



## From the President

President of the Republic of Sudan  
President HE Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir  
Office of the President  
People's Palace  
PO Box 281  
Khartoum  
Sudan

11 September 2015

Dear Mr President

### Sudan – Mr. Abdullah Abdelkader

The Law Society is the professional body representing more than 166,000 solicitors in England and Wales. Its concerns include upholding the independence of the legal profession, the rule of law and human rights throughout the world.

Mr Abdelkader was a judge in Sudan and a human rights defender as a member of the NGO, Sudan Human Rights Monitor. Also, he provided legal aid to victims of human rights violations, particularly as a result of armed conflict, and supported human rights defenders, in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur.

On 24 August 2015, Mr Abdelkader was visiting his hometown of El Abbasiya Tagali in South Kordofan State in Sudan. It is reported that on that day, he was shot and killed by an armed group, allegedly for his human rights work.

The Law Society is seriously concerned that Mr Abdelkader has been killed as a result of his legitimate human rights work as a lawyer, including providing legal aid. Additionally, we are concerned that unless there is an independent and effective investigation into the killing of Mr Abdelkader, a situation of fear amongst human rights lawyers in Sudan may arise, inhibiting their legitimate functions.

In this context we would like to draw your attention to Article 6 of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) (ICCPR)** ratified by Sudan on 18 March 1986. The ICCPR requires that,

*Article 6: "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life."*

We would also like to remind you of Article 4 of the **African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1998)** ratified by Sudan on 18 February 1986, which states that,

*Article 4: "Human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this right."*

Additionally, we would like to recall articles 16, 17 and 18 of the **UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (1990)**, which provides that,

*Principle 16: "Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics."*

*Principle 17: "Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities."*

*Principle 18: "Lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions."*

Further, we would like to recall Article 9(4)(c) of the **UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders 1998**. The Declaration states,

*Article 9(4)(c): "To the same end, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, inter alia to offer and provide professionally qualified legal assistance or other relevant advice and assistance in defending human rights and fundamental freedoms."*

On behalf of the Law Society, we respectfully call on the Government of the Republic of Sudan to conduct an independent, impartial and effective investigation into the death of Mr Abdelkader and to prosecute the alleged perpetrators in accordance with international standards. Finally, we urge the Government of the Republic of Sudan to ensure that human rights lawyers and activists are provided with adequate protection against threats, violence or legal proceedings, to ensure that they can carry out their legitimate work defending human rights.

Yours sincerely



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President

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