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2.1.3. Community leaders, lawyers, and human rights activists

The reinstatement of the National Security Laws in 2023 provided a legal basis for increased restrictions on civil society activities, while the so-called Information Law has been applied 'to criminalize online expression about the conflict.' [272](#) For additional information see [1.3.3. Access to information, misinformation and media landscape](#).

Reprisals against defenders engaging with regional and international bodies increased, taking the form of 'travel bans, arbitrary arrests, and threats'.[273](#) Staff members have been harassed or assaulted. Human rights defenders and civil society actors faced 'an unprecedented crackdown' by the authorities, as reported by the organisation Committee for Justice, that in August 2025 documented the killing of at least 41 human rights defenders including teachers' rights advocates, doctors, and journalists in the first six months of 2025.[274](#) At the end of 2025, Munib Abdelaziz, a young activist, was reportedly detained in the town of Magaser, near Dongola, capital of the Northern State, after a speech commemorating the December Revolution of 2018. Commemorations of the December Revolution were violently suppressed in several other SAF-controlled areas, amid open incitement by officials and pro-authority voices. [275](#)

UN OHCHR indicated that lawyers representing, 'or who may potentially represent,' 'individuals accused of collaborating with the RSF have reportedly faced threats and intimidation.'[276](#) For example, a lawyer was attacked in Wad Madani in November 2025 while representing an historian accused of RSF collaboration without the prosecution producing any evidence to support the claim.[277](#) In some cases, legal representatives were arrested as in the case of a defence counsel who was detained under Art. 53 ('Espionage against the State') reportedly for representing a civilian political organisation.[278](#) In another instance, a human rights lawyer-representing members of the 'Taqaddum' coalition[279](#) - was detained in Port Sudan in September 2024 after requesting access to investigation records for political detainees. He was reportedly subjected to physical and psychological torture,[280](#) charged under the Sudanese Criminal Act 1991 and the Anti-Terrorism law, including Articles 53 and 85 of the Criminal Act relating to espionage, undermining the constitutional order and waging war against the State. These charges were subsequently dropped. He was convicted under the Cybercrime Act and sentenced to one year and four months in prison, before being released in October 2025, following the payment of a fine.[281](#)

In January 2026, a Sudanese lawyer's committee associated with a faction of the Sudanese Bar Association revoked the licenses of 31 attorneys for allegedly supporting the RSF by joining

Taasis political alliance stating that ‘they had joined entities whose practices “contradict the ethics and honour of the legal profession.”’ This move reflected a further widening of divisions within Sudan’s professional unions which have been fragmented by the ongoing conflict between the army and the RSF since April 2023.[282](#)

In October 2025, after being condemned to a 20-year prison sentence and a fine of 10 million SDG [approximately EUR 14 200], Abubakr Mansour Abdela, a lawyer and human rights defender, has been sentenced to death by hanging by the Singa Criminal Court in Sennar state. [283](#) The Sudanese Observatory for Human Rights indicated that the death sentence was issued without adhering to the appeals court’s ruling. According to the Observatory this is an example of the ‘use of the judicial authorities as a tool to settle political disputes and subdue opponents’. [284](#) The lawyer was convicted under articles 50 and 51 of the Sudan Criminal Act 1991 on charges of offences against the State and waging war against the State reportedly in connection with the distribution of medicines from his brother’s pharmaceutical company, which the authorities alleged constituted collaboration with the RSF.[285](#)

In March 2026, five female journalists and human rights activists were arrested by the RSF in Nyala after they attended a workshop on women’s rights and ‘held incommunicado in undisclosed locations.’[286](#)

- [272](#)

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Sudan Tribune, Sudan lawyer admission committee revokes licenses of 31 attorneys, 6 January 2026, [url](#)

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