

13 September 2024

To:

His Excellency Ambassador Omar Zniber
President of the UN Human Rights Council
hrcpresidency@un.org

Copy:

Mr. Mohamed Chande Othman, Chair of the Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan
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RE: Intimidation of Sudanese civil society during HRC57 dialogue with the Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan

Your Excellency Mr. President,

We are writing to you regarding an incident of intimidation that occurred on 10 September 2024 during the [4th meeting](#) of the 57th session of the UN Human Rights Council during the Enhanced interactive dialogue with the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on the situation of human rights in the Sudan.

On 10 September 2024, Ms. Noon Kashkosh, a Sudanese lawyer and woman human rights defender, delivered the statement by the International Service for Human Rights. The statement [highlighted](#) the FFM's findings of violations of human rights and humanitarian law by the warring parties which include "extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, enforced disappearances, all forms of conflict-related sexual violence, forced evictions, the use of starvation as a weapon of war against civilians, targeting of human rights defenders and volunteers in the Emergency Rooms, the use of emergency courts that issue sentences in violation of the right to fair trial, the indiscriminate air strikes by SAF and artillery shelling by RSF, and the internet and telecommunications shutdown."

On 9 September 2024, Mr. Osama Said, a member of Sudanese civil society, met with the FFM and published a statement with photos with the members of the FFM. Mr. Said is currently facing charges including incitement and crimes against the State in Sudan.

In his response, the representative of the government of the Sudan made a statement (in Arabic) in which he stated: "the politicization of the work of NGOs in this form misuses the platforms of the UN and violates the decisions that govern the work of NGOs. Regarding the NGO that allowed its name and status to be used as a political front for some individuals who are wanted by the judiciary - we will file a complaint against them at the NGO Committee. And

we refer to the fact that there are no emergency courts in Sudan. Rather, ordinary national courts investigate these crimes.”

We consider that this incident amounts to intimidation against Ms. Kashkosh and Mr. Said.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders reaffirms the right of everyone, individually and in association with others, to unhindered access to and communication with international bodies, in particular the United Nations.

We urgently request your excellency as the President of the Human Rights Council, to:

1. Publicly condemn the intimidation by the Representative of Sudan during the HRC plenary session;
2. Urge the Government of Sudan to ensure the safety of Ms. Kashkosh, Mr. Said and other Sudanese civil society engaging with the HRC; and
4. Urge the Sudanese Government to end intimidation and reprisals against all human rights defenders including Ms. Kashkosh and Mr. Said.

We also request that you confirm receipt of this communication and keep us informed about the actions taken by the President of the Human Rights Council and other bodies of the United Nations.

We highly appreciate your cooperation in protecting the human rights defenders and the safety of the civil society actors within the United Nations Office in Geneva.

Sincerely,

1. International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
2. REDRESS
3. Sudan Human Rights Monitor
4. Rights for Peace
5. FIDH
6. Sudanese Women’s Rights Action (SUWRA)
7. The Regional Coalition for Women Human Rights Defenders in South West Asia and North Africa (WHRDMENA)
8. DefendDefenders (East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project)