an international humanitarian worker for 30 days without charge or trial – SPLM-N intelligence

1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026 (ongoing).

On the other side of the conflict, this section documents another violation committed by the opposing party, as the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N) continues to detain international



humanitarian worker Najwa Musa Kenda, an employee of Saferworld and also affiliated with the United Nations. She has been held since 1 April 2026 after being arrested in the Tobo area and transferred to an undisclosed detention site in Koya, west of Kauda. As of her 30th day in detention, she remains in arbitrary custody without any formal charges, investigation, or trial, in clear violation of international standards protecting humanitarian workers under international humanitarian law. She faces severe restrictions on contact with the outside world, with her family allowed only one brief and closely monitored visit on 13 April, which prevented any meaningful disclosure of her physical or psychological condition or access to legal and humanitarian assistance. Sources indicate that her health may be at risk due to lack of adequate medical care and inconsistent provision of food by the detaining authority.

Nyala, South Darfur (areas under Rapid Support Forces control)

Four women human rights defenders (Amina Ishaq, Salma Adam, Heba Musa, Rana Yaqoub) – Arbitrary and ongoing detention for 56 days without charge or trial – RSF intelligence

5 March 2026 to 30 April 2026 (ongoing).

In one of the most alarming cases of arbitrary detention in RSF-controlled areas, four prominent women human rights defenders—Amina Ishaq, Salma Adam Abdelrahman, Heba Musa Ismail, and Rana Yaqoub Mohammed—remain detained in Nyala prison after RSF intelligence forces raided their homes on 5 March 2026. The arrests followed their participation in a specialized training workshop on women’s rights and empowerment aimed at raising awareness among women in conflict-affected areas. The raids were carried out simultaneously and in a coordinated manner, indicating a pre-planned operation. The women were initially taken to an undisclosed location before being transferred to Nyala prison, without any arrest warrant or legal justification. As of their 56th day in detention, no formal charges have been brought against them, nor have they been presented to a prosecutor or court. They have also been denied regular contact with their families or lawyers, amid unconfirmed reports of harsh detention conditions

that may violate their right to human dignity. This case represents a stark example of the targeting of women for their peaceful human rights work at a time when support for women’s rights and empowerment is critically needed.

El-Obeid, North Kordofan

Five faculty members from the University of Kordofan (out of 11 initially arrested) – Arrest of academics over peaceful strike – Security forces (police and state security agencies)

30 March 2026 to 30 April 2026 (ongoing for 5 individuals).

On 30 March 2026, the city of El-Obeid witnessed a large-scale arrest campaign targeting 11 faculty members from the University of Kordofan during their participation in a peaceful protest at the Faculty of Education as part of a nationwide academic strike launched by the Sudanese Universities Professors Committee (SULOGU). The strike, supported by more than 1,000 university professors, called for improved salaries, approval of a revised pay structure, and updated employment regulations for teaching assistants and academic staff. The initial list of detainees included: Dr. Abdunnasser Abdulrahim, Dr. Obeidullah Ahmed Al-Hajj, Dr. Hamza Adam Yousif, Dr. Al-Fateh Al-Siddiq Abdel-Fattah, Dr. Mujtaba Mohammed Salam, Dr. Al-Zein Musa Juma, Mr. Osman Ahmed Khamis, Dr. Omar Al-Shafi Ahmed, Dr. Mohammed Al-Mahdi Mohammed Ali, Dr. Al-Sadiq Al-Qasim Farahna, and Dr. Qasim Ahmed Hamad. Following sustained rights advocacy and lengthy negotiations, six of them were later released: Obeidullah Ahmed Al-Hajj, Al-Fateh Al-Siddiq Abdel-Fattah, Osman Ahmed Khamis, Mohammed Al-Mahdi Mohammed Ali, Al-Sadiq Al-Qasim Farahna, and Qasim Ahmed Hamad. However, as of 30 April 2026, five academics remain in arbitrary detention by security forces: Dr. Abdunnasser Abdulrahim, Dr. Hamza Adam Yousif, Dr. Mujtaba Mohammed Salam, Dr. Al-Zein Musa Juma, and Dr. Omar Al-Shafi Ahmed.



