

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
Promoting human rights by protecting those who defend them

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January 5, 2015

HE Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir
Office of the President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum, Sudan

Mohamed Bushara Dousa
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302, Al Nil Avenue
Khartoum, Sudan
Via email : moj@moj.gov.sd

Your Excellencies:

Lawyers Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) is a committee of lawyers and academics who campaign internationally for advocacy rights, advocates in danger, and on rule of law issues and engage in legal research and education about international human rights law. I am a lawyer and a partner of a law firm in Canada, Cohen Highley LLP.

The following link <http://en.starafrika.com/news/sudan-cracks-down-on-demonstrating-lawyers.html> is a report about the conduct of Sudanese Government employees who have engaged in assaulting lawyers in Sudanese Government venues, including courts. The report has been shared with Human Rights groups around the world and illustrates an unconscionable disregard of civil rights on the part of government employees.

As a member of the United Nations Sudan has a legal obligation to provide government employees and others with education about internationally protected human rights. These duties arise from a variety of instruments including the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR), ratified by Sudan on 18 June 1986. The UN Committee on Human Rights, interpreting Article 2 of the ICCPR has stated,

it is very important that individuals should know what their rights under the Covenant (and the Optional Protocol, as the case may be) are and also that all administrative and judicial authorities should be aware of the obligations which the State party has assumed under the Covenant. To this end, the Covenant should be publicized in all official languages of the State and steps should be taken to familiarize the authorities concerned with its contents as part of their training.¹

This state duty to provide international human rights education and training was affirmed by the *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (Declaration on HRET), adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2011. The Declaration stipulates that,

¹ *General Comment 3 adopted by the Human Rights Committee on article 2: Implementation at the national level*, 1981, online: UNHRC Refworld
<[http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/c95ed1e8ef114cbec12563ed00467eb5?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/c95ed1e8ef114cbec12563ed00467eb5?Opendocument)>

States and ... relevant governmental authorities have the primary responsibility to promote and ensure human rights education and training, developed and implemented in a spirit of participation, inclusion and responsibility (Article 7.1).

The purpose of this correspondence is to ensure that officials of the Sudanese Government are aware of abuses carried out by its employees and to ask that stronger initiatives be implemented to ensure that human rights are respected by all government officials, particularly in Sudanese Courts. One of those initiatives must be to develop and implement a programme of international human rights training and education for all government employees and people working within the legal system including judges, lawyers, police and prison employees.²

LRWC is hopeful you will ensure prompt and thorough investigations of the allegations outlined above and take steps necessary to implement the remedies required. Your confirmation of receipt of this correspondence and actions to be taken would be appreciated.

Yours Very Truly,



Joe Hoffer
Sudan Monitor
Lawyers Rights Watch Canada

cc: Mr Osman Abufatima Adam
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² See *The Right to know our rights: International law obligations to ensure international human rights education and training*, LRWC, May 2012. Accessible at <http://www.lrwc.org/the-right-to-know-our-rights-international-law-obligations-to-ensure-international-human-rights-education-and-training/>