



Sudan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 16 February 2018

To what standard are the prison conditions in Sudan, and how are detainees generally treated.

The 2016 US Department of State country report for Sudan, in a section titled “Prison and Detention Center Conditions” (sub-section headed “Physical Conditions”), states:

“Prison conditions throughout the country remained harsh, overcrowded, and life threatening. The Prisons and Reform Directorate, a branch of the national police that reports to the Ministry of Interior, oversees prisons. According to human rights activists and released detainees, military intelligence officials also detained civilians on military installations, especially in conflict areas.

Overall conditions, including food, sanitary and living conditions, were reportedly better in women’s detention facilities and prisons, such as the Federal Prison for Women in Omdurman, than at equivalent facilities for men, such as Kober or Omdurman Prisons. In Khartoum juveniles were not held in adult prisons or jails, but they were reportedly held with adults elsewhere.

Prison health care, heating, ventilation, and lighting were often inadequate. Some prisoners did not have access to medications or physical examinations. Authorities generally provided food, water, and sanitation to prisoners, although the quality of all three was basic. Whereas prisoners previously relied on family or friends for food, families were no longer allowed to provide food or other items to family members. Most prisoners did not have beds. Ventilation and lighting conditions differed between prisons. Overcrowding was a major problem.

There were reports of deaths due to negligence in prisons and pretrial detention centers, but comprehensive figures were not available. Local press reported deaths resulting from suspected torture by police. Human rights advocates reported that additional deaths resulted from harsh conditions, such as extreme heat and lack of water, at military detention facilities.” (US Department of State (3 March 2017) *2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Sudan*, pp.7-8)

A fact-finding mission report jointly published by the Danish Immigration Service and the UK Home Office refers to information provided by Abdelrahman Elgasim, External Relations Secretary of the Darfur Bar Association, as follows:

“Asked about the profile of persons detained in Kober prison, Abdelrahman Elgasim said that it was mainly persons affiliated to rebel groups, politicians and some activists who were in Kober prison. The source stated that he was held in Kober prison for 4-5 months; however he added that detainees were

not kept in Kober prison for a long time, and were usually transferred to Dabak prison, north of Khartoum, where the conditions were even worse than Kober and where detainees were more frequently tortured. A person detained in Dabak had told the source that he had been beaten and been inflicted 150 lashes during his detention in Dabak. Abdelrahman Elgasim had also heard of cases of fingernail torture and also of cases of suicide among detainees. The source however clarified that torture occurred in both Kober and Dabak prisons. Abdelrahman Elgasim advised that there was not equality before the law and Darfuris and persons from the Two Areas were usually treated more harshly than others.” (Danish Immigration Service and UK Home Office (August 2016) *Sudan: Situation of Persons from Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile in Khartoum*, p.41)

A report published by the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies, in a section titled “Torture In Practice In Sudan” (sub-section headed “Torture in Places of Detention”), states:

“Mr. Mohamed Hassan AlimAlboshi is an engineer by profession and has openly criticised (sic) the ruling party and government on issues like corruption which have led to his arrest and detention by security personnel on numerous occasions (sic). He narrated to ACJPS that while giving a speech near the Libya market in Omdurman to the Sharara Youth Movement in January 2011, he was detained by NISS and taken to the NISS offices in Bahri near Shandi Bus station where he was subjected to torture for twenty one days. Mr. Alboshi was subjected to the following: he was burnt with electric shocks on his body i.e. his hands and testicle, beaten with sticks, NISS security personnel removed his clothes and poured hot water on his body, he was sleep deprived for three days, threatened with rape, and hung upside down. He was released after forty eight days in detention.” (African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (undated) *“I Was Electrocuted”: Torture in Sudan from 2011-2015*, p.8)