Global Honors and Achievements for Sudanese Human Rights Defenders

March – April 2026



London / New York (Global)

Issa Dafallah (Sudanese journalist) – Winner of “The Stringer Foundation Award” for Journalism 2026 – The Stringer Foundation in collaboration with The New York Times

29 April 2026.

The New York Times, in collaboration with The Stringer Foundation, announced that distinguished Sudanese journalist Issa Dafallah has won the 2026 Stringer Foundation Award, as part of a selective list of 25 independent journalists from around the world chosen from approximately 800 international nominations. The award recognizes exceptional journalistic work and the significant risks faced by journalists operating in high-risk environments. This prestigious award is granted to journalists who continue producing bold investigative and field reporting under the most difficult and dangerous conditions. It includes financial support ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000 to help sustain their work and enhance their professional protection amid growing threats. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place in November 2026, attended by leading journalists and media figures from around the world. This global recognition reflects the continued commitment of Sudanese journalists to their vital mission despite targeted persecution and systematic oppression, as Dafallah has continued covering violations and dire humanitarian conditions from within war-torn Sudan, providing vivid field accounts of civilian suffering in conflict areas.

Madrid (Global)

Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin (Sudanese novelist) – Winner of the 2026 Freedom of Expression Award – Commission Optimists Awards

11 April 2026.

On 11 April 2026, the jury of the 12th annual Commission Optimists Awards announced that prominent Sudanese writer and novelist Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin had won the 2026 Freedom of Expression Award, a prestigious international prize granted annually to creators who use their art and writing to defend freedom of expression and expose injustice and repression worldwide. This recognition was awarded in appreciation of his rich literary career spanning decades, during which he has used novels and short stories as powerful tools to highlight issues of political repression, wars, armed conflicts, and serious human rights violations affecting civilians in Sudan. His works have addressed themes such as displacement, social marginalization, and systematic violence against vulnerable groups and fragile communities. In its citation, the editor-in-chief of the magazine overseeing the award described Sakin’s creative voice as “a powerful testimony against censorship and injustice, and an indomitable soft force in the face of repression,” noting that his work represents a model of resistance literature that bridges artistic expression with the defense of human dignity. The award committee expressed hope that Baraka Sakin would receive the honor at a ceremony to be held at the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid.

My political position is that people must not rely on others



Muzan Abu Obeida Ahmed Al-Neel
(1986–2026)

Human rights defender, engineer, researcher, Sudanese writer, and one of the icons of the December Revolution

Early Life and Formation:

Muzan Al-Neel was born in Omdurman, Sudan, in June 1986, into a middle-class family. She was the eldest daughter of her parents, Abu Obeida and her mother, and had three siblings: Misdar, Marin, and Malab. She studied mechanical engineering at the Sudan University of Science and Technology, earning her bachelor’s degree in 2009, followed by a master’s degree in technical management. Muzan was known for her outspoken political positions, summarized in her famous phrase: “My political position is that people must not rely on others,” a slogan she frequently repeated in her writings and discussions, emphasizing the importance of self-reliance and grassroots struggle for freedom and dignity. Muzan passed away on 15 April 2026 at the age of 39, leaving behind a legacy of struggle and thought befitting the sacrifices she made for human rights in Sudan.

Professional and Human Rights Career:
Between Engineering and Activism:

Muzan worked for more than a decade in engineering projects and management consulting, managing projects in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. She also contributed to founding the Industrial Policy

Research Institute and volunteered as a consultant at the Industrial Research and Consultancy Center in Sudan. However, her true passion lay in human rights. She began her activism as early as 2006, when she established the Human Rights Unit at Sudan University as part of a project by the NGO “SUDO,” and helped create similar units in other Sudanese universities. Her work later focused on economic and social rights, where she developed pioneering initiatives and academic research published in regional and international journals addressing issues such as labor rights, indigenous peoples’ rights, anti-corruption efforts, and the right to housing and healthcare. In 2018, Muzan was at the forefront of the December Revolution, participating in the sit-in at the General Command of the armed forces, documenting the revolution’s phases and transformations in her critical writings, and rejecting any attempts to exploit the popular movement for narrow political gains.

Intellectual and Institutional Legacy and
Enduring Writings:

Muzan was not only a field activist but also an academic researcher and founding thinker. In 2021, she founded the “ISTinaD” Center, a research center focused on innovation, science, and technology for community-



oriented development, and served as its executive director. She was a research fellow at the Transnational Institute (TNI) and a former non-resident fellow at the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP). Among her most notable works is the documentation study “An Unfinished Revolution,” produced in partnership with the organization “DefendDefenders,” which examined the major challenges faced by women human rights defenders in Sudan after the December Revolution. She published in prominent international platforms such as African Arguments, MERIP, Jacobin, TIMEP, and Al Jazeera English, and contributed to the book “The Arab Uprisings: A Decade of Popular Mobilization” published by TNI in 2021. Her colleagues described her as “an unbreakable courageous voice” and “a unique individual who combined engineering precision with human rights passion.”

