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SUDAN | Four Still Await Justice

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) is calling for the release of Rev. Hassan Abduraheem, Rev. Kuwa Shamal, Petr Jašek and Abdumonem Abdumawla, ahead of the first anniversary of their respective arrests by Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS).

Rev. Abduraheem, Jašek and Abdumawla have been in detention since their arrests in December 2015 while Rev. Shamal was taken into custody in May 2016. The four men are charged jointly with at least seven crimes, which they deny, including two national security breaches. Their trial has been subject to several postponements and delays.

First to be detained was Jašek, a Czech national, who was arrested at Khartoum Airport on Dec. 10, 2015 as he attempted to leave the country after a short visit. Soon after his arrest, Abdumawla was detained, and on Dec. 19, 2015, Reverends Abduraheem and Shamal were arrested at their homes by NISS agents. Rev. Shamal was released but required to report to NISS periodically until May 24, when he was arrested and added to the prosecutor's investigation. Rev. Shamal appears to have been included in the case due to his senior position in the Sudan Church of Christ, his relationship with Rev. Abduraheem and his Nuba ethnicity.

Since his arrest, Jašek has had limited contact with his family and legal representative, while Rev. Abduraheem and Abdumawla were not permitted visits until May 2016. After being transferred to the attorney general's custody, the men were able to meet with their lawyers and have access to their families but were kept in cramped and unsanitary conditions before their case was filed with the court and they were moved to Al-Huda Prison in Omdurman.

The case against the men centers on the provision of finances for the medical treatment of Ali Omer, a young man from Darfur who was injured in a demonstration in 2013. After hearing about Omer's plight, Jašek travelled to Khartoum in December 2015 to meet him and donate \$5,000 toward his treatment. The meeting was facilitated by Rev. Abduraheem, who Jašek met

at an international conference in November 2015, and Abdumawla, who is a friend of Omer's and had been collecting finances for his medical treatment.

As he was leaving Sudan, Jašek was searched at Khartoum Airport by NISS agents, who found a receipt for the \$5,000 donation, signed by Rev. Abduraheem and Abdumawla. They arrested Jašek and confiscated his personal belongings, including his mobile phone, laptop and camera. The prosecution alleges that the \$5,000 Jašek donated to Omer's treatment was in reality support for rebel movements in the South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur regions. By framing the case in this manner, NISS has attempted to exploit the fact that Reverends Abduraheem and Shamal are originally from the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan and Abdumawla is from Darfur.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "This month marks one year since Rev. Hassan Abduraheem, Rev. Kuwa Shamal, Mr. Petr Jašek and Mr. Abdumonem Abdumawla were arrested in Sudan on grave charges which they have denied, but which have been brought against them simply for extending compassion to a man in need of medical treatment. In Rev. Shamal's case, being a senior Christian leader and a member of the Nuba ethnic groups is sufficient for him to be targeted by the security services. This unjust targeting of religious and ethnic minorities is in contravention of article 26 and 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Sudan is signatory, as well as of its own constitution and we urge the Sudanese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release these men and to drop all charges against them."