

Advocacy dossier

Abubakr Mansour Abdela

أبوبكر منصور محمد حمزة

Imprisoned (serving sentence) **Sudan**

Abubakr Mansour Abdela is a lawyer who stayed in his hometown when the war came to Sudan in 2023, distributing medicine and offering legal support to his neighbours. In October 2025 he was sentenced to death by hanging, and in 2026 the Court of Appeal upheld the sentence.

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The case at a glance

Abubakr Mansour Abdela is a lawyer who stayed in his hometown when the war came to Sudan in 2023, distributing medicine and offering legal support to his neighbours. In October 2025 he was sentenced to death by hanging, and in 2026 the Court of Appeal upheld the sentence.

Status **Imprisoned (serving sentence)**	Arrested **25 Nov 2024**	Country **Sudan**
Sentence Death by hanging.		
Charges Collaborating with the Rapid Support Forces Offences against the State under the Sudan Criminal Act 1991 Waging war against the State under the Sudan Criminal Act 1991		

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Release Abubakr Mansour Abdela immediately and unconditionally.

02 Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

03 Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

02

Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

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

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

Judicial harassment UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12

Unfair trial International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

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How the case unfolded

25 November 2024

Arrest

Arrested at his home in Singa

He was arrested at his home in Singa and held in Singa Prison.

27 April 2025

Conviction

First conviction and sentence

The Singa General Court sentenced Abdela to twenty years in prison and a fine of ten million Sudanese pounds. His legal team rejected the verdict and filed an appeal.

27 July 2025

Context

Court of Appeal drops some charges and sends the case back

The Court of Appeal dropped some of the charges, upheld others, recommended a harsher penalty and sent the case back to the trial court to hear additional evidence. This led to the second trial that ended in the death sentence.

October 2025

Detention conditions and health

Held on death row in overcrowded Singa Prison

UN experts reported that he was held in the death row section of Singa Prison, which was reportedly overcrowded, and that he had reportedly suffered ill-treatment and been denied adequate medical care.

1 October 2025

Context

His defence lawyer, Abubakr Elmahi, arrested

Authorities arrested Abubakr Elmahi, the lawyer representing him, a few days before the verdict, leaving him without his lawyer as the court prepared its judgment.

5 October 2025

Conviction

Sentenced to death by hanging

The Singa Criminal Court sentenced Abdela to death by hanging under Articles 50 and 51 of the Sudan Criminal Act 1991, without providing any public explanation for the decision. The hearing had been brought forward from 9 to 5 October without notice to the defence.

8 October 2025

Context

His defence lawyer, Abubakr Elmahi, released

Abubakr Elmahi, head of his defence team, was held by a joint security and intelligence unit known as the Security Cell in Singa from 1 to 8 October 2025. During that time he could not work on the defence or contact his client.

10 October 2025

UN special procedures communication

UN experts write to Sudan about his death sentence

24 December 2025

Other act

Sudan replies to the UN experts

The Government of Sudan replied to the communication that UN experts had sent on 10 October 2025 about his death sentence and the arrest of his defence lawyer.

April 2026

Appeal: judgment upheld

Court of Appeal upholds the death sentence

The Court of Appeal upheld the death sentence. He remains on death row in Singa Prison.

July 2026

Appeal: judgment upheld

Supreme Court reported to have upheld the death sentence

On 22 July 2026 The New Arab reported that the Supreme Court had upheld his death sentence. The date of the ruling was not given.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked again. Abubakr Mansour Abdela remains under a death sentence, upheld by the Court of Appeal around April 2026; in July 2026 The New Arab reported that the Supreme Court had also upheld it. No execution, pardon or release has been reported. His case is one of several against Sudanese lawyers since 2023; Front Line Defenders has linked it to the killings of Darfur Bar Association members Khamis Arabab, Tareg Hassan Yagoub Elmalik and El Sadeg Mohammed Ahmed Haroun.

Background and Work

Abubakr Mansour Abdela is a lawyer who has provided legal assistance and representation to members of his community in Sudan for many years. His practice has been marked by a long-standing resistance to the Islamic Movement, the political-religious network that controlled much of Sudan's governance and security apparatus from 1989 until the 2019 revolution and which has retained influence within factions of the military.

When armed conflict erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces in April 2023, Abdela chose to remain in his hometown rather than flee. He continued his legal work while also organising humanitarian support. He distributed free medicine obtained through a relative to community members who had lost access to medical care as the health system collapsed under the pressure of war.

Abdela has been publicly opposed to the war and has not aligned himself with either of the warring parties. His work during the conflict focused on providing immediate relief and legal counsel to civilians caught between the two armed forces.

The First Conviction

On 27 April 2025, the Singa General Court convicted Abdela and sentenced him to twenty years in prison, along with a fine of ten million Sudanese pounds. The charges related to alleged collaboration with the Rapid Support Forces. His legal team rejected the conviction and lodged an appeal, arguing that the proceedings had failed to meet basic standards of fairness and that the evidence presented did not support the charges. On 27 July 2025 the Court of Appeal dropped some of the charges, upheld others, recommended a harsher penalty and sent the case back to the trial court to hear additional evidence.

The Death Sentence

On 5 October 2025, the Singa Criminal Court sentenced Abubakr Mansour Abdela to death by hanging. The court convicted him under Articles 50 and 51 of the Sudan Criminal Act 1991, which criminalise offences against the state and waging war against the state. The court issued no public explanation for the decision.

According to observers who followed the proceedings, the ruling raised serious concerns about the integrity of the trial process, the evaluation of evidence, and compliance with both Sudanese and international fair-trial standards. The facts and testimonies presented during the hearings did not appear to substantiate the allegations of armed collaboration with the RSF.

Four days before the verdict was announced, on 1

October 2025, authorities arrested Abubakr Elmahi, the lawyer representing Abdela. The arrest effectively deprived Abdela of legal representation at the moment the court was preparing to issue its final judgment. Elmahi was held by the Security Cell in Singa until 8 October 2025.

Context of Repression Against Lawyers

Since the outbreak of war in April 2023, human rights lawyers in Sudan have faced systematic targeting by both the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces. Lawyers have been arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, tortured, and killed. Members of the Darfur Bar Association, including Mohammed Ahmed Kudia, Khamis Arabab, Tareg Hassan Yagoub Elmalik, and El Sadeg Mohammed Ahmed Haroun, have been killed in circumstances suggesting they were targeted because of their legal and human rights work.

The conviction and sentencing of Abdela appears to form part of this broader pattern of judicial harassment and persecution of legal professionals who have provided assistance to civilians during the war or who have been perceived as politically opposed to one or both of the armed factions.

Legal Proceedings and International Response

Abdela's legal team appealed the death sentence, challenging the procedural integrity of the trial, the sufficiency and reliability of the evidence, and the proportionality of the sentence. Around April 2026 the Court of Appeal upheld the death sentence. In July 2026 The New Arab reported that the Supreme Court had also upheld the death sentence; the date of that ruling was not given. He remains on death row in Singa prison. International human rights organisations have condemned the verdict as politically motivated retaliation and called for the sentence to be overturned and for Abdela to be released.

Latest updates on this case Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/abubakr-mansour-abdela/

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