Sudden Passing and Enduring Legacy:

Muzan’s passing on 15 April 2026 coincided with the third anniversary of the outbreak of war in Sudan—a war that forced her displacement to the United Arab Emirates while her heart remained tied to her homeland. She died of a sudden heart attack in what was described as a “symbolic and tragic” moment, leaving this world on the same day Sudanese people continue to pay the heavy cost of war with tens of thousands of victims. Numerous human rights and political bodies mourned her, including the Transnational Institute, which described her passing as “a great loss to the progressive movement,” the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate, which called her “an icon of the December Revolution,” the Revolutionary Socialists movement, which described her as “a courageous voice for freedom and justice,” and the “No to Women’s Oppression” initiative, which recognized her

as a prominent defender of women’s rights. The Sudan Human Rights Defenders Coalition described her as one of the icons of the glorious December Revolution. Muzan may have passed away, but her intellectual and research legacy, her principled positions, and her pioneering studies on the targeting of women human rights defenders will remain beacons lighting the path for future generations, inspiring continued struggle for a Sudan grounded in justice and dignity for all.

“May God have mercy on Muzan Al-Neel; she was truly a rare example of an engaged intellectual committed to the causes of her people, choosing to be a voice for those who have no voice.”





Key Activities of the Sudanese Human Rights Defenders Coalition April 2026

Dialogue Session on the Role of Human Rights Defenders in Peace and Conflict Resolution – Toward Developing Supportive Peacebuilding Policies

Kampala – April 10, 2026 | Sudan Defenders

The Sudanese Human Rights Defenders Coalition organized a dialogue session with the participation of approximately 30 active human rights organizations and entities. The session focused on discussing and strengthening the role of human rights defenders in peace processes and conflict resolution amid the ongoing armed conflict in Sudan and its escalating humanitarian and human rights consequences. Human rights defender Dr. Shams al-Din Dho al-Bayt presented a discussion paper titled “The Role of Defenders in Peace and Conflict Resolution,” addressing advocacy, protection, and peacebuilding roles, with emphasis on the need to develop these roles within the current war context and transform discussions into practical policy frameworks. The session featured broad interactive discussions aimed at refining the paper into actionable policy proposals that support defenders’ work and enhance the role of human rights networks and peacebuilding actors. The paper highlighted the historical role of Sudanese

defenders in documenting violations, particularly in conflict areas such as the Nuba Mountains, Darfur, and Blue Nile, and in contributing to accountability through national and international justice mechanisms. It also addressed their roles in human rights training, defending civil and political rights, and promoting human rights culture. Discussions further emphasized the importance of strengthening defenders’ participation in peace negotiations, expanding their role in peace pathways, supporting public freedoms, advocating rights, countering authoritarianism, protecting refugees’ rights, raising political awareness, organizing community dialogues, and combating hate speech. Participants stressed the need for a comprehensive human rights approach linking civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, strengthening partnerships with grassroots women and youth networks, integrating human rights and peace concepts into education, developing early warning systems to monitor tensions, and promoting legal and constitutional reforms to uphold the rule of law. The session concluded by underscoring the importance of sustaining such dialogue platforms to develop practical tools that contribute to building a just and sustainable peace in Sudan.



Advanced Institutional Shift: Sudan Defenders Adopts Internal Policies Aligned with the 2026–2031 Strategy to Strengthen Governance

March 26–27, 2026

As part of an advanced trajectory to strengthen institutional development, the Sudanese Human Rights Defenders Coalition announced the completion and adoption of a package of internal policies aligned with its 2026–2031 strategy during its evaluation meeting held on March 25–26, 2026. The policies were presented, discussed, and approved according to established organizational procedures. This step reflects the coalition’s commitment to enhancing its institutional systems by improving administrative and organizational efficiency and reinforcing principles of transparency and accountability. These efforts aim to strengthen its capacity to protect human rights defenders effectively and sustainably, in line with international standards and best practices for human rights organizations.

