



1.10.17

SUDAN | Defense Closes Case in Security Crimes Trial

Lawyers representing three men charged with national security crimes in Sudan opened and closed the defense case Jan. 9.

During the hearing in Khartoum, Rev. Hassan Abduraheem, Petr Jašek and Abdulmonem Abdumawla's lawyers presented two witnesses who knew Abdumawla and Ali Omer, the Darfuri student who was injured in a protest in 2013. The witnesses testified to the relationship between Abdumawla and Omer and explained the steps taken by Abdumawla to source funds for Omer's medical treatment. The defense closed their cases after the witnesses were questioned.

The presiding judge is expected to receive written arguments from the prosecutor and defense lawyers on Jan. 16. He is then expected to deliver his final decision Jan. 23.

The three men, who have been in prison since December 2015, are charged with several crimes including two national security crimes, waging war against the state and espionage, which carry life imprisonment or the death penalty as maximum sentences.

The case against the men centers on the provision of funds for the medical treatment of Omer. After learning of 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 funds for his treatment.

As he was leaving Sudan, Jašek was searched at Khartoum Airport by National Intelligence and Security Service (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 Rev. Abduraheem and Rev. Kuwa Shamal, previously a co-defendants in the trial, are originally from the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan, and Abdumawla is from Darfur. Rev. Shamal was released from prison last week after the trial judge concluded there was no evidence against him and dismissed the charges.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "As the defense lawyers close their cases, we continue to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Rev. Abduraheem, Mr. Jašek and Mr. Abdumawla. These innocent men have committed no crimes and have been detained unjustly for over a year simply for an act of kindness. We call on the government of Sudan to ensure that these men are freed. We also urge the government to review the NISS's powers and to end the targeting religious and ethnic minorities in Sudan."