

Public Statement

EHAHRD-Net Index SUD 017/006/ 2008

24th May 2008

KAMPALA: EHAHRD-Net CONDEMNS THE CURRENT ATTACK ON MEDIA FREEDOM IN SUDAN

The human rights violations in Sudan which have been ongoing especially in the Darfur region have escalated with the recent attack on media freedom. This was demonstrated by the recent closure of the daily newspaper Alwan on the 14th May by the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) on allegations of publishing military information and threatening national security.

According to the Sudan Organization Against Torture (SOAT), EHAHRDP/Net's focal point in Sudan, the NISS agents seized all assets of the Alwan Publishing and Printing Company and ordered journalists to leave the newspaper offices with just their personal belongings. SOAT further reports that a case has been filed with the prosecutor for state security against the Alwan Publishing and Printing Company and against the newspaper's Chief Editor and Publisher – Hussein Khougali.

The NISS in addition to closing the newspaper offices is reported to be censoring many of the newspapers before they are allowed to print an edition, all of this is on the pretext of national security.

“The Sudan Government ratified international instruments that provide for media freedom, it is their duty to protect the freedom of expression and should not be seen to violate that freedom. It is quite worrying that the censorship of the media has been ongoing since February of this year and intensified in the last few weeks, it is unacceptable. EHAHRDP/Net strongly condemns these actions and calls upon the Sudanese government to respect media independence and ensure its security organs do not contravene provisions of international law” says Hassan Shire Sheikh, Chairperson EHAHRDP/Net.

APPEAL;

EHAHRD- Net strongly condemns the attacks on media freedom in Sudan and calls upon the Sudan government to;

- Ensure that the Alwan Newspaper offices are reopened without restrictions and cease censorship of the media in Sudan
- Respect individual rights and freedoms as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights especially the Freedom of Expression

EHAHRD- Net calls upon the international community to join the campaign for the respect of media freedom in Sudan

The Network further appeals to its members to write to the Sudan government calling upon the authorities to reopen the Alwan newspaper offices cease censorship of the press and ensure media freedom.

Send appeals to;

H.E Omar El Bashir
President of the Republic of Sudan
President's Palace
P.O Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: 249 183 783223

His Excellency Salva Kiir Mayardit
First Vice President
People's Palace
P.O Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: +249 183 779383

His Excellency Ali Osman Taha
Vice President
People's Palace
P.O Box 281, Khartoum, Sudan
Fax: +249 181 771025

Mr. Lam Akol Ajawin
Minister of Foreign Affairs
P.O Box 873, Khartoum, Sudan

For further information, please contact;

Ms Laetitia Bader, Human Rights Officer at advocacy@defenddefenders.org or +256-775-141756

Or

Michael Farquhar
Campaigner
Sudan Organization Against Torture
Argo House Kilburn Park Road London NW6 5LF United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7625 8055 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7372 2656
Email: info@soatsudan.org