



Sudan Defenders
Sudan Human Rights Defenders Coalition

NEWSLETTER

Sudan Defenders

Monthly Newsletter | March 2026



Women at the Heart of the Battle..
Defenders on the Frontline

Preamble



The Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders – Sudan Defenders issues its newsletter for March 2026, coinciding with International Women’s Day (March 8) amidst a complex Sudanese reality dominated by armed conflict and widespread violations. This issue focuses on the vital role of human rights defenders, particularly women, who face double targeting yet continue their crucial work to protect communities and promote values of resilience and justice.

The newsletter highlights the escalation of gross and systematic violations, including: extrajudicial killings, field executions, arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearance, and unfair trials, alongside the increased targeting of women human rights defenders through gender-based violence,

restriction of civic space, and the undermining of protection guarantees and the rule of law. These facts reveal an organized trend to criminalize human rights work and silence independent voices. The issue also includes monitoring and documentation of systematic violations against human rights defenders, special files revealing Sudanese global distinction by honoring human rights defenders, by highlighting the stories of women and men defenders who have received international recognition and awards, in addition to an analysis of the reality of civic space in Sudan, monitoring the Alliance’s activities and participations, and presenting documentary profiles reflecting experiences of struggle and sacrifices in the defense of rights and freedoms.

Opening Editorial

MARCH
2026



Women at the Heart of the Battle.. Defenders on the Frontline

March 2026, crowned with the symbolism of International Women’s Day (March 8), arrives as Sudan passes through one of its darkest phases, with the armed conflict entering its third year, the continued collapse of the justice system and rule of law, and the widening circle of impunity.

In the heart of this grim scene, women human rights defenders stand against systematic targeting, where women’s bodies have become battlefields, and violations such as sexual violence, rape, and forced displacement have multiplied, in a blatant violation of human dignity and fundamental rights. Despite the harsh reality, Sudanese women—defenders and activists—continue to embody the highest meanings of resilience, writing daily epics in defense of rights and freedoms, extending a long legacy of struggle since independence, through the achievement of political rights, to their pivotal role in the December Revolution, where the slogan Freedom, Peace, and Justice rose as a uniting horizon for their ongoing struggle.

In parallel, women and men human rights defenders continue their work in an extremely dangerous environment, characterized by arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearance, unfair trials, along with smear campaigns and restriction of civic space. Data documented by the Alliance confirms the escalation of direct targeting of workers in the fields of rights and media, within a broader context

of intense polarization, hate speech, and exploitation of the conflict to deepen divisions.

This issue is based on a precise field monitoring methodology, reflecting victim testimonies and documented facts, and presents a comprehensive picture of the scale of violations and their humanitarian and legal impact, as numbers alone do not reflect the depth of suffering, but rather reveal the erosion of trust in institutions, the diminishing chances for justice, and the threat to the foundations of sustainable peace.

Based on our mission as an independent alliance, we affirm our absolute rejection of all forms of violations, and renew our call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, ensuring effective protection for defenders, ending impunity, and holding perpetrators accountable according to national and international standards. We also call on the international community to assume its responsibilities in supporting justice mechanisms and protecting civic space.

March, with all its symbolism, places upon us an ethical and legal responsibility: to make the struggle of women and human rights defenders a compass for joint action towards justice, and to affirm that human dignity is not an option, but an inherent right that does not lapse with time.

(Chairperson of the Board of Trustees)



Monitoring and Documentation of Systematic Violations against Women and Men Human Rights Defenders in Light of the Sudanese War

Rabak – White Nile State

Lawyer Adam Ahmed Al-Dignaoui: Arbitrary Arrest and Violation of Legal Immunity

Date: March 19, 2026

Lawyer Adam Ahmed Al-Dignaoui, the representative of the Bar Association in White Nile State, was arrested by a joint security force from the Security and Military Intelligence Service, supported by Special Operations Forces, on Thursday evening at his office in Rabak city. The arrest stemmed from an internal discussion in a closed WhatsApp group named «Lawyers» Oasis,» representing a direct targeting of discussion freedoms within professional spaces.

Legal sources reported that the security forces raided the office and took Al-Dignaoui to an unknown location before he was later released on the condition of appearing for investigation on Sunday morning. It is noted that this incident is not the first of its kind, as Al-Dignaoui had previously been subjected to repeated arrests due to his political positions, opposition to the war, and demands to combat corruption.

This measure is considered a blatant violation of the Amended Bar Association Law of 1983, Article 57 of the 2019 Constitutional Document, in addition to Article 33 of the 1991 Criminal Procedure Law, which stipulates the necessity of obtaining a judicial warrant for arrests. The rights-based demand is clear: immediate and unconditional release and ensuring lawyers can freely practice their professional rights.

Blue Nile / Omdurman Prison

Two Women Sentenced to Death by Stoning: International Condemnation and Return to Judicial Extremism

