

## Public Statement

### **The Law Society of Upper Canada Expresses Grave Concerns about the Detention of Adam Sharief in Sudan**

The Law Society of Upper Canada\* is gravely concerned about the detention of lawyer Adam Sharief in Sudan.

Adam Sharief is a lawyer and the coordinator of the Darfur Bar Association in South Darfur. According to reports, he was arrested on September 26, 2013, and was held without charge. Mr. Sharief was not granted access to a lawyer.

Six days before his arrest, Mr. Sharief participated in an interview with independent radio station, Radio Dabanga. During this interview, Mr. Sharief criticized the Governor of South Darfur for the lack of security in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur. This criticism was linked to the protests that broke out in Nyala on September 18, 2013, after Ismail Ibrahim Wadi, a prominent local businessman and the president of the local football team, his son and nephew were killed. Protestors held militia employed by the local authorities responsible for the killings.

Mr. Sharief also criticized the use of live ammunition by security forces on September 19, 2013, (the date of Ismail Ibrahim Wadi's funeral) to disperse demonstrators that gathered together around the South Darfur government offices to call for the Governor to resign. According to reports, at least five people were killed by live fire during the demonstration and at least 48 people were seriously injured and required hospital treatment.

Recent reports indicate that Mr. Sharief has been released. However, the Law Society is concerned the arrest and harassment of Adam Sharief. In the past, the Law Society of Upper Canada has condemned the persecution and ill-treatment of lawyers in Sudan. International human rights instruments, including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, state that respect for human rights are essential to advancing the rule of law.

The Law Society urges the government of Sudan to:

- a. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Adam Sharief and other human rights defenders in Sudan;
- b. put an end to all acts of harassment, including at the judicial level, against human rights lawyers and other human rights defenders in Sudan;
- c. ensure that all lawyers can carry out their peaceful and legitimate activities without fear of physical violence or other human rights violations;

- d. conform in all circumstances with the provisions of *the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers* and the *Declaration on Human Rights Defenders*; and
- e. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.

*\*The Law Society of Upper Canada is the governing body for some 46,100 lawyers and 5,600 paralegals in the Province of Ontario, Canada. The Treasurer is the head of the Law Society.*

*The mandate of the Law Society is to govern the legal profession in the public interest by upholding the independence, integrity and honour of the legal profession for the purpose of advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law.*