



Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme

ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE NON GOUVERNEMENTALE AYANT STATUT CONSULTATIF AUPRES DES NATIONS UNIES, DE L'UNESCO,
DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE ET D'OBSERVATEUR AUPRES DE LA COMMISSION AFRICAINE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET DES PEUPLES

International Federation
for Human Rights

Federación Internacional
de los Derechos Humanos

الغدرالية الدولية لحقوق الإنسان

Press release

Sudan/ICC

NGOs express their solidarity to Sudanese victims and Human Rights defenders and support the ICC as an essential element to peace and justice in Darfur

20 March, 2009 - We, the undersigned organisations, deplore the grave humanitarian situation in Darfur, which is poised to deteriorate dramatically with the government of Sudan's recent decision to expel 13 international humanitarian organisations. In making this decision, the government of Sudan has shown callous disregard for the well-being of its citizens. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has estimated that more than 1.1 million people may be left without food, more than 1 million without potable water and more than 1.5 million without healthcare. In addition, it is estimated that 250,000 children will be affected by the closure of schools.

Moreover, we condemn the closure of three national human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development, Amal Centre for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture, and Sudan Development Organisation), as well as the continuing harassment and targeting of human rights defenders. In all three cases, the organisations' registration was revoked and all organisational assets were seized and bank accounts were frozen. This decision was taken in a manner inconsistent with Sudanese constitutional and national laws. These actions were taken by the security forces and the Humanitarian Affairs Commission without the necessary judicial approval. These closures will severely impact the capacity to monitor, and report on, continuing human rights violations in Darfur. These decisions put also strongly at risk the security of those human rights defenders.

In addition, we deplore the continuing state of impunity in Darfur and in Sudan as a whole. Since the conflict started, six years ago, the government of Sudan has not made any credible effort to bring the perpetrators of serious international crimes to justice. In this context, the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) of 4 March 2009 to issue a warrant of arrest for Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir together with previous warrants of arrest issued against Ahmed Harun and Ali Kushayb, as well as the request made by the Prosecutor for arrest warrants to be issued for rebel leaders responsible for the killing of African peacekeepers during the Haskanita attack, represent an essential step forward in the fight against impunity and for peace in Darfur.

This historic step is also possible because of strong international, including African and Arab, support for the cause of international justice. The Court's functioning is made possible by the

support of its 108 state parties, 30 of which are also members of the African Union. Members of the Arab League participated actively in Rome Conference, which drafted and adopted the ICC Statute. The Court's investigations in Darfur was opened after the United Nations Security Council referred the situation to the ICC in its Resolution 1593, which also poses an obligation on the government of Sudan to cooperate with the Court.

We call upon the international community to show solidarity with the victims of the conflict in Darfur. The conflict has already claimed 300,000 lives and forced more than 2.5 million people from their homes. Yet, the victims have not seen any effective response to their repeated call for peace and justice.

Our organisations:

- Urge the Sudanese authorities to reverse their decisions regarding the expulsion of international humanitarian organisations and the closure of national human rights NGOs, in conformity with international instruments, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as the Security Council's resolution and presidential statement imposing an obligation on Sudan to cooperate with the ICC.
- Urge all parties to the conflict to engage in a genuine and inclusive political process.
- Urge the international community to strongly condemn the decisions of the Sudanese government.
- Support the fighting against impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes committed in Darfur, thus opposing any suspension of the ICC proceedings.

Signatory organisations:

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

Africa

Mouvement burquinabe des droits de l'Homme et des peuples (MBDHP), Burkina Faso

Maison des droits de l'Homme (MDH), Cameroon

Organisation pour la Compassion et le Développement des familles en détresse (OCODEFAD),
Central African Republic

Mouvement ivoirien des droits humains (MIDH), Cote d'Ivoire

Association tchadienne pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'Homme (ATPDH), Chad

Ligue tchadienne des droits de l'Homme (LTDH), Chad

Association africaine des droits de l'Homme (ASADHO), Democratic Republic of Congo

Groupe Lotus, Democratic Republic of Congo

Ligue djiboutienne des DH (LDDH), Djibouti

Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), Ethiopia

Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), Kenya

Liberia Watch for Human Rights, Liberia

Association malienne des droits de l'Homme (AMDH), Mali

Association nigérienne des droits de l'Homme (ANDDH), Niger

Civil Liberties organisation (CLO), Nigeria

Observatoire congolais des droits humains (OCDH), Republic of Congo

Ligue des électeurs, Democratic Republic of Congo

Ligue rwandaise pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'Homme (LIPRODHOR), Rwanda

Rencontre africaine pour la défense des droits de l'Homme (RADDHO), Senegal

Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development (KCHRED), Sudan

Ligue togolaise des droits de l'Homme, Togo

Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI), Uganda

Americas

Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS), Argentina
Comité de Acción Jurídica (CAJ), Argentina
Asamblea Permanente de los Derechos Humanos de Bolivia (APDHB), Bolivia
Justiça Global (JG), Brazil
Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales Alternativos (ILSA), Colombia
Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos (CNDH), Dominican Republic
Comisión Ecuménica de Derechos Humanos (CEDHU), Ecuador
Fundación Nacional de Asesoría Jurídica en Derechos Humanos (INREDH), Ecuador
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CDHES), El Salvador
Centro para la Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos (CALDH), Guatemala
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (CDHG), Guatemala
Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CMDPDH), Mexico
Liga Mexicana por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (LIMEDDH), Mexico
Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos (CENIDH), Nicaragua
Centro de Capacitación Social (CCS), Panama
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos (APRODEH), Peru
Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), USA

Asia

Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), Cambodia
Altsean-Burma, based in Thailand

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Human Rights Centre of Azerbaijan (HRCA), Azerbaijan
Human Rights Centre Viasna, Belarus
Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights (KCHR), Kyrgyzstan
Centre for Peace and Democracy Development, Serbia
Citizen's Watch, Russia

North Africa and Middle East

Egyptian Organisations for Human Rights (EOHR), Egypt
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), Egypt
Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR), Egypt
Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies (DCHRS), Syria
Committee for the Defence of Democracy Freedoms and Human Rights (CDF), Syria
Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), Bahrain
Bahrain Human Rights Society (BHRS), Bahrain