Sudanese Human Rights Defenders Coalition Strengthens Regional Cooperation with REDHAC

Kampala – March 24, 2026

The Sudanese Human Rights Defenders Coalition held a high-level meeting with the Central African Human Rights Defenders Network (REDHAC) at REDHAC’s headquarters in Kampala, as part of efforts to enhance regional cooperation and exchange expertise in protection, advocacy, and capacity-building. The meeting aligned with the Coalition’s strategy, focused on capacity development and strengthening networks and regional partnerships. Both parties reviewed their activities and areas of work and discussed challenges and opportunities related to implementing human rights programs and projects in local and regional contexts. REDHAC, which has a presence in

eight Central African countries, presented a detailed overview of its organisational structure and scope of work, including documenting human rights violations, protecting defenders, advocacy campaigns, and capacity building, with a focus on solidarity among defenders and supporting them against threats.

Key Outcomes of the Meeting:

Exchange of expertise and knowledge between the two organisations in protection, advocacy, and capacity building.

Strengthening networking and communication to develop joint mechanisms with regional and international coalitions.

Developing coordinated strategies to enhance the effectiveness of human rights and community initiatives.

Participants emphasized the importance of continuing to build shared understanding focused on protecting human rights defenders, strengthening institutional capacities, and ensuring tangible impact on local and regional policies, thereby enhancing civil society’s ability to confront violations and promote human rights.





Monitoring International Decisions and Positions on the Human Rights Situation in Sudan

European Union Announces Consideration of Additional Sanctions Targeting Sudan's War Economy and Rejects Parallel Governance

April 22, 2026

On April 22, 2026, the European Union (EU) issued a strongly worded statement following closed consultations on Sudan, declaring its intention to use "all available tools, including diplomacy and restrictive measures, for peace in Sudan," including studying the imposition of additional sanctions targeting the war economy and its beneficiaries. The EU called on all actors to engage in negotiations aimed at an immediate and permanent ceasefire and expressed readiness to support any unified peace initiative. It also urged external actors to cease fueling the conflict and called for expanding the mandates of the International Criminal Court and the UN arms embargo to cover the entire country, rather than being limited to Darfur.

The EU reaffirmed its commitment to Sudan's unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, strongly rejecting "any unilateral attempt to establish parallel governance that could threaten the country's division." These developments came days after a European delegation visited Port Sudan, followed by diplomatic statements described as "shocking" by the UN Secretary-General and his envoys, reflecting growing international tensions over the trajectory of the Sudan crisis.

EU Mission Issues Statement Marking Three Years of War in Sudan

April 21, 2026

On April 21, 2026, the European Union issued a statement marking three years since the outbreak of war in Sudan, emphasizing that "the suffering of the Sudanese people continues unabated." The statement noted that the conflict between the Sudanese Armed

Forces and the Rapid Support Forces “destroys lives and deprives the population of the aspirations of the 2018/2019 revolution.” The EU condemned ongoing serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, stressing that conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence is being used as a weapon of war, devastating individuals and communities. The statement also highlighted financial pledges made during the Berlin Conference, totaling €1.5 billion, including €812 million from the EU and its member states.

Russia Vetoes UK-Drafted UN Security Council Resolution Calling for Ceasefire in Sudan

April 17, 2026

On April 17, 2026, Russia exercised its veto against a UK–Sierra Leone draft resolution at the UN Security Council that called on warring parties in Sudan to implement an “immediate cessation of hostilities” and begin negotiations toward a national ceasefire. UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy condemned the Russian decision as “a disgrace,” accusing Russia of being “the sole obstacle to a unified Council voice,” and repeatedly stated “shame on Putin.” U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield also accused Russia of blocking “life-saving action in the world’s largest humanitarian crisis.” In response, Russia’s Deputy Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy described the resolution as having a “colonial flavor,” accusing the UK of attempting to remove references to Sudan’s “legitimate authorities.” Sudan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Port Sudan authority) welcomed the Russian veto, describing it as support for Sudan’s unity and sovereignty.

United States Imposes Sanctions Targeting Recruitment of Colombian Mercenaries to Fight with RSF

April 17, 2026

On April 17, 2026, the U.S. Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on five companies and individuals accused of involvement in recruiting and deploying former Colombian soldiers to fight alongside the Rapid Support Forces in Sudan. The sanctions were issued under an executive order targeting those destabilizing Sudan and undermining democratic transition efforts. Previous UN and diplomatic reports had revealed smuggling operations transporting Colombian fighters Libya and neighboring countries through complex networks documented by UN experts. This U.S. escalation comes as Washington urged both parties to accept a three-month unconditional humanitarian truce.