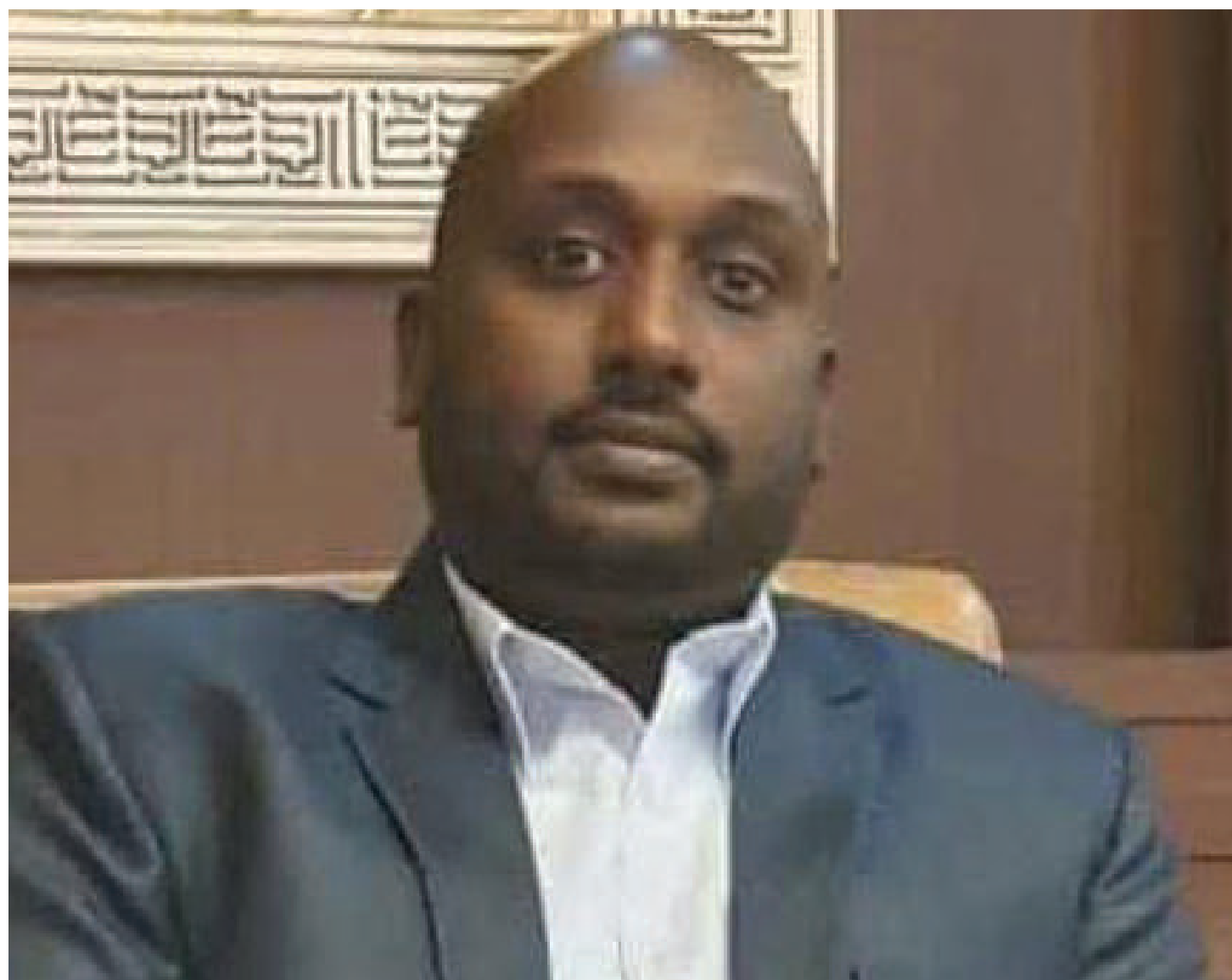
Date: February 26, 2026

Sudanese authorities issued two death sentences by stoning against two women from Gedaref and Blue Nile; they were transferred to Omdurman Women's Prison, where the detainees suffer from a lack of legal representation amidst the near-total collapse of the judicial system. The sentences sparked widespread international condemnation, with the Head of the European Union Mission in Sudan warning that their implementation represents «a dangerous return to extremism in the judicial system» and threatens women's rights. Reports circulated about the possibility of a temporary presidential pardon, without official publication, amidst warnings that a pardon does not nullify the sentence without a legal amendment. Rights organizations consider these violations part of an ongoing pattern against women in conflict zones, calling for immediate release and ensuring full legal representation.



Port Sudan Prison

Lawyer Mohamed Ezzeddine: Ongoing Detention Under Dangerous Health Conditions



March 2026

Lawyer Mohamed Ezzeddine remains in detention since May 10, 2025, in Port Sudan prison, after being subjected to enforced disappearance, torture, and ill-treatment, and transferred between detention centers of the Special Operations Forces. His detention has been renewed 11 times without appearing before a judge, with the case file against him opened late, and he faces the threat of the death penalty under Articles 50 and 51 of the 1991 Criminal Law. Ezzeddine suffers from chronic illnesses including diabetes and high cholesterol, in addition to contracting dengue fever, without adequate medical care, leading to a serious deterioration in his health condition. His continued detention under these circumstances constitutes a flagrant violation of his rights and the rules of fair trial.

Nyala – South Darfur State

Abduction and Enforced Disappearance of Seven Women Defenders and Journalists

Date: February 4, 2026 – Ongoing until March 30, 2026

On February 4, 2026, the Rapid Support Forces carried out a raid on a rights activity addressing «Women's Rights in International Charters,» organized by the «Natakalam» initiative and the «Journalists for Peace» initiative, in partnership with the «Sudan Women Development» organization, as part of preparatory activities for International Women's Day. It was reported that the arrests were carried out from the homes of the targeted women using combat vehicles and plainclothes elements affiliated with the Rapid Support Forces. The detained women are: Manahal Mustafa Al-Sanousi, Mawahib Ibrahim (journalist), Zahraa Mohammed Al-Hassan (journalist), Ishraqa Abdulrahman (journalist), Izdiyar Abdel Moneim Hamid, Sarah Adam, and Majda (from the Sudan Women Development organization).

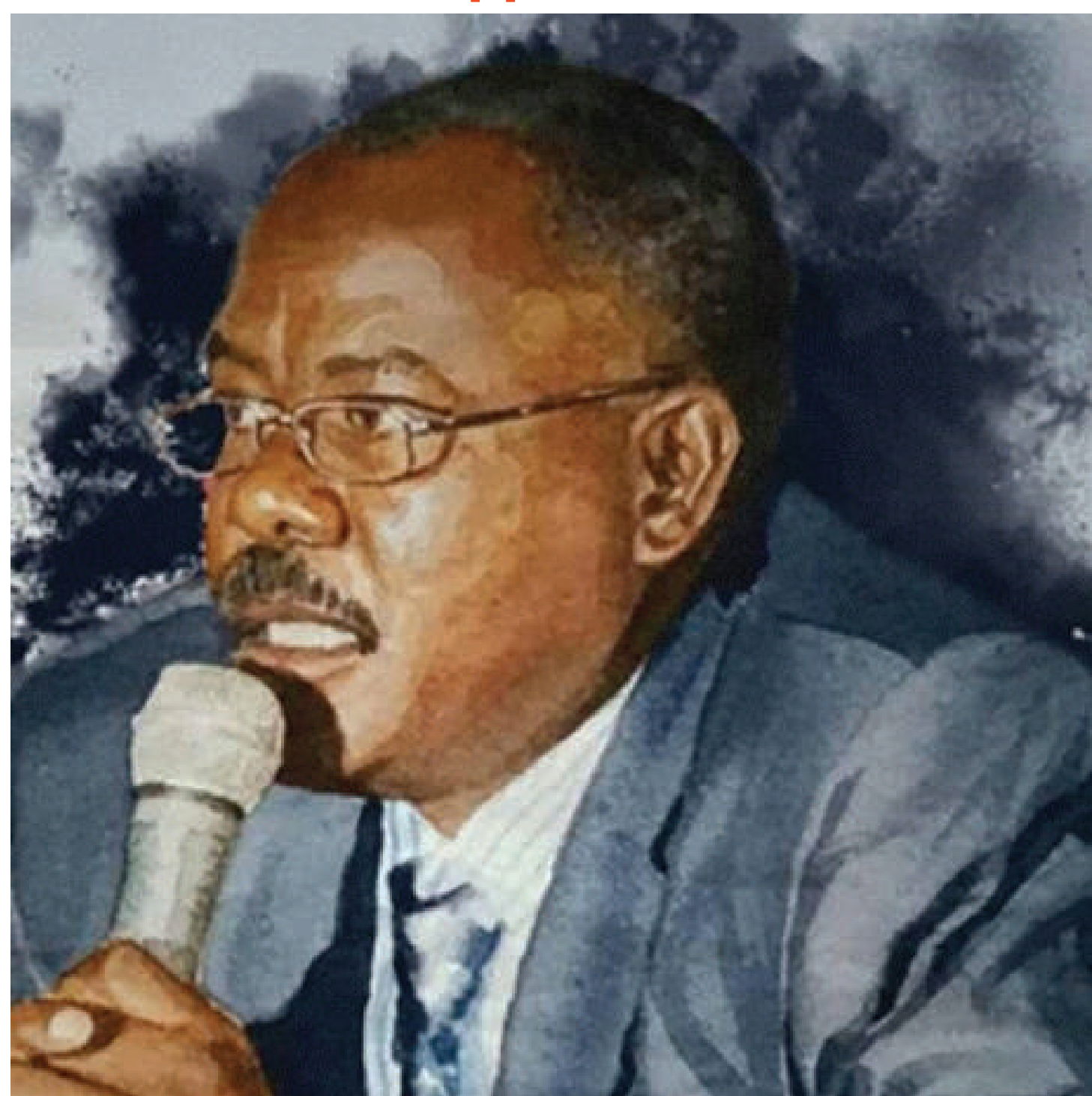
The arrests were carried out without producing arrest warrants or any legal charges. As of March 27, 2026, their detention locations remain undisclosed, and they have not been presented to any judicial authority, constituting cases of enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention.

