

8 January 2019

Sudan: Ongoing incommunicado detention of blogger and human rights defender, Yasir Elsir Ali

On 5 January 2019, human rights defender **Yasir Elsir Ali** was taken by the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) from his residence in the city of Omdurman.

[Yasir Elsir Ali](#) is a blogger and human rights defender, who has used social media to denounce State-led human rights violations.

At around noon on Saturday 5 January, 12 armed men wearing balaclavas and civilian clothes stormed Yasir Elsir Ali's family home. Yasir Elsir Ali was due to return to United Arab Emirates on the same day, but the men told him and his family that a travel ban was in force against him. The human rights defender had traveled back to Sudan from United Arab Emirates on 20 December 2018 to visit his dying father.

According to his family, the men - who arrived in an unmarked truck - showed no warrant before forcibly detaining Yasir Elsir Ali. The men also threatened his family to prevent them from speaking out or from filming his detention.

On 25 December 2018, Yasir Elsir Ali was shot by a sniper in Khartoum. The bullet fractured one of his ribs, and punctured his right lung before settling in his spinal chord. He was taken to hospital, but surgeons in Khartoum refused to remove the bullet, believing that it would require a very serious surgery that they were not sufficiently well-equipped to carry out. The human rights defender spent nine nights in the intensive care unit at Fidail Hospital in Khartoum, before being discharged on 3 January. He has been in incommunicado detention since 5 January.

Yasir Elsir Ali's family, friends, as well as Sudanese human rights organizations are very concerned about his situation, as he is in very critical health and his whereabouts are not known.

Front Line Defenders is concerned for the health and safety of Yasir Elsir Ali and condemns his ongoing incommunicado detention, particularly given that he requires urgent medical attention. Front Line Defenders believes the treatment of Yasir Elsir Ali to be solely connected to his legitimate and peaceful work in promoting and protecting human rights in Sudan.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Sudan to:

1. Ensure that Yasir Elsir Ali is immediately released and that he receives all necessary medical attention;
2. Inform his family and lawyer of his place of detention and allow them immediate and unfettered access to him;

3. Lift the travel ban on Yasir Elsir Ali as it is believed that this measure has been taken solely on account of his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
4. Take all necessary measures to guarantee his physical and psychological integrity, as well as that of his family, and ensure that the treatment of Yasir Elsir Ali while in detention adheres to the conditions set out in the “Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment”, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
5. Ensure that Yasir Elsir Ali’s treatment in detention adheres to all those conditions set out in the “Basic Principles for Treatment of Prisoners, adopted by the General Assembly resolution 45/111 of 14 December 1990”;
6. Ensure that all human rights defenders in Sudan, carrying out their legitimate work in the defence of human rights, are able to operate free of restrictions and reprisals.