Third Berlin Conference: €1.5 Billion in Pledges Amid Political Deadlock

April 15, 2026

On April 15, 2026, coinciding with the third anniversary of the war, the third international Berlin Conference in support of Sudan was held with participation from 55 countries and regional and international organizations. The conference secured unprecedented financial pledges exceeding €1.3 billion (approximately \$1.5 billion) to support humanitarian response efforts in Sudan and neighboring countries. The EU and its member states pledged €812 million. However, the conference failed to achieve a political breakthrough, as participants were unable to agree on a unified fi-



nal statement due to disagreements over language concerning the future of state institutions, settling instead for a coordinators’ statement. Nevertheless, the conference succeeded in amplifying Sudanese civil voices, with around 40 representatives of political and civil forces signing a “unified civil call” for ending the war and initiating a Sudanese-led political process, while emergency room representatives participated in discussions with international mediators.

Human Rights Watch Urges World Leaders to Take Concrete Action to Stop Atrocities in Sudan

April 14, 2026

On April 14, 2026, Human Rights Watch called on leaders attending the Berlin Conference to commit to concrete, time-bound measures to protect civilians and hold perpetrators of serious international crimes accountable. In a statement issued on the eve of the war’s third anniversary, the organization noted that the conflict had entered its fourth year amid widespread war crimes, mass displacement, and continued arms flows to warring factions. Mohamed Osman, Sudan researcher at Human Rights Watch, stated that “another year in Sudan has been marked by widespread war crimes,” emphasizing that the conference should generate international momentum to deter atrocities, strengthen accountability, and protect civilians, including local aid workers.

UN and African Union Missions Warn of Escalating Violations and Submit Report on War Crimes

April 13, 2026

On April 13, 2026, the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan and the joint mission

of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights issued a joint statement warning of escalating violence and an increased risk of further atrocity crimes as the conflict approaches its fourth year. Investigations concluded that both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces are responsible—at varying degrees—for serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, including killings, arbitrary detentions, torture, and widespread indiscriminate attacks such as airstrikes, drone attacks, and shelling in populated areas. The missions noted that violations by the RSF were particularly systematic, describing them as “reflecting an organized and repeated pattern, including looting, sexual violence, and ethnically targeted attacks.” The statement stressed that accountability for atrocity crimes is essential to prevent further violations, warning that impunity will persist without justice.

European Union Reaffirms Support for Accountability Mechanisms and Civilian Protection in Sudan

April 8, 2026

On April 8, 2026, the European Union reaffirmed its continued support for international and regional efforts to strengthen accountability mechanisms for serious human rights violations in Sudan. The EU emphasized the importance of activating both national and international accountability processes to ensure perpetrators are not granted impunity, covering all parties to the conflict without exception, in line with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The statement called for enhanced civilian protection in conflict zones and practical measures to reduce recurring violations, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, and attacks on civilian infrastruc-



ture. It also urged the implementation of international recommendations and participation in global efforts to build alliances aimed at preventing serious crimes.

Human Rights Watch Calls on Sudanese Armed Forces to End Arbitrary Detention and Torture in Areas Under Their Control

April 7, 2026

On April 7, 2026, Human Rights Watch issued a statement urging the security and military forces to the Sudanese Armed Forces to immediately end practices of arbitrary detention, torture, and ill-treatment of civilians in areas under their control. The organization reported documenting recurring patterns of abuse, including the arrest of civilians without judicial warrants, detention in harsh conditions, and both physical and psychological torture in official and unofficial detention facilities. It warned that the of such violations may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, calling on military authorities to strictly adhere to international human rights and humanitarian law and to guarantee the right to a fair trial.

Amnesty International Report: Escalation of Serious Violations Against Civilians After Three Years of War

April 5, 2026

In a report issued on April 4, 2026, Amnesty International warned of a dangerous escalation in the rate of violations committed against civilians in Sudan as the armed conflict entered its third year. The organization stated that both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces continue to carry out

direct and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, alongside widespread violations that may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. The report documented abuses including deliberate killings, widespread rape and sexual violence, torture, enforced disappearances, looting, destruction of civilian infrastructure, and obstruction of humanitarian aid. It also highlighted major incidents such as attacks on the Zamzam IDP camp in Darfur, assaults on El Fasher, and airstrikes targeting civilian areas such as markets. Amnesty called for expanding the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court to cover all of Sudan, imposing a comprehensive arms embargo, holding states supporting conflict parties accountable, and ensuring unimpeded humanitarian access.