The Committee to Protect Journalists, in a statement issued on March 16, 2026, demanded their immediate and unconditional release. According to sources from the Sudanese Defenders Alliance, the detainees are held in harsh conditions threatening their lives, including being deprived of communication with their families, denial of visits, and lack of healthcare.



El-Obeid – North Kordofan State

Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashim «Bob»: Ongoing Enforced Disappearance



Date: Arrested on September 23, 2025 – Enforced disappearance until October 13, 2025 – Suffering continues until March 2026**

Human rights defender and union leader Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashim, known as «Bob,» has been subjected to enforced disappearance since his arrest in El-Obeid city on September 23, 2025, by officers of the Sudanese General Intelligence Service, without producing an arrest warrant or notifying his family. His enforced disappearance continued until October 13, 2025, in a flagrant violation of fundamental legal guarantees. Hashim is the head of the Workers' Coordination Committee, emerging through his peaceful activism in defending workers' rights and fair wages. This incident falls within a pattern of targeting defenders and unionists in North Kordofan, amidst a lack of transparency and accountability.

El-Obeid – North Kordofan State

Lawyer Khalfallah Hussein: Released After Two-Month Detention

Arrest: January 17, 2026 – Release: March 2026

After detention that lasted since January 17, 2026, by Sudanese security services, lawyer and rights

defender Khalfallah Hussein Abdelaziz was released. Known for his activity in defending the rights of detainees, Khalfallah Hussein had been subjected to arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance by the General Intelligence Service affiliated with the Sudanese Armed Forces, without any legal warrant or formal charges. During the detention period, he was prevented from communicating with his family, meeting a lawyer, or appearing before a judge, in a flagrant violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. His release represents a positive step but remains insufficient, following a widespread campaign targeting lawyers in conflict zones.

Cairo – Arab Republic of Egypt

Rashid Mohamed Abbas: Death Under Torture or Medical Negligence While in Custody



Date: Death between March 15 and 22, 2026 – Announcement: March 25, 2026

Sudanese citizen Rashid Mohamed Abbas was subjected to a grave violation involving arbitrary arrest or death in custody within Egyptian territory. According to sources from the Sudanese Alliance of Human Rights Defenders, he was arrested in early March 2026 under undisclosed circumstances and remained detained for approximately two weeks without being able to communicate with his family or obtain legal guarantees. During the third week of March 2026 (between March 15 and 22), he died in custody under mysterious circumstances, amidst conflicting accounts regarding the location and circumstances of the death. His death was announced via the «Muwatinoon» website on March 25, 2026, which remains the only confirmed date in the case so far. This incident raises serious concerns about the

possibilities of torture or medical negligence, especially given the absence of an official statement from the authorities, the prevention of family communication, and the victim's family's refusal to receive the body pending an independent medical report determining the true cause of death.

Wad Madani – Gezira State

Lawyer Ahmed Al-Mustafa: Life Sentence in Case of Alleged Cooperation with Rapid Support Forces

Arrest: December 2025 – Verdict: March 2026

The Wad Madani Criminal Court issued a life sentence against lawyer Ahmed Al-Mustafa, known for his activity in defending detainees, in a case labeled by the Port Sudan government as «cooperation with the Rapid Support Forces,» a verdict that sparked widespread criticism regarding the trial's circumstances. According to close sources, Al-Mustafa was arrested in December 2025 from his home, after he had been involved in voluntary work during the war and defended dozens of detainees, securing the release of several through acquittals before his own arrest. Data suggests the court relied on limited and contradictory testimonies against defense witnesses, amidst speculation that the case might be linked to his legal role and personal disputes, in the absence of tangible evidence. This trial is part of a series of arbitrary verdicts issued in Wad Madani, involving hundreds of citizens on similar charges, amidst serious concerns about judicial independence and the absence of fair trial standards.

U.S. Designation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan Terrorist Organization» – Complex Rights Implications

Date: March 9, 2026 – Designation Effective: March 16, 2026

The U.S. Department of State announced on March 9, 2026, the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan as a «Foreign Terrorist Organization» and a «Specially Designated Global Terrorist Entity,» effective March 16, 2026. The designation included the Al-Bara' bin Malik Brigade, the group's military wing, due to their involvement in widespread violence against civilians, including field executions and child recruitment, receiving direct support from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force. In response to the decision, Sudanese Army Commander General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan affirmed the army's separation from any armed groups. On March 15, 2026, Port Sudan authorities arrested Islamist leader Naji Abdullah, indicating clear international pressure to curb the activities of armed groups.

Rights Dimension: The decision highlights the grave violations committed by fighters of the Islamist current, emphasizing the necessity of holding those responsible for crimes accountable according to international law standards.

UN Condemns Attack on Al-Daein Hospital: May Amount to War Crimes

Date: March 24, 2026

UN Secretary-General António Guterres condemned in the strongest terms a drone strike, attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces, that targeted Al-Daein Teaching Hospital, killing at least 60 people, including

children, women, and health workers. Guterres stated that «attacks on health workers and facilities may amount to war crimes,» calling for adherence to international humanitarian law. This attack aligns with a broader pattern of systematic targeting of civilian infrastructure, documented by the Security Council in its multiple statements, where it affirmed that «deliberate attacks on humanitarian workers and health facilities may constitute war crimes.»



Conclusion and Recommendations: A Systematic Pattern of Violations and a Global Call for Justice:

The above monitoring reveals a systematic pattern of grave violations against women and men human rights defenders in Sudan, including arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance without judicial orders, deprivation of communication with families and lawyers, detention under dangerous health conditions, deaths in custody under mysterious circumstances, arbitrary judicial rulings, and deliberate targeting of

women defenders and journalists. In light of these violations, the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders calls upon the international community to secure the immediate and unconditional release of all arbitrarily detained individuals, ensure independent and transparent investigations into the death of Rashid Mohamed Abbas and all cases of death in custody, hold perpetrators accountable according to international law, provide urgent protection for human rights defenders, especially women, and pressure for the cessation of arms flows to all parties to the conflict, in implementation of Security Council resolutions.



