



HUDO Centre

Press release

For immediate release (21st Dec. 2015)

Sudanese authority destroyed two churches at Omdurman

On 21st and 28th Oct. 2015 the combined troops of National intelligence and security service (NISS), Police, land registration authority and locality's officer destroyed two churches in Althawra (square 29 and square 61) which are located in Karari locality of Omdurman town at Khartoum state, without any legal ground.

Althawra's (square 29) Church incident: on 21st Oct. 2015 the troops armed with teargas accompanied with land registration authorities and Karari locality authorities came to the church on twelve (12) vehicles and two (2) bulldozers. As soon as they arrived, the soldiers surrounded the church, threw the teargas canisters to fragment the people who had gathered to protect the church. Immediately after that, they started to destroy (pull down) the church while it was closed with its furniture and holy/ sacred items there in. Steven Adil Kajo (23 years old) who tried object to their action was arrested and later released after destroying the said church.

Althawra's (square 61) Church incident: on 28th Oct. 2015 at (10:00 am) a troop consist of armed soldier from NISS and police came on six (6) vehicle with bulldozer destroyed Althawra's (square 61) church. The items that were destroyed include all the church's furniture and holy/ sacred belongings that were in.

According to priest (James), "Althawra's (square 29) church was established in this location since 1984 when it was an open area. Later on 1995 the land registration authority re-planned the area and they allocated the alternative lands to the mosques and ignored the church yet, the church authority kept requesting. The current land of the said church is (400 m²) and their congregation is about (450 persons). And Althawra's (square 61) church in area was re-planned on 1999 and the church also was ignored to be given alternative land".

The same priest added that, "The same authorities with NISS and police tried twice in the last four days before the incident to destroy this same church (square 29). The first trial was on 17th Oct. 2015 at (10:00 am) they came on six (6) vehicles with bulldozer, but the church authority objected asking for the official order. The troop went back and on the same day issued and delivered official letter by (02:00 pm) giving the church authorities seventy two hours to

evacuate it. The second trial on 20th Oct. 2017 the same troop came back again but the people gathered inside the church and started to pray. Then the troop confiscated some items from the church and went back. The following day they came back and destroyed it”.

Christian eyewitness lady (Hawa) said; “The destruction was carried out without care or regard to the sanctity of the church which is a violation to our constitutional rights and against the international conventions”.

As a result of the destruction, the congregations from those churches resorted to gather and pray from the open space without any shelter/facility.

HUDO Centre is seriously concerned about the matter of violating the rights of Christians and their churches, as well as;

- Calling on the authorities to conduct a transparent investigation on the official destroying orders for the churches, and to give the churches alternative land as well as to pay them financial and moral redress.
- Calling on the authorities to stop immediately any further destroying of churches and violating of the Christians’ rights, as well as to give respect to their sacred places/ worship centres.
- Urge the authorities to respect the constitution and the international conventions and stop discrimination basing on religion.

End

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