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Sudan: Human rights defender and trade union leader Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem “Bob” disappeared and held in incommunicado detention

On 23 September 2025, Sudanese human rights defender and trade union leader **Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem**, widely known as “Bob,” was disappeared by officers of the SAF General Intelligence Service at his office in North Kordofan. The authorities did not inform his family or colleagues of his detention, and his whereabouts remained unknown until 13 October 2025.

[Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem “Bob”](#) is a Sudanese human rights defender and trade union leader from North Kordofan, a region whose authority is disputed due to intense fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem is the head of the Workers’ Coordination Committee, an independent body representing public sector employees. He is known for his peaceful advocacy for labour rights and fair wages.

On 14 October 2025, Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem’s son made a statement disclosing that on 23 September 2025, the human rights defender had been arrested by officers of the SAF General Intelligence Service in Al-Obeid, North Kordofan. Since his arrest, the human rights defender has been held incommunicado for more than three weeks without charge or access to legal counsel or family visits. According to information received by Front Line Defenders, the human rights defender has been interrogated twice but no formal charges have been filed against him. His prolonged incommunicado detention raises serious concerns about his health, safety, and the legality of his deprivation of liberty under both Sudanese and international law.

The arrest of Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem appears to be linked to an audio message he shared with colleagues in a private professional group. In the recording, the human rights defender discussed the situation of the trade union movement in North Kordofan, affirming the legitimacy of the Workers’ Coordination Committee established after the repeal of the 2010 Trade Unions Act, and emphasizing the need to preserve the political independence of union activity. In the same recording, the human rights defender raised concerns about the non-payment of workers’ salaries for sixteen months. He insisted that workers’ rights and dignity must be respected and that legitimate demands for overdue salaries should not be met with intimidation or political retaliation.

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Following the circulation of the recording, Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem was arrested by security officers from his office in Al-Obeid, North Kordofan. Several days later, it was reported that he had been transferred to Al-Obeid Central Prison, where he remains detained without any formal charges or legal justification.

Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem's arrest occurs amid a wider pattern of enforced disappearance, harassment, intimidation, and arbitrary detention of trade union leaders across Sudan, particularly since the escalation of armed conflict in April 2023, which has led to the militarization of governance and suppression of civic space.

Front Line Defenders believes that the arrest and continued detention of Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem are directly linked to his peaceful defence of workers' rights and his legitimate trade union activities. The organisation expresses deep concern over his continued detention without charge, denial of due process guarantees, and the risk of ill-treatment while in custody.

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

1. Immediately and unconditionally release human rights defender and trade union leader Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem and drop any charges against him;
2. Ensure Abdelwahab Ahmed Mohamed Hashem's safety and well-being while in detention and guarantee that his treatment complies with international human rights standards, particularly the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment;
3. End the harassment and intimidation of all human rights defenders in Sudan and guarantee that they can carry out their peaceful activities free from arbitrary arrest, judicial harassment, or any form of reprisal.