Sudanese Global Distinction:

March 2026 – The Month of Human Rights Defenders

Sudanese Global Distinction: Yusra Elbagir Wins Best TV Journalist Award in Britain and Dedicates Achievement to Sudan

March 4, 2026

In an achievement reflecting Sudanese excellence on the international stage, Sudanese-British journalist Yusra Elbagir was awarded the Best TV Journalist of 2026 at the Television Journalism Awards ceremony organized by the Royal Television Society, held on March 4 in London. The recognition came in appreciation of her distinguished field coverage, especially of the war in Sudan, where through her work as an Africa Correspondent for Sky News, she provided in-depth humanitarian reports conveying civilian suffering and revealing the dimensions of the escalating humanitarian crisis since the conflict erupted in April 2023. Elbagir dedicated the award to Sudan, affirming that this honor represents a victory for her country, as she continues to convey the stories of Sudanese people to the world, despite the personal impact of the war on her, including the destruction of her family home in Khartoum. This achievement comes amid the rising presence of Sudanese journalists in international forums, reinforcing the image of professional competence and humanitarian commitment among Sudanese media professionals.

Sudanese Distinction in International Forums: Stella Gaitano Wins the 2026 Freedom of Expression Award from the Norwegian Writers' Union

March 27, 2026

In a new achievement reflecting Sudanese distinction in literature and freedom of expression, the Norwegian Writers' Union announced on March 27, 2026, awarding the Freedom of Expression Prize to Sudanese/South Sudanese novelist Stella Gaitano, shared with poet and rights activist Emi Mahmoud. This recognition comes in appreciation of Gaitano's literary contributions through which she expressed issues of communities affected by wars and conflicts, addressing themes of identity, migration, and displacement in her works such as «Edo's Souls,» «Morning Star,» and «Love the Size of a Papaya Fruit» with profound human insight. Gaitano is considered one of the prominent literary voices that succeeded in conveying the suffering of the Sudanese people to the world, having previously received the Courage Award from the British Ben Pinter Foundation, continuously affirming the presence and impact of Sudanese literature on global humanitarian issues.



Sudanese Global Distinction: Nadra El Mahdi Wins the 2026 Peace Prize for Her Story on War and Displacement

February 23, 2026

Sudanese journalist and writer Nadra El Mahdi won the 2026 Peace Prize from the United Nations-affiliated Women for Peace and Humanitarian Action organization, in partnership with Pulse of the World, for her story «Sudan Between Mines and Music.» This recognition came in appreciation of her contributions to highlighting the voices of women in conflict zones and enhancing their presence in media and humanitarian narratives, as her story reflected the meaning of peace as the protection of women, securing livelihoods, and clearing roads of mines, away from theoretical political discourse. The organization noted that Nadra's story offers a courageous and moving reflection on peace for everyone who has experienced the horrors of war, displacement, and exile, and was selected for international publication and promotion within the Pulse of the World awards program. Al-Mahdi was also awarded the badge of «Distinguished Storyteller» in recognition of the power and impact of her narrative. In her comment on the award, Nadra Al-Mahdi emphasized that this honor is not only personal but represents every Sudanese woman who resisted fear and raised her voice from the heart of suffering, stressing that true peace begins when women's voices are heard and they are included in decision-making, reflecting Sudanese excellence in defending human rights and global media reporting.

Sudanese Distinction on the International Stage: Ayein Network Wins the Dutch Human Rights Tulip Award

March 10, 2026 – The Hague, Netherlands

In an achievement that lifts Sudan's name high in international forums, the Ayein Network, one of the

institutions of the Sudanese Media Forum, was awarded the Dutch Human Rights Tulip at a ceremony held at the Peace Palace in The Hague. Dutch Human Rights Ambassador Wim Geerts presented the award to a representative of the network, recognizing its role in documenting human rights violations through video and conveying the voice of the affected Sudanese people to the international community.

In an emotional speech, the network's representative considered the award «a moment of great pride not only for the journalistic team but an honor for all correspondents who face risks and sacrifice their lives while performing their duty in the field.»



Prior to the award ceremony, the Sudanese Media Forum in the Netherlands organized an event titled «Sudan Under Fire,» during which the film «Sudan's Unknown Heroes» was screened, documenting the resilience of Sudanese women and youth throughout the ongoing war. The head of the forum, Kamal Al-Sadiq, affirmed that the Sudanese Journalists' Union has documented 555 violations against journalists, including 33 journalists killed due to their work exposing violations, while 90% of media institutions were destroyed or disabled. This international recognition serves as a testament to the resilience of the Sudanese media amid war and the efforts of Sudanese correspondents in defending human rights and conveying the truth to the world, reflecting Sudanese excellence and professionalism under the most difficult circumstances.

Sudanese Global Distinction: Sudanese Emergency Rooms Win the 2025 Chatham House Prize



London, March 26, 2026

The prestigious Chatham House institution announced that the Sudanese Emergency Rooms have won its annual prize for 2025, in recognition of their crucial role in providing humanitarian aid during the war that engulfed Sudan since April 2023. The prize is awarded annually to those who have made «the most significant contribution to the improvement of international relations» and was received on behalf of the institute's patron, King Charles III, making it one of the highest international awards in humanitarian work. The Emergency Rooms earned this recognition for their exceptional response in areas often isolated from any international support, providing food and water, managing community kitchens, facilitating civilian evacuations from conflict zones, documenting violations, and supporting women and children survivors of violence. Bronwen Maddox, Director of

Chatham House, praised the Sudanese volunteer networks, describing them as having «demonstrated the ability of civilians to deliver a vital response that goes beyond mere aid, returning a measure of power to communities.» Meanwhile, Tejeste Amare, Director of the Africa Program at the institute, affirmed that these rooms formed «the backbone of the humanitarian response for millions of Sudanese in the absence of government and international support.» The Emergency Rooms expressed their gratitude in an official statement, dedicating the prize to every volunteer who «risks their lives daily to protect others» and to the martyrs of humanity, affirming that this recognition reinforces their commitment to building a civilian future for Sudan based on peace, dignity, and humanity. It is noted that the Sudanese Emergency Rooms have previously received several international honors, including nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize for the years 2024–2026, winning the Rafuto Prize, the European Union Human Rights Prize, and the Richard Holbrooke Prize for International Defense.

Sudanese Distinction on the International Stage: Salwa Al-Sadiq Wins Human Rights Prize in Düsseldorf

Date: March 29, 2026

Location: Düsseldorf, Germany / Sudan

The Tonhalle Düsseldorf awarded Sudanese activist Salwa Al-Sadiq the prestigious Human Rights Prize (€10,000) in recognition of her exceptional efforts in defending women's rights and providing humanitarian aid to displaced persons and the most affected communities amidst wars and crises in Sudan. Salwa, founder and director of the Women's Advocacy and Development Initiative (WADI), works on providing food, clean water, emergency shelter, and involving women in peace and reconstruction processes. The award's trustees, led by Maestro Adam Fischer, praised her heroic role and steadfast leadership under extreme conditions.

The prize has previously been awarded to prominent figures such as Doctors Without Borders, human rights activist Osman Kavala (2022), historian Sergey Lukashevsky (2024), and activists Joanna Hassoun and Shay Hoffmann (2025), reflecting the prestigious international standing of the honor and affirming the continued leadership role of Sudan in defending human rights despite conflicts and major humanitarian challenges.