A report from the Amsterdam based pro-Darfuri Radio Dabanga states

“A Sudanese activist who was recently released from detention said that the prisons of the security apparatus are overcrowded with detainees, who are ill-treated or tortured. Trader and entrepreneur Abdallah Abdelgayoum saw the inside of several prisons in El Gedaref, Khartoum North, and Khartoum during his detention from 18 December until 22 January. He was also moved to Dabak prison and a hotel which he called the 'refrigerator'. 'The security apparatus prisons are overcrowded with lots of detainees whose families do not know their whereabouts and are not allowed to communicate with them,' he told Radio Dabanga in an exclusive interview. He met many people from Darfur: 'They are treated the worst.'” (Radio Dabanga (31 January 2017) *'NISS prisons in Sudan overcrowded': released detainee*)

A report from the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies states:

“Usama Mohamed Abdulsalam, 42 years of age, was arrested on suspicion of drinking alcohol during a raid carried out by the Public Order Police in Walaa, Port Sudan on the evening of 21 August 2017. Article 78 of the 1991 Criminal Act prohibits Muslims from drinking alcohol and provides for a penalty of forty lashes.

Mr. Abdulsalam collapsed in the police cell due to dehydration on 22 August 2017 and was taken to Port Sudan hospital where he was given an intravenous (IV) glucose drip. He was taken back to the police station the same day to await trial in an extremely hot and overcrowded cell with poor ventilation and limited access to drinking water. The cell measured about 3 x 3 meters with just one small window measuring about 40 x 40 centimeters. The outside air temperature in Port Sudan was reported to have been around 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit). He died the following day, 23 August. A medical report issued after his death stated that he died from acute dehydration and that he had been returned to the police cell against medical advice that he should remain at the hospital in an air-conditioned room with access to plenty of fluids.

ACJPS previously documented the deaths of two men in Port Sudan in August 2014 who had been detained at Diem Mayo public order police station in severely overcrowded, hot and poorly ventilated conditions. A third man died at Port Sudan prison later the same month. He had spent one night at Diem Mayo public order police station. The three men had been subjected to flogging for the consumption of alcohol.” (African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) (6 September 2017) *Call for urgent review of detention conditions in Port Sudan following death in custody*)

A Human Rights Watch report states:

“Human rights defender Dr. Mudawi Ibrahim Adam has been in prison since December 7. He has yet to be charged. He went on hunger strike twice to protest the lack of charges. His driver and several associates, including Darfuri activist Hafiz Idris, were also detained. Idris, who hails from a sprawling displaced person’s camp in South Darfur, also remains in detention without charge, and credible sources report he was badly beaten.

Other, lesser-known activists are also locked up – not just in official prisons, but in unmarked buildings, offices, and private houses – today’s version of the eponymous 1990s ‘ghost houses’ where torture and ill-treatment were commonplace. A former detainee, a member of the opposition Sudanese Congress Party, who was held for 50 days after being picked up during the November 2016 crackdown on ‘civil disobedience’, was so badly beaten by security agents that he needed surgery. He told me that he saw other detainees who were beaten and even electrocuted in custody.” (Human Rights Watch (14 March 2017) *Sudan’s New Image Can’t Disguise Harsh Reality*)

A report from Radio Dabanga states:

“Opposition party leaders in detention are subject to physical torture while some suffer from chronic diseases, a spokesman for the Sudanese Communist Party claimed following witness reports. Fathi Fadul, Communist Party spokesman, said that the party leaders suffer from ‘physical and psychological torture’, pointing to Communist Party leaders Mohamed Mukhtar El Khateeb, Siddig Yousef, and of the National Umma Party, Co-Vice-President Mohamed Abdallah El Doma and Secretary-General Sara Nugdallah. ‘Some of them have chronic diseases.’ According to Fadul, a report about their transfer to the notorious Shala Prison in El Fasher is incorrect. ‘But none of the detainees were allowed any visits or contact with

their families.' He added that El Khateeb was forced to sit on an iron chair facing the wall for more than four hours a day, 'to psychologically break his will.'" (Radio Dabanga (30 January 2018) *Detained opposition leaders 'maltreated' in Sudan prison*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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