



# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

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## COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE - COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

1 April 2004

IMMEDIATE

### **Sudan: Five Lawyers in Incommunicado Detention**

Five Sudanese lawyers who have been arbitrarily arrested and detained must be either charged or released, exclaimed the Centre for the Independence of Judges and Lawyers of the ICJ.

Baroud Sandal Ragab, Ismail Oman, Mohamed Haroun, Mohamed Sharief Ali and Abdalla Aldoma were detained on 19 March in Khartoum. The lawyers are reportedly being held in a special section of Kober prison, do not have legal representation and are not allowed to communicate with their families.

The grounds for the arrests remain unknown, but there is reason to believe that they are linked to the lawyers' political affiliations. Mr. Abdala is a prominent member of the opposition Umma party. He presided over a delegation of that party to the National Committee for the Development and Restoration of Social Infrastructure in Darfur. It is believed that his arrest is linked to the delegation's withdrawal from that Committee. The other four lawyers are members of the Popular Congress, another opposition party. Their arrest is allegedly related to their participation in a number of demonstrations with displaced persons from Darfur denouncing their lack of shelter and food.

"Unless the Sudanese authorities charge these lawyers with a recognisable criminal offence and bring them before an independent and impartial tribunal, they must be immediately released" said Linda Besharaty-Movaed, ICJ/CIJL Legal Advisor. "The grounds for their detention must be urgently made public, and they must be allowed to communicate with their lawyers".

The ICJ/CIJL urges the Sudanese authorities to respect its international obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular article 9, which states that, *"everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law"*.

The ICJ/CIJL has expressed its deep concern at the deterioration of the human rights situation in Sudan, particularly in Darfur, the site of an ongoing internal armed conflict. Both parties to the conflict have been accused of committing human rights abuses in this province and in the rest of the country, including the capital Khartoum.

*For further information, please contact José Zeitune, Lawyer, at +41 22 979 3812*

The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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