Sudanese Distinction: Miqdad Hassan: Sudanese Journalist Wins Hans Verploeg Award for Covering the War in Khartoum

Date: February 3, 2026

Location: The Hague, Netherlands / Khartoum, Sudan

Sudanese journalist Miqdad Hassan won the «Best New Journalist–Hans Verploeg 2025» award from Free Press Unlimited, in recognition of his field coverage of the war in Khartoum since April 2023. Hassan is among the few who remained in the capital to document violations, through images and direct reports from destroyed



buildings and active frontlines, revealing to the world the executions, rapes, and starvation of civilians amidst partial international silence. The international jury stated: «Miqdad's dedication, courage, and ability to produce accurate reports in extreme conditions qualified him for this international honor.» Hassan affirmed that the award «belongs first and foremost to Sudan and its people who refuse to lose their humanity,» stressing the importance of field documentation and the role of independent journalism in conveying the Sudanese truth to the world, despite ongoing risks.

Sudan Kassala: Continuation of Feminist Activism in Kassala Despite War and Armed Conflict

March 25, 2026

The Human Rights Center at the Michelsen Institute released a study on March 25, 2026, documenting how Sudanese women continue their feminist activism and community initiatives in Kassala State, despite the war and militarization conditions the country has witnessed since April 2023. The study showed that the war, which led to the displacement of over 11 million people and left 30 million in need of humanitarian aid, did not halt the momentum of the women's movement but rather reshaped it through more decentralized and innovative mechanisms. The study highlighted that women in Kassala used decentralized organization to continue feminist work, humanitarian response, launch small economic initiatives, and create psychological and legal support networks for displaced women and host communities. It also documented media initiatives such as the podcast «Tell Me,» to convey women's voices away from traditional discourse, alongside support from international organizations, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The study concluded that the women's movement in Kassala represents a model for feminist activism in conflict zones, combining resilience, flexibility, decentralization, and quiet resistance, amidst the continuation of armed conflict, affirming that international and regional support efforts contributed to enhancing this resilience and empowering women to play an active role in communities affected by war.



Documentary File



The Crackdown on Civic Space in Sudan

March 2026

Escalation of Systematic Repression of Civic Space

Sudan witnessed during February and March 2026 a qualitative escalation in the campaign targeting civil society organizations. Port Sudan authorities moved from a policy of gradual monitoring and restriction to systematic closure procedures and complete confiscation of organizations' assets, relying on the Voluntary and Humanitarian Work Law of 2006, with justifications ranging from «practicing activities not serving the community» to closure without any stated reason.

Port Sudan Government Warns International Organizations Against Dealing with Parallel Entities

Date: January 27, 2026

Type of Violation: Restriction of Humanitarian Work Freedom**

Salwa Adam Binya, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid in the Port Sudan government, issued an official warning to international and regional organizations including:

- Prohibiting dealing with the Rapid Support Forces Humanitarian Agency (SARHO) as a «parallel state entity.»
- Considering any agreement with SARHO as «support for a rebel entity» and «a departure from national sovereignty.»

- Threatening to revoke the license of any violating organization based on Article 14 of the Voluntary and Humanitarian Work Law of 2006.

****Legal Analysis:**** This warning constitutes unjustified restriction on the right of humanitarian organizations to choose their partners according to principles of neutrality and independence, and is a violation of Sudan's obligations under international humanitarian law.

Restriction of Cross-Border Humanitarian Aid

Period: February 2026

Type of Violation: Prevention of Humanitarian Aid Access

Sudanese authorities imposed strict restrictions on the movement of cross-border aid from Chad to Darfur, including:

- Preventing aid convoys from crossing the Adré crossing without prior permits.
- Systematic inspection and delay procedures for trucks loaded with relief supplies.
- Partial suspension of World Food Programme (WFP) operations in West and South Darfur.

****International Position:**** The U.S. Department of State warned on February 26, 2026, that these restrictions «hinder the delivery of life-saving aid.»



Violations Targeting Civil Society Organizations

Darfur Victims Support Organisation

Date: February 3, 2026

Type of Violation: Arbitrary License Revocation

The license was closed without mentioning any legal justification, affecting its offices in El Fasher, Nyala, and El Geneina. The organization was founded in 2004 and focused on providing psychological and social support, community rehabilitation, and documenting rights violations. This arbitrary closure constitutes a flagrant violation of the rights of the organization and its beneficiaries.

Kayan Organisation for Women Empowerment and Peacebuilding

Date: February 3, 2026

Type of Violation: Arbitrary Closure of the Organization

The decision targeted the organization's locations in Khartoum, South Kordofan, Gedaref, and Kassala, without stating any legal reason. The closure led to:

- Suspension of training programs for 1,850 women.
- Closure of 3 legal advice centers.
- Disruption of 12 peacebuilding projects.

Enjaz Organisation for Gender, Humanitarian Aid and Development

Date: February 3, 2026

Type of Violation: Arbitrary Closure

Enjaz Organisation for Gender is one of the Sudanese civil organizations with a feminist orientation, working in areas of promoting gender equality, protection, humanitarian work, and sustainable community development, with a special focus on women, youth, and groups affected by conflicts.

Union of Darfuri Scholars and Experts

Date: February 3, 2026

Type of Violation: Targeting Independent Platforms

Suspension of 12 research programs and 25 educational programs, and the loss of a platform for exchanging scientific expertise and documenting rights violations, reflecting the targeting of independent and reliable platforms in Darfur.

Prevention of Humanitarian Organizations' Movement in South Kordofan State

Date: March 5, 2026

Type of Violation: Complete Freeze of Humanitarian Activities

The decision included:

- Freezing activities of 7 humanitarian organizations.
- Closure of 3 health centers.
- Preventing vaccination teams from reaching remote areas.

Restrictions on Foreign Organizations

Date: March 10, 2026

Type of Violation: Restriction of International Humanitarian Work

The Humanitarian Aid Commission in Khartoum imposed:

- Mandatory full coordination with authorities.
- Prohibition of direct work without an approved local partner.
- Requirement of prior approval for all local and international staff.
- Threat to suspend the activity of any violating organization within 30 days.

B o u n d l e s s
C o u r a g e : T h e
J o u r n e y o f
R i g h t s D e f e n d e r :
P r o f e s s o r



Rabiha Ismail Mohamed El-Sheikh

**Introduction: A Biography of Struggle
Embodied in Justice and Dignity****

In a world beset by conflicts and where the interests of major powers intersect, individuals sometimes emerge who write chapters of giving and commitment with their courage. Rabiha Ismail Mohamed El-Sheikh is not just a human rights defender, but a symbol of the Sudanese woman who turns pain into strength, and challenges into lessons in resilience and perseverance. Her career balances field work, rights documentation, and institutional representation, forming a rare model of civil leadership and humanitarian commitment.

**Roots and Formation:
From El-Obeid to Global Horizons**

Rabiha was born in El-Obeid city, North Kordofan, where she drew strength and deep roots from her land. She obtained a degree in Administrative Sciences from the University of Khartoum, and later a Higher Diploma in Peace Studies from Bahri University, honing her knowledge of the fundamentals of community and rights work, preparing herself to face uniquely complex challenges in conflict environments.