UN Human Rights Expert Renews Call for Dialogue and Accountability

April 2026

In a statement issued in April 2026, the UN expert on the human rights situation in Sudan renewed calls for launching a comprehensive political dialogue process and strengthening accountability mechanisms amid the ongoing armed conflict, which has entered its fourth year. The expert emphasized that continued hostilities and serious violations—including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture, and attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure—highlight the urgent need to break the recurring cycle of violence. He stressed that accountability for violations is a fundamental pillar of any sustainable peace process, warning that the absence of justice will lead to conflict in different forms.





Risk Map: Patterns of Targeting Human Rights Defenders in Sudan

Hotspot States: Breakdown of Violations by Region

1- Khartoum (Capital & SAF-Controlled Areas)

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Prosecutions on charges carrying the death penalty	Case of lawyer Rahab Mubarak (listed as “fugitive”)	State Security Crimes Prosecutor
Arrest of humanitarian volunteers	Hamed Al-Naeem – East Jireif Emergency Room	Joint Security Cell
Detention and intimidation of journalists	Journalist Mayas Al-Nil Mubarak	General Intelligence Service

Analysis:

Khartoum is witnessing a shift in repression tools from direct confrontation to the politicisation of the judiciary. Broad legal provisions (Articles 50, 51, and 66 of the Penal Code) are increasingly used to criminalise humanitarian and human rights work, in a broader effort to dismantle civil society space.

2- Damazin – Blue Nile State

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Mass arbitrary arrest	7 human rights defenders (mid-January 2026)	Military Intelligence
Physical and psychological torture	Detainees subjected to harsh interrogation methods	SAF-affiliated security units

Analysis:

This case reflects a broader pattern in peripheral states where security forces exercise extraordinary powers outside legal frameworks, relying on vague “security charges” to justify arbitrary detention.

3- Nyala – South Darfur (RSF-Controlled Areas)

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Prolonged arbitrary detention	4 women human rights defenders (56 days without trial)	RSF Intelligence
Financial extortion	Payment required for release from Daqrees prison	Prison administration / controlling forces
Denial of family contact	No visits or access to lawyers	RSF Intelligence

Analysis:

Violations in Nyala reveal a pattern of detention outside legal frameworks, where women defenders are held for months without charges, in clear violation of Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ICCPR.

4- El Fasher – North Darfur

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Abduction and incommunicado detention	Journalists and civil society activists	RSF
Death threats	Direct threats against documentation activists	RSF-affiliated elements
Attacks on NGO offices	Raids and destruction of human rights offices	RSF armed units

Analysis:

Following RSF control of El Fasher (February 2026), the city has become a highly dangerous environment where scorched-earth tactics are used against journalists and activists. Enforced disappearance and death threats have become recurring practices.

5- Port Sudan (De Facto Government Seat)

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Legal persecution of aid workers	Case of pharmacist Ahmed Shifa	Public Prosecutor / Security agencies
Long-term arbitrary detention	Lawyer Mohamed Ezzeldin (Day 355 since 10 May 2025)	Port Sudan Authority
Enforced disappearance	Unacknowledged detention cases	State security services

Analysis:

Port Sudan authorities increasingly use judicial and administrative power to silence dissent. The Ezzeldin case represents one of the longest documented arbitrary detentions in this period, indicating the existence of opaque detention networks.

6- El Obeid – North Kordofan

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Arrest of academics over peaceful strike	5 professors still detained out of 11	Security forces / Police
Restriction of academic freedoms	Dispersal of university protests	State security agencies

Analysis:

This case reflects direct targeting of academic and union freedoms. The strike was treated as a security crime, violating Article 23 of the UDHR (freedom of association).

7- Kauda – South Kordofan (SPLM-N Controlled Areas)

Type of Violation	Documented Examples	Perpetrating Authority
Detention of international humanitarian worker	Najwa Musa Kenda (Day 30 without charge)	SPLM-N Intelligence
ALLRestriction of family contact	One heavily monitored family visit only	SPLM-N security forces

Analysis:

This case demonstrates that human rights violations are not confined to one party; other armed groups also engage in practices that violate international humanitarian law protecting aid workers.

