



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)  
LEGAL AID BOARD

## **Sudan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Tuesday 30 April 2019**

### **Information on the detention and treatment in detention of anti-Government protesters by Sudanese Security forces, particularly women**

In April 2019 the *African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies* states that:

“...more than 800 peaceful protesters and activists have been released after spending more than 2 months in custody without charge” (African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (17 April 2019) *Sudan: Hundreds of Peaceful protesters and activists released from detention, including Mohamed Hassan Alim and Hisham Ali Mohammed Ali*, p.1).

A report issued in April 2019 by the *Physicians for Human Rights* notes that:

“...years of human rights reporting by PHR in Sudan has revealed the extensive use of torture and other human rights violations in Sudan's prisons and detention centers...” (Physicians for Human Rights (5 April 2019) *Intimidation and Persecution: Sudan's Attacks on Peaceful Protesters and Physicians*, p.13).

In March 2019 the *World Alliance for Citizen Participation* states that:

“Security forces have launched a violent campaign targeting protesters, including doctors, teachers, journalists, women activists and opposition political leaders. Hundreds have been arbitrary arrested and detained, with reports of torture and severe beating, including sexual abuse mostly against women, intimidation and abuse. More than 2,600 people have been arrested and detained during the protests according to government figures” (World Alliance for Citizen Participation (20 March 2019) *Women on front line of peaceful protests bear the brunt of violent crackdown amid state of emergency*, p.1).

In February 2019 the *International Crisis Group* notes in a report that:

“The regime also detained dozens of protest and opposition leaders Friday night and Saturday morning”(International Crisis Group (26 February 2019) *Bashir Moves Sudan to Dangerous New Ground*, p.2).

*Amnesty International* in February 2019 notes that:

“Since mass anti-government protests began on 19 December 2018, Amnesty International has verified and recorded more than 45 deaths and more than 180 people injured. Government officials say more than 2,600 people have been arrested and detained during the ongoing protests” (Amnesty International (25 February 2019) *Sudan: State of emergency intensifies brutal government crackdown on protests*).

In February 2019 *International Federation for Human Rights* state that:

“The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) and FIDH are deeply concerned about the safety of 30 women detained without access to lawyers or

family members by the Sudanese National Security Intelligence Services (NISS) in Omdurman women's prison. The detainees were targeted for their participation or suspected involvement in the ongoing protests calling for the resignation of president Omar al-Bashir. ACJPS and FIDH have gathered disturbing information about the detention conditions of these women, all of whom have been subjected to invasive strip searches, amounting to acts of sexual violence” (International Federation for Human Rights (21 February 2019) *Sudan: 30 women detained in inhumane conditions following involvement in protests*).

In February 2019 the *World Organisation Against Torture* states that:

“...the well-documented use by the NISS of torture and other forms of ill-treatment against detainees...” (World Organisation Against Torture (12 February 2019) *Sudan: Serious concerns after the arrest of 30 human rights defenders in violent crackdown against peaceful protests*).

*Wagingnonviolence* in January 2019 points out that:

“Poverty — including among well-educated professionals — is exactly why protests broke out on Dec. 19 and haven’t relented. Medical professionals and trade unionists of other sectors have flooded the streets of about 50 cities across the nation. And despite at least 40 extrajudicial killings, thousands of hospitalizations, and thousands of detentions and kidnappings, the demonstrations continue to escalate” (Wagingnonviolence (31 January 2019) *Repression strengthens mass movement aiming to topple Sudan’s dictator*, p.1).

A report issued in January 2019 by *Amnesty International* notes:

“The NISS maintains broad powers of arrest and detention under the National Security Act 2010 (NSA), which allows suspects to be detained for up to four-and-a-half months without judicial review. NISS officials often use these powers to arbitrarily arrest and detain individuals, and as a result, prisoners in Sudan are often subjected to torture and other ill-treatment” (Amnesty International (25 January 2019) *Forty-Seven Students Held Incommunicado, One Killed*).

*Human Rights Watch* in January 2019 points out that:

“The abuse of detainees in NISS custody, including torture, is well documented and all detainees in the agency’s custody are at risk of such ill-treatment” (Human Rights Watch (18 January 2019) *Sudan: Hundreds of Protesters Arrested*).

In January 2019 the *International Crisis Group* states in a report that:

“Already in January and February 2018, the combined effects of the subsidy cuts and the currency devaluation stimulated a number of well-coordinated protests. Many demonstrators were committed anti-government activists and some were linked to established opposition political parties; the protests failed to attract the broader social base that has taken to the streets today and were not large enough to threaten Bashir. Still, security forces arrested over a hundred protesters and held them without charge for weeks...” (International Crisis Group (14 January 2019) *Improving Prospects for a Peaceful Transition in Sudan*, p.7).

A report issued in January 2019 by the *New Humanitarian* notes:

“...reports of arrests (over 800 so far, according to the government) including of journalists, opposition politicians, and university professors” (New Humanitarian (9 January 2019) *Briefing: Sudanese call for bread and freedom*, p.3).

A report published in March 2019 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year points out that:

“Civil society activists in Khartoum, former detainees, and NGOs all reported that government security forces (including police, NISS, SAF Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) personnel, and the RSF) tortured persons in detention, including members of the political opposition, civil society, and journalists. Reported forms of torture and other mistreatment included prolonged isolation, exposure to extreme temperature variations, electric shock, and the use of stress positions”(United States Department of State (13 March 2019) *Sudan 2018 Human Rights Report*, p.5).

This document also states that:

“Prison conditions throughout the country remained harsh and life threatening; overcrowding was a major problem. The Prisons and Reform Directorate, a branch of the national police that reports to the Ministry of Interior, oversees prisons. According to human rights activists and released detainees, RSF and DMI officials also detained civilians on military installations, especially in conflict areas. Overall conditions, including food, sanitation, and living conditions, were reportedly better in women s detention facilities and prisons, such as the Federal Prison for Women in Omdurman, than at equivalent facilities for men, such as the main prison in Khartoum, Kober, or Omdurman Prisons” (ibid, p.7).

It is also pointed out in this document that:

“Political detainees reported facing harsher treatment, although many prominent political detainees reported being exempt from abuse in detention. Numerous high profile political detainees reported being held next to rooms used by security services to torture individuals” (ibid, p.7).

A report published in 2019 by *Freedom House* reviewing events of 2018 notes that:

“The harassment, intimidation, and arrests of opposition figures hinder their parties’ ability to gain power” (Freedom House (2019) *Freedom in the World 2019, Sudan*, p.3).

This document also states that:

“Torture and abuse of prisoners is rampant...” (ibid, p.7).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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