This academic background was not the end but the foundation upon which she built her institutional experience and understanding of the dynamics of civil work in Sudan and the region.

**A Rich Professional Career: Between
Institutions and Civil Foundation**

Rabiha began her professional career at the Ministry of Health in North Kordofan, where she realized that health and human dignity are intrinsically linked. This was followed by successive significant roles in civil organizations such as:

- AZZA Feminist,
- Swedish Child Care,
- Wai Organisation,

Gaining extensive experience in the fields of women and child protection, and honing her skills in community project management and rights documentation.

Not content with working within existing institutions, she founded and participated in founding several local organizations and associations, believing that voluntary work is the backbone of change. Thanks to

this experience, she became a prominent member of the Sudanese Defenders Alliance, and a member of the board of directors of the Regional Alliance of Women Defenders in East and Central Africa, granting her an influential presence at both national and regional levels.

Quiet Leadership: From Secretarial Roles to Coordinating Initiatives

Rabiha masters the art of quiet leadership through pivotal roles in the executive offices of rights initiatives, such as:

- Financial Secretary for the «No to Defeat» Initiative,
- Secretary for the «Women Against Injustice» Campaign,
- Coordination with the Environmentalists Association and the Bridge for Peace Association.

Her active presence extends to civil politics and advocacy, where she has built a strong network of relationships supporting the causes of peace, justice, and civilian protection in Sudan.

Personal Ordeal: Turning Pain into a Rights Message

In September, Rabiha faced a personal challenge with a breast cancer diagnosis, while coordinating awareness campaigns for early detection in cities like Dongola, Karima, and Atbara. The illness was not an obstacle but transformed into an experience that strengthened her resilience, as she underwent chemotherapy sessions amidst war conditions and displacement, while continuing to deliver rights seminars and workshops. This phase demonstrated Rabiha's ability to turn personal pain into a tool for empowerment, proving that rights struggle does not stop before any obstacle.

International Presence: A Sudanese Voice in Global Forums

Her expertise and unique experience made her an influential presence in international arenas, representing Sudan in conferences and workshops on:

- Citizenship and Empowerment in Morocco, sponsored by the British Council,
- Feminist Guarantee in Nairobi with Sawtouna Organization in 2022,
- Evaluation of Resolution 1325 with the African Union in Ethiopia in 2024,
- Women, Peace, and Agenda in Kampala under the auspices of UN Women in 2023,
- Peace Negotiations (Track II) in South Sudan in 2020,
- Leadership and Governance Programs at John Kenyatta Institute in 2021,
- Monitoring and Documentation Training with Amnesty International in 2024.

Her participations represent a genuine commitment to exporting the Sudanese rights experience and advocating for the issues of women and affected communities.

Peacebuilding Expert: Training and Rights Authorship

Rabiha is a certified trainer in the fields of:

- Conflict and Violence Resolution,
- Leadership and Strategic Management,
- Anti-Corruption,
- Transitional Justice.

She has also produced solid research papers, including:

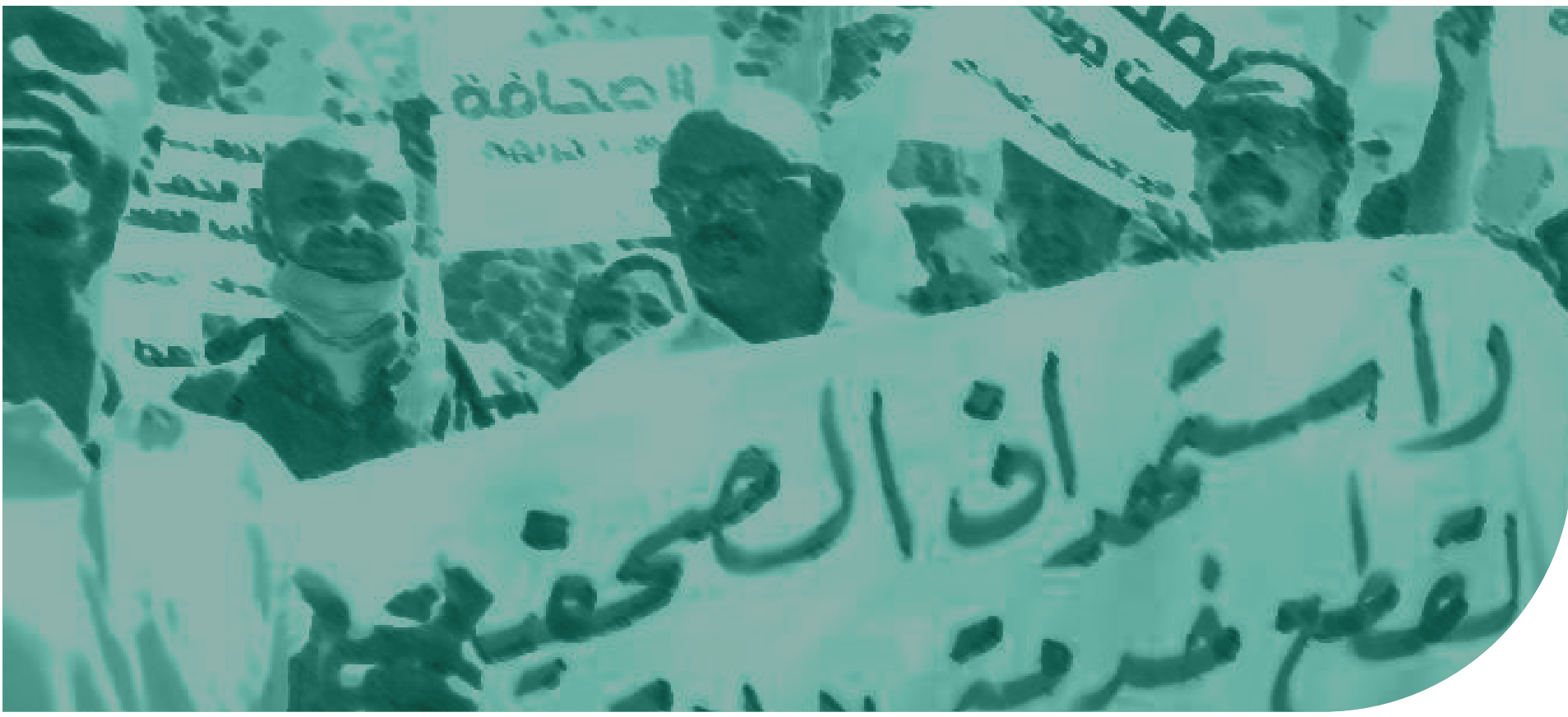
- «The Impact of Resolution 1325 on Protecting Sudanese Women in Times of War,»
- «Customs and Traditions in Sudan and Their Impact on Documenting Violations Against Young Women.»

These papers reflect her commitment to combining field work with scientific rights analysis.

