



African Commission rules that Sudan breached the rights of 88 internally displaced persons and needs to provide reparation for torture and other violations

London, UK, 25 February 2014 – In [an important decision](#), Africa’s regional human rights treaty body - the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights - held that Sudan is responsible for the arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and ill-treatment of 88 internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The 88 complainants are Sudanese nationals who had escaped conflict in South Sudan and Darfur and settled in the Soba Aradi camp in the South East of Khartoum, Sudan’s capital. In 2005, they resisted an official attempt to forcibly relocate thousands of residents. They claimed that the authorities detained them for more than twelve months without charge or access to the outside world. In detention, officials tortured them to extract confessions, including with severe beatings using various objects. Following their release, they lodged a complaint against the police about the torture suffered, which the Sudanese authorities have failed to investigate.

The African Commission fully vindicated the claims of the 88 IDPs. It ruled that they did not have access to effective remedies because Sudanese police officers enjoy immunity from prosecution, which can only be lifted by the head of the police. The Commission also found that the complainants had been arbitrarily arrested and detained, and subjected to torture in violation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. Importantly, the Commission requested Sudan to pay adequate compensation, to initiate an effective and impartial investigation and to amend legislation, in addition to providing training to security officers on human rights standards.

“We welcome the ruling, as it vindicates the claims brought by 88 individuals, who as IDPs in Sudan, already lived in precarious circumstances. When they resisted arbitrary relocation, they were subjected to further abusive law enforcement,” said Carla Ferstman, Director of REDRESS. “It is now critical that Sudan complies with the decision of the African Commission and implements it speedily.”

“This decision is very important for the victims in this case, many of whom suffered serious physical injuries and psychological trauma”, said Ali Agab, a lawyer who represented the complainants in Sudan on behalf of the Khartoum Centre for Human Rights and Environmental Development. “Sudan should now demonstrate that it takes its human rights

treaty obligations seriously and carry out the measures requested by the African Commission.”

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About REDRESS: REDRESS was founded by a British torture survivor in 1992. Since then, it has consistently fought for the rights of torture survivors and their families in the UK and abroad. REDRESS takes legal challenges on behalf of survivors, works to ensure that torturers are punished and that survivors and their families obtain remedies for their suffering. It has intervened in a range of leading torture cases. More information on our work on: www.redress.org