29 NGOs Call for Immediate Halt to Unlawful Deportation of Sudanese Refugee by Egyptian Authorities

Joint Statements · Egypt · Sudan · 18 July 2024

The undersigned organizations condemn the Egyptian authorities' arrest and detention of Sudanese refugee and community leader Othman Hussein Yaqoub Mansour, Director of the African Vision School for Sudanese Education in 6th of October City, on Monday, July 1st, and his forced disappearance and coercion into signing a declaration of voluntary deportation from Egypt.

These measures, including arrest, detention, threat of deportation, and initiation of deportation procedures in cooperation with the Sudanese Embassy, against a UNHCR registered refugee and holder of asylum status, constitute clear and flagrant violations of international obligations and the Egyptian Constitution. The Egyptian authorities must release him immediately and ensure his protection.

Othman Hussein Yaqoub Mansour has been registered with the UNHCR in Egypt since 2013. He was granted refugee status in October 2023 and holds a refugee card valid until the end of the upcoming August. Throughout his stay in Egypt, he has not been charged with any criminal offenses, focusing solely on formal education for children.

On Monday, July 1st, at around 6:00 p.m., Egyptian police forces raided the African Vision School for Sudanese Education in 6th of October City and detained him. During the raid, they seized Sudanese curriculum textbooks (geography and history) and his personal computer. When his family and lawyer inquired about him, the 6th of October Second Police Station denied his presence until July 7th.

On July 7th, his family received a call from a member of the 6th of October Police Department informing them of a deportation order for Othman and that they needed to purchase flight tickets for him. During this period, Othman was not brought before the prosecution and no charges were brought against him. Instead, he was tortured into signing a voluntary return to Sudan document.

The Refugees Platform in Egypt (RPE) documented Othman's transfer from the 6th of October Second Police Station to the General Administration of Passports, Immigration and Nationality, which issued a letter to the Sudanese Embassy, urging it to issue an emergency travel document for Othman's deportation.

This action constitutes a clear violation, as it involves sharing the information of a registered refugee with his home country in an attempt to deport him. On July 10th, the Sudanese Embassy in Cairo issued an emergency travel document for Mr. Othman against his will.

On July 13th, Othman Hussein was transferred to the General Administration of Passports, Immigration and Nationality to complete the necessary procedures for his deportation. The administration then issued a letter to his place of detention at the 6th of October Police Station, notifying them of his deportation to the Qustul border crossing between Egypt and Sudan.

One of the undersigned organizations reached out to Othman's family, who sought help from the UNHCR in Egypt and several partner institutions such as St. Andrew's Refugee Services and United Lawyers. However, they were unable to defend him or resolve the crisis.

Since 2021, the RPE has documented numerous cases of refugees being coerced by the Egyptian authorities into signing voluntary return declarations after prolonged detention, during which they were denied contact with their families or legal counsel. This pattern has become more prevalent recently, particularly among refugees active in the fields of human and social rights.

The undersigned organizations affirm that forcing refugees to sign voluntary return documents does not relieve Egypt of international obligations prohibiting the deportation or return of refugees to conflict zones.

The undersigned organizations call on the Egyptian authorities to:

- Immediately release detained refugee and community leader Othman Hussein Yaqoub Mansour, and immediately halt all forced deportations.
- Halt the detention of refugees and asylum seekers, immediately cease all hostilities towards Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, and enable asylum seekers to access the registration process and submit applications.
- Immediately cease all forms of forced deportation, expulsion, and refoulement that are increasingly being carried out by Egyptian security authorities.
- Stop the escalating hate speech against Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, and take serious actions against officials who perpetuate this rhetoric.
- Halt the closure of educational centers, recreational facilities, and places of activities for refugee and migrant communities in Egypt.

Signatory Organizations:

1.The Refugees Platform in Egypt (RPE)

2.El Nadim Center

3.Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)

4.Intersection Association for Rights and Freedoms

5.Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

6.survivors15april

7.HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement

8.The Regional Coalition for Women Human Rights Defenders in South West Asia and North Africa (WHRDMENA)

9.Egyptian Human Rights Forum (EHRF)

10.Committee for Justice

11.Refugees in Libya – APS

12.International Service for Human Rights (ISHR

13.Anti Racism Movement, Lebanon

14.Sudanese Women Rights Action

15.ADALA FOR ALL Association (1901)

16.Mv Louise michel

17.MALDUSA

18.Sudan Monitor

19.Foundation for the promotion of rights Algérie

20.Justitia Center for legal protection of human rights in Algeria

21.Partnering Eritrean Coalition Organizations -PECO

22.Middle East Democracy Center

23.National Representative Council of Eritrea-GIE

24.Human Rights Concern – Eritrea (HRCE)

25.EgyptWide for Human Rights

26.Partnering Eritrean Coalition Organizations -PECO

27.EuroMed Rights

28.المنتدى التونسي للحقوق الاقتصادية والاجتماعية

29.مرصد شرق النيل لحقوق الإنسان

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