Overall Risk Index (April 2026)

Region	Risk Level	Trend	Most Targeted Groups
Khartoum	Very High	Increasing	Lawyers, humanitarian volunteers
Damazin	High	Increasing	Human rights defenders
Nyala	Very High	Stable	Women human rights defenders
El Fasher	Very High	Sharp Increase	Journalists, civil activists
Port Sudan	Medium-High	Increasing	Defenders, aid workers
El Obeid	Medium	Stable	Academics
Kauda	Medium	Increasing	International humanitarian workers

Bulletin Recommendations

Sudan Defenders (April 2026)

Based on the above risk map, the Sudan Defenders network calls on all relevant stakeholders (local, regional, and international) to take the following measures:

First: Ending Violations and Protecting Civilians and Defenders

- Immediate cessation of all forms of arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, and torture in all conflict areas, without exception.
- Urgent protection guarantees for human rights defenders, including lawyers, journalists, academics, and humanitarian volunteers.
- Establish clear procedures to prevent the targeting of humanitarian and human rights workers during the conflict, and ensure accountability for any violations against them.

Second: Fair Trial Guarantees and Judicial Independence

- Review all politically or security-related cases to ensure compliance with fair trial standards, and annul judgments issued in the absence of proper defense.
- Immediate release of arbitrarily detained individuals (such as Mohamed Ezzeldin, the five professors, and the four women activists), or re-trial before independent civil courts.
- Stop using vague legal provisions (such as “undermining the constitutional order,” “waging war against the state,” “spreading false information”) to criminalise peaceful human rights work.

Third: Accountability and Ending Impunity

- Establish or activate independent investigative mechanisms to examine serious violations committed by all parties, including rape, sexual violence, and enforced disappearance.
- Full cooperation with international mechanisms,



especially the International Criminal Court (ICC), and expansion of its jurisdiction to cover all of Sudan.

- Ensure accountability for war crimes and grave violations without exception, regardless of rank or affiliation.

Fourth: Protection of Civic Space and Freedom of Expression

- End all forms of restrictions on civil society and media work, including raids and closure of offices.
- Stop legal prosecutions against human rights defenders and journalists for their professional activities or legitimate opinions.
- Guarantee press freedom and protect journalists from arrest, targeting, or defamation.

Fifth: Protection of Women and Women Human Rights Defenders

- Adopt special protection measures against gender-based violence and provide safe shelters for women defenders.

- Integrate a gender perspective into all protection and accountability policies, and ensure women's representation in monitoring mechanisms.
- Provide psychosocial and legal support mechanisms for victims, ensuring confidentiality and protection from stigma.

Sixth: Strengthening Protection of Humanitarian Work

- Respect the neutrality and independence of humanitarian workers in accordance with international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions.
- Stop arrests and prosecutions of volunteers and workers in emergency rooms and relief organizations.
- Ensure a safe environment for delivering aid and essential services, and prohibit targeting of hospitals and medical responders.

Seventh: Strengthening the Role of the International Community

- Expand international investigations into violations in Sudan, and support the UN and African Union fact-finding missions.
- Impose pressure measures on parties responsible for human rights violations, including targeted sanctions and travel bans.
- Support civilian protection and documentation mechanisms through funding local and international human rights organizations.

Eighth: Strengthening Monitoring and Early Warning Tools

- Develop early warning systems to track escalation of violations in vulnerable areas and regularly inform decision-makers.
- Support defender networks in secure data collection and documentation, and train them in digital security tools.
- Establish a centralized, verified database of violations accessible to national and international judicial bodies.

About Sudan Defenders

Sudan Defenders: It is the civil alliance of human rights defenders in Sudan, first established in 2009 and re-established in June 2022 in Kampala, Uganda, through the adoption of the Kampala Declaration. The alliance currently includes 47 rights organizations and works to empower and protect human rights defenders through legal, psychological, and logistical support, training, research, monitoring and documentation of violations, and advocacy at national, regional, and international levels. The alliance carries out its activities according to values of independence, transparency, respect for human dignity, and promotes collective action and solidarity among human rights defenders in Sudan and abroad. Its headquarters is located in Kampala, Uganda.



Sudan Defenders
Sudan Human Rights Defenders Coalition



Sudan Defenders

Sudan Human Rights Defenders Coalition

Contact: للتواصل:

 Head Office: Human Rights House, Plot 1853, John Kiyingi Road, Nsambya, Kampala.

 sudandefenders.org

 info@sudandefenders.org

 @SudanDefenders