

29 January 2021

Sudan: Killing of Human Rights Defender Faisal Yousef Mohamed

On 17 January 2021, human rights defender **Faisal Yousef Mohamed** was killed in his house in El Genena city, West Darfur by unknown individuals from armed militant groups. Two of the human rights defenders brothers were murdered in the same incident.

Faisal Yousef Mohamed was human rights defender and paralegal training to become a lawyer. The human rights defender was a member of Hay El Ameerya resistance committee, a committee that frequently organises peaceful demonstrations to promote civil and economic rights in Sudan. Faisal Yousef Mohamed was a member of El Geneana Para Legal Network, a network of paralegals who offered legal assistance to internally displaced people (IDPs) in refugee camps in West Darfur. One of his main areas of human rights work was helping IDPs who had been victims of human rights violation seek justice by connecting them with lawyers.

On 16 and 17 January 2021, Faisal Yousef Mohamed witnessed the outbreak of violent clashes between armed men from the Masalit and Arab communities which occurred near the Krinding Camp for Internally Displaced People in West Darfur. The human rights defender was working with IDPs at the time of the incident. These clashes reportedly resulted in the killing of approximately 160 people and at least 215 people were injured.

On 17 January at 10 p.m. several members of an armed militant group, involved in the clashes that took place on the 16th and 17th January, entered Faisal Yousef Mohamed's house in El Genena and murdered the human rights defender. Faisal Yousef Mohamed's two brothers were also killed. Other members of the human rights defender's family were also threatened to be killed. The human rights defender had previously faced multiple threats from both militant groups and authorities for his human rights work,

As a consequence of the spread of militant groups in Darfur, human rights defenders and activists are in severe danger as a result of their work. On 23 January 2021, an urgent UN Security Council session was held regarding the escalation of events in Darfur, however the conclusion was reached that it is a domestic issue,. This violent outbreak in the Krinding Camp for IDPs came two weeks after the UN Security Council ended the United Nations-African Union mission in the Darfur region of Sudan (UNAMID). The UNAMID mandate, established in 2007, is expected to complete its withdrawal by June 30 2021.

Front Line Defenders condemns the murder of human rights defender Faisal Yousef Mohamed and his two brothers by armed militant groups. Front Line Defenders is concerned about the escalation of violence in West Darfur, and the dangerous context in which human rights defenders and civilians find themselves.

Front Line Defenders urge the authorities to in Sudan to:

1. Immediately carry out an impartial and independent investigation into the murder of human rights defender Faisal Yousef Mohamed and his two brothers;
2. Fully implement Sudan's National Plan for the protection of civilians, and to restore public order and the rule of law in Darfur;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Sudan are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

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