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Stockholm 28 March 2019

Elisabeth Rachlew /ch

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

Your Excellency,

The Human Rights Committee of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, the Swedish Academy and the Young Academy of Sweden write seeking your assistance regarding the urgent situation of our Sudanese scientific colleague Professor Muntaser Ibrahim, a professor of molecular biology at the University of Khartoum and a widely respected scholar in the fields of genetics and cancer research.

We were alarmed to learn that Professor Ibrahim was detained by security forces on February 21, 2019, and is being held incommunicado at the Security Forces' Political Detention Center in Bahri, Khartoum. It is our understanding that Professor Ibrahim and several opposition members were taken into custody just as they were planning to present a memorandum to the government outlining a University of Khartoum faculty initiative. This initiative, signed by more than 500 faculty members, proposes steps toward a peaceful solution to the escalating protests and violence in your country. We understand that, while Professor Ibrahim remains in detention, the individuals detained with him have been released.

Reliable reports indicate that Professor Ibrahim is being held under harsh conditions of confinement and that he has been allowed no access to legal counsel or family members. His situation is of particular concern given that he suffers from a chronic heart condition and has had two strokes in recent years. To the best of our knowledge, there have been no reasons provided for Professor Ibrahim's detention.

As Professor Ibrahim has not been charged with any internationally recognized crime, we are concerned that his detention stems solely from his efforts to develop a proposal for a peaceful resolution of the current unrest in Sudan. Such action constitutes the exercise of his fundamental rights to freedom of opinion and expression, which are protected under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, to which the Republic of Sudan is a party. Thus, we respectfully request that you use your good offices to ensure that Professor Ibrahim is promptly and unconditionally released from prison and that, in the interim, his conditions of confinement are brought into conformity with U.N. Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, including that he be allowed regular access to his family, legal counsel of his choosing, and any necessary medical care.

Thank you in advance, Your Excellency, for your attention to this important matter.


Elisabeth Rachlew
Professor, Chairman of the Human Rights Committee

Copy: His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Ahmed Salim, Minister of Justice
Embassy of the Republic of Sudan
Embassy of Sweden, Khartoum, Sudan