

Sudan Democratic Alliance of Lawyers

Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) – 10th Annual Conference

17 – 20 July 2019

Lomé, Togo

First of all, let me convey my happiness to be at the 2019 PALU Annual Conference. I would also like to convey greetings from my colleagues in The Democratic Alliance of Lawyers, which includes the Sudanese opposition and independent democratic lawyers. I would also like to thank the President and members of the Bar Association of Togo for hosting this 10th Annual Conference.

The Alliance is seeking for the rule of law be reinstated , to have judiciary reforms, to have our human rights upheld, the right to fair trials to continue to be upheld by the courts and for the Sudanese Government to stop using the Bar Association as a legal tool for the executive authorities.

in June 1989, the National Islamic Front (NIF) sought to use the Sudanese Bar Association to serve in its military regime. The Bar thus became a principal target for the regime, which sought to steal its will by abolishing Chapter 10 of the Advocacy Act of 1983, which regulates the General Assembly rules and election. Additionally, Article 69 of the Advocacy Act, pursuant to the Temporary Decree No 1, 1993, was promulgated with the intent of making Bar Association report to the labour unions' Registrar General's office. Accordingly, the Bar Association has been treated as a workers' trade union rather than a professional body.

Afterwards, the Arab Lawyers Union, with Farooq Abu Eisa who was serving as its secretary, ended Sudan's membership at the Union. In remedy, the National Assembly issued, in 2001, a resolution stating that the Bar Association is exempt from being subject to the provisions of the Labour Union Act, seeking to remove the suspension imposed by the Arab Lawyers Union. The Sudanese Bar Association, during 30 year of Islamic regime, backed several violations of the law and the Government's support for the ruling party's list of candidates in six union electoral cycles for 24 years.

We in the Sudan Democratic Alliance of Lawyers submitted several appeals against proven violations in the previous elections. The Committee of Appeals rejected some appeals without justifications while other appeals are still pending.

At the beginning of the revolution, the Military Council undertook to dissolve the Council of the Bar Association, since it was a tool being used by al-Bashir's notorious regime, but it soon reversed its commitments when negotiations with the forces of freedom and change collapsed.

Before continuing the dialogue under the mediation of the African Union , we look forward to the Pan African Lawyers Union seeking audience with the African Union to pressure the Military Council to declare the dissolution of the illegal Council of the Bar Association, and to submit the list which will be submitted by the Democratic Alliance of Lawyers as the steering committee preparing for a general assembly seeking an independent Bar of Association .

We also have a reason to believe your prestigious Union will address the African Union in order to follow the implementation of what has been agreed upon between the forces of Freedom and Change and the Military Council.

Finally, the support of the Democratic Alliance of Lawyers and the forces of freedom and change is a support for democracy, the rule of law and human rights, the principles and objectives of the legal profession.

As long as the slogan of our peaceful revolution is a part of our professional goals, I will sing it as my people (children before adults) do:

“Freedom – peace – justice and The Revolution is the Peoples Choice.”

Thank you and may Sudan continue to be a beacon of change and hope in our continent