

Advocacy dossier

Ahmed Mohamed Abdella

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Killed **Sudan**

A lawyer who provided legal aid to victims of human rights violations in Darfur, Ahmed Mohamed Abdella was kidnapped and killed less than 24 hours later, his body found with severe torture marks on 4 August 2023.

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The case at a glance

A lawyer who provided legal aid to victims of human rights violations in Darfur, Ahmed Mohamed Abdella was kidnapped and killed less than 24 hours later, his body found with severe torture marks on 4 August 2023.

Status	Arrested	Country
Killed	**3 Aug 2023**	**Sudan**

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Order a full, independent, and impartial investigation into the killing of Ahmed Mohamed Abdella, with timely public reporting on findings.

02 Identify and prosecute those responsible, both the direct perpetrators and any state officials who ordered, enabled, or covered up the killing.

03 Provide effective reparation to the family of Ahmed Mohamed Abdella.

04 Take immediate steps to protect other defenders working in the same field from similar attacks.

02

Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

Extrajudicial killing International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6

Threats and intimidation UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 12

Torture Convention against Torture, Articles 1, 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 7

03

How the case unfolded

15 April 2023

Context

War erupts in Sudan

Armed conflict breaks out between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, plunging Darfur into renewed violence.

11 May 2023

Context

Jeddah Declaration signed

Warring parties sign the Jeddah Declaration committing to protect civilians and comply with international humanitarian law.

3 August 2023

Abduction

Abducted near his home in Nyala

Unidentified armed men took Ahmed Mohamed Abdella and his neighbour Adam Omer Jad Elrab near Ahmed's house in Hay Elrehman, Nyala, and demanded a ransom from his family.

4 August 2023

Killing

Body found with signs of torture

Ahmed's body was found on the Nyala-El Fasher road with severe torture marks, less than 24 hours after his kidnapping. His neighbour Adam Omer Jad Elrab was also found dead with severe torture marks.

4 August 2023

Other act

Rapid Support Forces deny responsibility

Family members went to the Rapid Support Forces headquarters to ask about the kidnapping. An RSF leader told them the RSF was not responsible and that members of irregular armed groups had carried it out.

10 August 2023

Other act

Front Line Defenders calls for an investigation

Front Line Defenders issued an urgent appeal condemning the killing, which it believes was linked to his human rights work, and calling for an impartial and independent investigation.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked again. No investigation into the abduction and killing of Ahmed Mohamed Abdella and his neighbour Adam Omer Jad Elrab in Nyala in August 2023 has been reported, and no one has been named or charged; the Rapid Support Forces told his family at the time that irregular armed groups were responsible. He was one of several members of the Darfur Bar Association killed in 2023, among them Tareg Hassan Yagoub Elmalik, El Sadeg Mohammed Ahmed Haroun and Khamis Arabab in El Geneina.

Background and Work

Ahmed Mohamed Abdella was a lawyer and human rights defender based in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur state. He dedicated his practice to providing legal aid to victims of human rights violations in a region that has experienced decades of conflict and mass atrocities.

Ahmed was a member of the Darfur Bar Association, an organization of Sudanese lawyers established in 1995. The association became a critical source of legal support and documentation during Darfur's humanitarian crises. In 2020, the Darfur Bar Association received the Democracy Award in recognition of its sustained work supporting and providing legal aid to victims of human rights violations across the Darfur region.

When war erupted across Sudan on 15 April 2023, pitting the Sudanese Armed Forces against the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, Darfur once again became a front line. Despite the escalating violence and the proliferation of armed groups across the region, Ahmed continued his legal work in Nyala.

The Kidnapping

On 3 August 2023, a group of unknown armed individuals arrived in a pickup van near Ahmed's home in the Hay Elrehman neighbourhood of Nyala. They forcibly took Ahmed and his neighbour, Adam Omer Jad Elrab, who had worked with the International Medical Corps in Darfur.

The kidnappers contacted Ahmed's family on the same day, demanding a ransom of thirty million Sudanese pounds for his release. The family sought assistance from the Rapid Support Forces, one of the main armed actors controlling parts of Nyala at the time. One RSF leader told the family that the RSF was not responsible for the kidnapping, claiming instead that it had been carried out by members of irregular armed groups operating in the area.

The Killing

Less than twenty-four hours after his abduction, Ahmed's body was discovered on the Nyala-El Fasher road on 4 August 2023. His neighbor Adam was found dead alongside him. Both bodies bore severe torture marks.

Ahmed's killing occurred despite the Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan, signed by the warring parties on 11 May 2023. That agreement recognized the obligations of both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces under international humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians and

facilitate humanitarian action. In practice, neither side has complied.

Context of Violence Against Defenders in Darfur

Ahmed Mohamed Abdella was at least the seventh human rights defender killed in Darfur in the first four months of the war. In the three months preceding his death, six other defenders were killed in El Geneina, West Darfur: Abd Elrazeg Adam Mohammed, Tareg Hassan Yagoub Elmalik, El Sadeg Mohammed Ahmed Haroun, Mohammed Ahmed Kudia, Khamis Arabab, and Khidir Sulieman Abdelmageed.

The spread of armed groups across Darfur, combined with the collapse of state authority and the active participation of irregular militias in the conflict, has created an environment of extreme danger for human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, and activists. Legal professionals who documented abuses or represented victims have been particularly exposed to retaliation.

Ahmed's death illustrates the near-total impunity with which human rights defenders and other civilians are targeted in the context of Sudan's civil war. No effective investigation or accountability mechanism exists for killings carried out by armed actors on either side of the conflict.

Latest updates on this case Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/ahmed-mohamed-abdella/

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