

Advocacy dossier

Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem

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At liberty **Sudan**

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The case at a glance

Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem, known as Bob, leads the Workers' Coordination Committee in North Kordofan, advocating for public employees amid Sudan's civil war. He was taken from his office in September 2025 and released without charge on 25 December 2025.

Status	Arrested	Country
At liberty	**23 Sep 2025**	**Sudan**

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Drop any charges that remain on record against Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem in connection with peaceful human rights work.

02 Confirm publicly that Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem faces no residual travel, financial, or professional restriction arising from this case.

03 Guarantee that Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem can resume that work without surveillance, summons, or further reprisal.

04 Provide effective remedy for the period of deprivation of liberty already served.

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Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

Arbitrary detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9

Denial of family visits UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rule 58

Denial of legal counsel International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14(3)

Enforced disappearance International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Article 2
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 9, 16

Prolonged pretrial detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)

03

How the case unfolded

August 2022

Arrest

Briefly detained over his exposure of unpaid salaries

He was briefly detained in connection with his public exposure of alleged corruption linked to the non-payment of workers' salaries. He was not charged.

23 September 2025

Arrest

Arrested by SAF Intelligence in Al-Obeid

Officers from the SAF General Intelligence Service arrested Bob at his office in Al-Obeid, North Kordofan. His family and colleagues were not informed.

5 October 2025

Transfer between places of detention

Moved to El-Obeid Central Prison

He was moved from the General Intelligence Service office to El-Obeid Central Prison, where he was held in a small, crowded cell. He said he had been questioned twice more about his voice message.

13 October 2025

Reappearance in custody

Whereabouts disclosed: transferred to prison

After three weeks of enforced disappearance, information emerged that Bob had been transferred to Al-Obeid Central Prison.

14 October 2025

Call by others

Son issues public statement

Bob's son made a public statement confirming the arrest on 23 September and the period of incommunicado detention that followed.

15 October 2025

Family visit denied

Family visits and medication refused

The authorities rejected his family's requests to visit him on 15, 18 and 20 October 2025 and did not accept the medication they brought for him.

24 November 2025

UN special procedures communication

UN experts write to Sudan about his detention without charge

25 December 2025

Release

Released without charge

He was released on 25 December 2025, about three months after his arrest, without having been charged. He was reported to be in poor health as a result of prison conditions and to remain under surveillance.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked again. Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem was released without charge on 25 December 2025 and was reported to be in poor health and under surveillance; no later development has been reported.

Background and Work

Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem, widely known as Bob, is a trade union leader from North Kordofan, a Sudanese region whose governance has been disputed and fractured by the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces since April 2023. He serves as head of the Workers' Coordination Committee, an independent structure representing public sector employees established after the repeal of the 2010 Trade Unions Act. The Committee was formed to defend workers' rights in a climate where traditional union structures had been dismantled or co-opted.

Bob's advocacy has focused on labour rights, fair wages, and the political independence of union activity. In September 2025, he recorded an audio message for a private professional group in which he discussed the situation facing the trade union movement in North Kordofan. He affirmed the legitimacy of the Workers' Coordination Committee and raised alarm about the non-payment of salaries to public sector workers for sixteen months. He insisted that workers' rights and dignity must be respected and that demands for overdue wages should not be met with intimidation or political retaliation. He had also objected to the governor handing the union council back to its old leadership elected in 2015.

The Arrest and Enforced Disappearance

On 23 September 2025, officers from the SAF General Intelligence Service arrested Bob at his office in Al-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan. Authorities did not inform his family or colleagues of his detention; his relatives learnt of it on 25 September 2025 through a message passed on by a visitor to another detainee. He was moved to El-Obeid Central Prison on 5 October 2025, and Front Line Defenders reported that his whereabouts became publicly known only on 13 October. His disappearance fits a wider pattern of enforced disappearances targeting trade union leaders and human rights defenders across Sudan since the escalation of armed conflict.

On 13 October 2025, information emerged that Bob had been transferred to Al-Obeid Central Prison. The following day, his son issued a public statement confirming the arrest and the period of enforced disappearance. At that point, Bob had been held incommunicado for more than three weeks without charge, without access to legal counsel, and without family visits.

Detention Conditions and Legal Status

Bob was interrogated at least twice during his detention, but no formal charges were filed against him. His detention without charge violated both Sudanese law and international human rights standards. The prolonged incommunicado nature of his detention raised serious concerns about his health, his safety, and the risk of ill-treatment or torture while in custody.

He was released without charge on 25 December 2025, after about three months in detention, reportedly in poor health and under surveillance. While held, he was denied due process guarantees, including the right to be informed of any charges, the right to legal representation, and the right to communicate with his family. His detention appeared to be punitive rather than judicial, linked directly to the circulation of his audio message about workers' rights and overdue salaries.

Context and Pattern of Repression

Bob's case is part of a broader campaign of repression against trade union leaders in Sudan. Since the outbreak of war in April 2023, governance in many regions has been militarized and civic space has been systematically suppressed. Trade unionists, in particular, have faced harassment, arbitrary detention, and enforced disappearance for peaceful advocacy. The arrest of Bob and others reflects the authorities' intolerance of independent voices demanding accountability and economic justice during a time of acute crisis.

The militarization of governance in contested regions like North Kordofan has created an environment in which security forces operate with impunity. Workers advocating for unpaid wages or defending the independence of union structures are increasingly treated as security threats rather than as legitimate social actors. Bob's detention underscores the risks facing those who continue to advocate for labour rights in Sudan's current conflict.

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