Conclusion: A Defender with a Global Outlook and a Sudanese Heart

Rabiha Ismail Mohamed El-Sheikh's career is not just a rights experience; it is a complete humanitarian epic, where every challenging experience, whether in the fields of struggle or facing illness, turns into a driving force for justice and dignity. She is a true model of a rights defender who starts from within and influences the world, carrying Sudan's message with all courage and awareness, proving that resilience, creativity, and continuous rights work can build bridges to peace that know no impossibility.





Special File: March 2026



Update on Press Freedom in Sudan

Journalists Subjected to Enforced Disappearance

Ashraf Al-Habr
Omdurman – November 2024

Incident Description:

Ashraf Al-Habr, an independent journalist, disappeared suddenly from Omdurman city in November 2024. The entity responsible for his abduction has not been revealed, and no information is available regarding his detention location or health condition. This disappearance is part of a series of incidents targeting independent journalists and reflects an escalation in intimidation campaigns against media professionals who report local news and criticize government practices.

Type of Violation: Enforced disappearance, violation of press freedom, violation of fundamental human rights.
Responsible Entity: Unknown, with reference to potential involvement of security elements based on patterns of previous disappearances.

Rights Observations: The incident represents a flagrant violation of Article 57 of the 2019 Constitutional Document and the UN Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Essam Mohamed Haroun
El Fasher – August 30, 2025

Incident Description:

Essam Mohamed Haroun, Director General of the State Radio and Television Authority in El Fasher, was subjected to enforced disappearance on August 30, 2025. His detention location or the entity responsible for his abduction has not been announced, while information indicates the continued disregard by official authorities for investigation or disclosure of his status.

Type of Violation: Enforced disappearance, assault on

professional rights of journalists, direct threat to media freedom.

Responsible Entity: Unknown, with evidence of Rapid Support Forces involvement.

Rights Observations: The incident reflects the continuation of the systematic approach in targeting media professionals and constitutes a violation of national laws and international obligations concerning freedom of expression.

Mosab Al-Hadi
October 2, 2025

Incident Description:

Mosab Al-Hadi, a journalist, has been in a state of enforced disappearance since October 2, 2025. The entity responsible for his abduction remains unclear, and his fate is unknown, falling within a recurring pattern of enforced disappearances that journalists have faced in Sudan.

Type of Violation: Enforced disappearance, intimidation of journalists, breach of fundamental human rights.

Responsible Entity: Unknown, likely involvement of security or military elements.

Rights Observations: Continued disregard by the state for its legal and constitutional obligations, and failure to provide any protection for journalists.

Journalists Arbitrarily Detained

Abdelaziz Mahmoud Saleh Araja
Port Sudan – April 29, 2024

Incident Description:

Abdelaziz Mahmoud Saleh Araja, a cameraman for Sudan TV in Zalingei city, was arrested on April 29, 2024, in Port Sudan by the Armed Forces, without any judicial warrant or legal procedures. The arrest occurred outside the judicial framework, reflecting a policy of arbitrary

arrests against journalists who report news or highlight corruption files or sensitive local issues.

Type of Violation: Arbitrary detention, breach of journalist's professional rights, violation of press freedom.

Responsible Entity: Sudanese Armed Forces.

Rights Observations: Represents a flagrant violation of Article 33 of the 1991 Criminal Procedure Law and Sudan's obligations under international law.

Mustafa Fadl Al-Mawla (Abu Guta)
Zalingei – September 25, 2025

Incident Description:

Mustafa Fadl Al-Mawla, Director General of the Central Darfur Radio and Television Authority, was arrested on September 25, 2025, in Zalingei city by the Rapid Support Forces, without any judicial warrant or official decision. The arrest reflects a systematic approach to targeting media leadership in Darfur and subjugating media professionals to the control of military and security apparatuses.

Type of Violation: Arbitrary detention, intimidation of journalists, breach of national and international laws.

Responsible Entity: Rapid Support Forces.

Rights Observations: Considered a violation of Sudanese law and the 2019 Constitutional Document, limiting media freedom and professional discourse.

Muammar Ibrahim
El Fasher – October 26, 2025

Nyala – South Darfur | Violation of Journalists' Rights: Continued Detention of Muammar Ibrahim by Rapid Support Forces

March 2026

The Rapid Support Forces continue to detain Sudanese journalist Muammar Ibrahim, who was arrested on October 26, 2025, while attempting to leave El Fasher and was later transferred to Nyala, where he remains detained without contact with his family or lawyer.

Videos showing his detention and interrogation by the Rapid Support Forces have surfaced.

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the International Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders have called for his immediate release.

General Rights Analysis:
Targeting Journalists Between Violations and Legal Obligations

Follow-ups indicate that the disappeared and detained journalists in Sudan are committed to practicing media work and have not committed any criminal offenses, making their targeting a flagrant violation of professional immunity and their fundamental rights, reflecting the absence of legal and professional protection mechanisms. These ongoing violations create an environment of fear and intimidation, limit the freedom of professional discourse and independent journalistic investigations, with press freedom facing increasing and serious pressures. It is noted that Sudan is obliged, under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and domestic laws, to immediately disclose detention locations and hold perpetrators of these violations accountable. In this context, rights organizations and the Sudanese Journalists' Union demand:

- Immediate disclosure of the detention locations of disappeared journalists and investigation into the circumstances of their disappearance.
- Immediate and unconditional release of all detained journalists, ensuring their physical and psychological safety.
- Accountability of entities and individuals responsible for violations under international and domestic law.
- Calling upon international organizations concerned with press freedom, including the United Nations, to pressure Sudanese authorities to immediately halt these violations.





Key Activities of the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders during January and February 2026 and Announcement of a Special Event for International Women's Day

Kampala – March 2026

The Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders continues its efforts to enhance the protection of human rights defenders within Sudan and in exile, through a series of activities and meetings organized during February and March 2026, alongside important steps in the path of institutional building.

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

March 26–27, 2026

As part of an advanced path to strengthen institutional building, the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders announced the completion of preparing and adopting a package of internal policies aligned with its 2026–2031 strategy, during the evaluation meeting held on March 25–26, 2026, where the policies were presented, discussed, and approved according to approved regulatory procedures.

This step reflects the Alliance's commitment to developing its institutional systems, by enhancing administrative and organizational performance efficiency, consolidating principles of transparency and accountability, thereby strengthening its ability to protect human rights defenders effectively and sustainably, consistent with best practices and international standards for rights organizations.

Sudanese Defenders Alliance Strengthens Regional Cooperation with REDHAC Alliance

Kampala, March 24, 2026 – The Sudanese Alliance of Human Rights Defenders held a high-level meeting with the Central African Human Rights Defenders Alliance (REDHAC) at the headquarters of the Sudanese Alliance, as part of efforts to enhance regional cooperation and exchange expertise in protection, advocacy, and capacity building. The meeting aligned with the Sudanese Alliance's strategy focusing on capacity development and strengthening work networks and regional networking. Both sides reviewed their activities and areas of work, and discussed challenges and opportunities related to implementing rights programs and projects in local and regional contexts. The REDHAC Alliance, comprising eight countries in Central Africa, provided a detailed explanation of its organizational structures and scope of work, including documenting human rights violations, protecting defenders, advocacy campaigns, and capacity building, focusing on solidarity among defenders and defending them against threats.

