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ARTICLE 19

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Sudan: Urgent Action Required from Governments and Stakeholders to Help Mitigate Repression of the Press and Human Rights Defenders

ARTICLE 19 calls on embassies, governments and international partners to help mitigate a rapidly deteriorating work environment for the press and human rights defenders in Khartoum, Sudan.

In recent weeks, scores of journalists and human rights defenders in Khartoum have been interrogated and/or arrested by Sudan's National Security Services. The latest attack was directed at the Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development (KCHRED). The Chairman of KCHRED **Amir Mohamed Suliman**, and his colleagues **Abedlmonim Aljak** were taken into custody on 24 November and interrogated for several hours before they were released. Meanwhile Mr. **Osman Hummaida**, a human rights researcher and member of OMCT Assembly of Delegates remains in custody.

“We're seeing a very disturbing and adverse trend in the efforts to build peace, advance economic development and human rights including free expression in Sudan,” said Dr. Agnes Callamard, the Executive Director of ARTICLE19. The repressive situation in Khartoum requires immediate action and *“we call on all governments and particularly embassies representatives in Khartoum to intervene with the authorities and help mitigate this unacceptable disregard for the rule of law,”* added Dr. Callamard.

Freedom of expression is guaranteed in Comprehensive Peace Agreement and Section 39 of the Sudanese Interim Constitution:

- 1) Every citizen shall have an unrestricted right to the freedom of expression, reception and dissemination of information, publication, and access to the press without prejudice to order, safety or public morals as determined by law.
- 2) The State shall guarantee the freedom of the press and other media as shall be regulated by law in a democratic society.
- 3) All media shall abide by professional ethics, shall refrain from inciting religious, ethnic, racial or cultural hatred and shall not agitate for violence or war.

ARTICLE 19 is a member of a consortium '*promoting freedom of expression and civil society involvement in developing democratic media legislation in Sudan*'; in partnership with Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development (KCHRED), the Association of Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS), the Olof Palme International Center, International Media Support and Norwegian People's Aid.

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- For more information: please contact Cece Fadoupe, Africa Programme Officer, cece@article19.org, +44 207 278 9292
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.