H.E. Dr. Baha´aldin Hanafi
Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan
Kurfürstendamm 151
D-10709 Berlin

Your Excellency,

Human right defender Ms Mai Shutta has been held without charge by the Sudanese authorities since her arrest from her home in Khartoum-Omdurman on 1 July 2012. This is part of a widespread crackdown on activists and human rights defenders in Sudan in the context of recent demonstrations. Human rights defenders Mr Bakry Al-Ajami and Mr Faisal Shabu were arrested on 29 June and 24 June respectively, and continue to be held without charge. Mr Bakry Al-Ajami and Mr Faisal Shabu have reportedly meanwhile been transferred to Port Sudan prison, hundreds of miles away from their families.

Mai Shutta is known for her work with the non-violent Girifna movement, which advocates for human rights and democratic reform. Bakry Al-Ajami is a member of the same movement. He was previously detained in November 2011, along with a number of other Girifna activists, and subjected to torture while in detention. Faisal Shabu is a long-term human rights defender and women's rights activist, who co-founded and is running the NGO “Sima Organisation for Child Rights”. He was previously arrested on several occasions and detained in unofficial detention centres where he was subjected to torture.

Mai Shutta suffered several injuries in the days leading up to her arrest on 1 July 2012. On 27 June, she was beaten up by an unidentified person not far from her home. She sustained injuries to her arm and back during the attack. On 29 June, she took part in a peaceful demonstration in Khartoum Wad Nubawi, where she was violently knocked over by police, fell on her already injured arm and damaged it even more. Furthermore, she was refused medical care by the two hospitals she approached due to the fact that she was a protester.

Bakry Al-Ajami was arrested in his home in Omdurman on 29 June 2012. Meanwhile, Faisal Shabu was arrested on 24 June 2012 at his office in Khartoum North, and he was reportedly transferred to Kober prison. Neither of them were involved in the demonstrations.

All three detained human rights defenders have had very limited access to their families and have been denied access to their legal representatives. Mai Shutta is currently detained in Omdurman Women's Prison, in the section that is controlled by the security service, rather than in the general prison population.

I condemn the arrest and continued detention without charge of Mai Shutta, Bakry Al-Ajami and Faisal Shabu, and believe that these measures are solely motivated by their advocacy for human rights in Sudan. I am seriously concerned for the physical and psychological integrity of the aforementioned human rights defenders, particularly taking into account the injuries sustained by

Mai Shutta prior to her arrest and the reported torture inflicted on Bakry Al-Ajami and Faisal Shabu when they were detained on previous occasions.

I urge the authorities in Sudan to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Mai Shutta, Bakry Al-Ajami and Faisal Shabu, as it is believed that their detention is solely motivated by their legitimate human rights activities;

2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Mai Shutta, Bakry Al-Ajami and Faisal Shabu while in detention;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Sudan are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

Yours sincerely,