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Sudan: Judicial harassment and smear campaign against woman human rights defender and lawyer Rehab Mubarak

On 17 April 2026, Sudanese judicial authorities initiated criminal proceedings against woman human rights defender and lawyer **Rehab Mubarak**, under charges of disseminating information deemed harmful to national security. Authorities in Sudan have issued an arrest warrant against her and taken steps to dismiss her from the Sudanese Bar Association. These measures were followed by a coordinated incitement and defamation campaign.

[Rehab Mubarak](#) is a Sudanese woman human rights defender and lawyer, and a member of the executive office of the Emergency Lawyers group. Through her legal and advocacy work, she has been actively engaged in documenting human rights violations arising from the ongoing conflict in Sudan, including the alleged use of prohibited weapons. She also provides legal analysis and support aimed at advancing accountability and justice. Her work focuses on monitoring abuses, supporting victims, and promoting respect for fundamental rights, including freedom of expression and the rule of law.

On 17 April 2026, Sudanese judicial authorities initiated criminal proceedings against woman human rights defender and lawyer Rehab Mubarak, charging her under Articles 51 and 66 of the Sudanese Criminal Code of 1991, including accusations of “waging war against the state” and “spreading false news,” which carry severe penalties and may extend to capital punishment. Authorities in Sudan have issued an arrest warrant against her and taken steps to dismiss her from the Sudanese Bar Association. Following the initiation of criminal proceedings the incitement and defamation campaign against her intensified. On 18 April 2026, a coordinated smear campaign on media platforms and social networks called for her prosecution, discredited her work and, and undermined her credibility.

The criminal proceedings against the woman human rights defender Rehab Mubarak are taking place in the context of an escalating reprisals against defenders documenting violations and speaking out against abuses committed during the conflict. The use of vague and overly broad charges related to national security and the dissemination of false information reflects a pattern of judicial harassment aimed at silencing independent voices. Further, coordinated smear campaigns exacerbate the hostile environment that threatens the safety and independence of human rights defenders.

Front Line Defenders believes that the targeting of Rehab Mubarak appears to be directly linked to her legitimate work documenting human rights violations, including the use of prohibited weapons. Such actions undermine efforts to ensure accountability for serious abuses and contribute to the perpetuation of impunity.

Front Line Defenders expresses its deep concern over the use of criminal law against a practicing lawyer in connection with her professional and human rights activities. The organisation asserts that the authorities' measures against Rehab Mubarak constitute a violation of her right to a fair trial, undermines the independence of lawyers, and restricts the right to freedom of expression as protected under international human rights law.

Front Line Defenders urges the de facto authorities in Sudan to:

1. Immediately drop all charges against Rehab Mubarak, as they appear to be a reprisal for her legitimate and peaceful work defending human rights;
2. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity and security of Rehab Mubarak;
3. Cease all acts of harassment, including judicial harassment, against her and all human rights defenders in Sudan;
4. Ensure that all human rights defenders in Sudan are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions in line with Sudan's obligations under international human rights law.

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