

# JOINT PETITION

19 December 2019

**His Excellency Dr. Abdalla Hamdok**

Prime Minister of Sudan

Chairperson of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Khartoum

Republic of the Sudan

*Dear Prime Minister Hamdok:*

## **Unlawful Dissolution of Sudan Union of Journalists**

On behalf of the undersigned journalists' unions in the Eastern Africa region, we collectively write to you to condemn, and express our outrage over, your Government's move to dissolve trade unions of Sudan, including our sister union - Sudan Union of Journalists.

On the night of 14 December 2019, the ruling Sovereignty Council issued a degree to dissolve all trade unions and professional associations in Sudan. Lieutenant General Yasser Al-Atta, member of Sovereignty Council, who heads the Committee of "elimination of empowerment and fighting corruption" which was created by the Sovereignty Council, announced that the Committee decided to seize all properties and assets of all trade unions and establish a committee to revise trade union laws and prepare for new election for leaders of trade unions under these new laws.

On 15 December 2019, police soldiers, who were reinforced by other heavily armed security forces, raided and barred the leaders of Sudan Journalists (SJU) to enter their offices and their properties were seized.

With this decision, the current government of Sudan has flagrantly violated fundamental human and trade unions rights. The decision to dissolve trade unions is not in line with the national laws and constitutes a gross interference of the internal affairs of a trade union organization. Article 5 of ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association ratified by your Government recognizes the right of workers' organizations to join federations and confederations of their own choice. Your government has completely ignored ILO legal provisions as well as repeated calls from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) to respect rights guaranteed under international conventions ratified by Sudan.

We urge your Government to revoke the decision to dissolve Sudan Union of Journalists and other trade unions, end gross interference in internal affairs of unions and to engage in

genuine dialogue with unions about legislative reforms that will ensure the respect of workers' rights in line with Sudan's international obligations without further delay.

Our unions, collectively or individually, shall continue to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Sudan Union of Journalists and we are committed to Speak Out at continental and international forums.

Yours sincerely,

1. Abdalle Ahmed Mumin, Secretary General, Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS)
2. Alexandre Niyungeko, President, Union Burundaise des Journalistes (UBJ)
3. Claud Gwandu, Chairperson, Journalist Workers Union of Tanzania (JOWUTA)
4. Eric Oduor, Secretary General, Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ)
5. John Oprong, General Secretary, Uganda Media Union (UMU)
6. Kenedid Ibrahim Houssein, President, Syndicat de la Presse et de audiovisual de Djibouti (SPAD)
7. Omar Faruk Osman, Secretary General, National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)
8. Stephen Ouma Bwire, General Secretary, Uganda Journalists Union (UJU)