Key Outcomes of the Meeting:

- Exchange of expertise and knowledge between the two alliances in protection, advocacy, and capacity building.
- Strengthening networking and communication to develop joint work mechanisms with regional and international alliances.
- Developing strategies for joint coordination to enhance the effectiveness of rights and community initiatives.



Participants affirmed the importance of continuing to build a common understanding focused on protecting human rights defenders, developing institutional capacities, and ensuring tangible impact on local and regional policies, thereby enhancing civil society's ability to confront violations and promote human rights.

Sudanese Defenders Alliance Celebrates International Women's Day and Demands Urgent Protection for Women and Women Defenders

On March 8, 2026, the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders organized a large event at its headquarters, with the participation of around 70 defenders, commemorating International Women's Day under the slogan «Giving to Gain.» Media professional Mohassen Ahmed presented the celebratory program, while the Deputy Chairperson of the Board of Trustees delivered the Alliance's speech, affirming the pioneering role of Sudanese women in facing the repercussions of the ongoing conflict since 2023. The event included a dialogue session moderated by the Alliance's Secretary, during which a set of pressing issues were discussed. Samah Al-Jamri addressed women's economic conditions under war, Mona Qasim highlighted the dual challenges faced by women with disabilities and the violations they endured, while Noura Mohamed, a legal assistant, provided insight into the conditions of women human rights defenders and their urgent need for protection.

The event also included live testimonies and rich interventions from attendees, in addition to presenting practical recommendations directed to regional and

international mechanisms to enhance protection and accountability, alongside a Ramadan Iftar and a symbolic musical performance embodying the spirit of solidarity and unity among participants. The Alliance concluded the event with a clear call for urgent action to ensure the protection of women and women human rights defenders, enhance their effective participation in peace processes and decision-making, and build a safe future based on justice and equality.

Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders Participates in Launching the Statement «Sudanese Women... Justice Lost in War

On March 8, 2026, on International Women's Day, the «No to Defeat for Women» Initiative, in cooperation with the Darfur Lawyers Association, the Sudanese Group for the Defense of Rights and Freedoms, the Democratic Front of Sudanese Lawyers, Journalists for Human Rights (JHR), the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders, and the Assembly of Demands Bodies (TAM), launched a campaign under the slogan «Freedom – Peace – Justice.» The campaign focuses on highlighting the suffering of Sudanese women and girls during nearly three years of ongoing war, where they have been subjected to sexual violence, forced displacement, and extreme poverty, amidst the continued impunity for perpetrators of violations. The civil forces under the statement affirmed that achieving justice for women and girls is a fundamental condition for any just and sustainable peace in Sudan, demanding accountability for all those responsible and ensuring victims' access to legal and humanitarian protection.



Statement of the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders on International Women's Day

March 8

On behalf of the Sudanese Alliance of Women and Men Human Rights Defenders (Sudan Defenders), and on behalf of every Sudanese woman who holds a pen to write the truth, or bandages a wound in a field clinic, or documents a violation in defense of justice, or carries a *touria* (seedling) to plant to feed the hungry, or embraces her child in displacement camps and whispers to them that the homeland does not die...

I am honored to address you on this International Women's Day, the eighth of March, which arrives this year while Sudan is passing through one of the harshest ordeals in its modern history.

This day is not merely an occasion for celebration, but a moment for reflection, solidarity, and renewing the covenant with the values of justice, equality, and human dignity.

A Salute to the Women of Sudan

On this day, we bow in reverence and honor to the souls of Sudanese women who have paid a heavy price amidst the ongoing war since April 2023.

Women in Sudan have faced a harsh reality, where numerous international reports have documented that sexual violence was used as a weapon to terrorize and dismantle communities, and that thousands of women have suffered grave violations that affected their bodies and dignity.

Yet, women were not merely victims of this war; they were at the forefront, resisting pain with resilience,

transforming suffering into strength.

Salute to every woman displaced under heavy shelling, yet rose to be the sole support for her family.

Salute to mothers who continue to search for their missing children despite despair.

Salute to activists and women human rights defenders who continue to document violations and defend the truth despite the risks.

These women are a living extension of the spirit of the *Kandakas* in Sudanese history; women who today write a new chapter of courage and resilience in the annals of human struggle.

A Historical Legacy of Struggle

The struggle of Sudanese women is not born of this difficult moment alone, but is an extension of a long history of striving for freedom, justice, and equality.

Sudanese women played a pivotal role in the national movement since the 1940s, with the emergence of early feminist organizations, followed by the founding of the Sudanese Women's Union in 1952, which was a landmark in the journey of women's political and social rights.

Since then, Sudanese women have remained at the forefront of the struggle for rights and freedoms, contributing to the achievement of the right to vote and political participation. Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim's entry into parliament in 1965 was a historic milestone for women in Africa and the Arab world.

Women also continued their struggle against restrictive laws, including legislation that restricted women's rights and dignity in the public sphere. The feminist movement in Sudan is a deeply rooted movement, shaped through decades of resistance against colonialism and authoritarianism, and today it continues its struggle in the face of war.

Current Challenges:

Despite this great legacy, Sudanese women today face a set of profound challenges, most notably:

First: War and Armed Violence:

Where women's lives have become a scene of compounded suffering, whether through displacement, loss of family members, or exposure to multiple forms of violence.

Second: Social and Cultural Discrimination

Which still restricts women's full participation in public life and diminishes recognition of their leadership roles.

Third: Threats to Fundamental Rights and Freedoms: Including attempts to restrict women's rights in public and private life under social or political pretexts.

Fourth: Exclusion from Decision-Making Processes:

Despite the significant role women played in social and humanitarian mobilization, their participation in peace processes and decision-making remains below the required level.

Women as Peacebuilders:

Despite all these challenges, Sudanese women prove day after day that they are not only the most affected by conflicts, but also the most capable of building peace and rebuilding communities. In the collapse of many state institutions, community-led initiatives led by women are at the forefront of humanitarian efforts; from organizing emergency rooms, distributing food, to caring for the wounded and sheltering the displaced. These initiatives reflect the true face of Sudan: a

Sudan of solidarity, humanity, and the ability to rise from under the rubble.

Towards a More Just Future

We believe that the future of Sudan cannot be built without the full and effective participation of women. Justice and equality are not just slogans; they are the foundation of any national project seeking to build a democratic civil state that respects human dignity and rights. The Sudanese feminist movement is not merely a demand-based movement, but an integral part of the project for social justice and sustainable peace.

Hence, we renew our call for:

- Protecting women from all forms of violence and violations.
- Ensuring women's real participation in peace processes and decision-making.
- Supporting women human rights defenders and protecting them from risks.
- Building state institutions based on equality and the rule of law.

A Final Word

The pain that Sudanese women experience today will not be the end of the story. It will be the beginning of a new phase of struggle and hope. Women in Sudan will remain a force for life, a voice for justice, and a cornerstone in building peace.

Every year, may the women of Sudan grow stronger and more determined.

Every year, may the banner of justice shine brighter. Every year, may Sudan draw closer to freedom and peace.

Glory and eternity to the martyrs of the nation.

And salutations to all the resilient women of Sudan.

March 8, 2026

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

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