



June 22, 2015

His Excellency Ibrahim Ghandour
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Government of Sudan
Khartoum, Sudan

Minister Ghandour:

We come from a variety of countries with different parliamentary systems in various regions, and we write to collectively express our grave concern about the continued imprisonment and persecution of Rev. Yat Michael and Rev. Peter Reith. We request the immediate dropping of all charges and that the two pastors be unconditionally released from prison. We further request they be allowed to stay in Sudan and resume their church work, and that the harassment of them and their congregation end.

Revs. Michael and Reith belong to the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SPEC) Khartoum Bahri congregation. The church has been in a land dispute to stop the illegal sale of church property. We understand that in December 2014, Rev. Michael was detained after urging his parishioners to stand up for their church and their religious freedoms. Rev. Reith was detained in January 2015.

The charges brought against the pastors are shocking, as if convicted they face the death penalty or life imprisonment for expressing their constitutional rights to freedom of expression and religion. They have been charged with undermining the constitutional system (Article 50 of the Sudanese Criminal Code); waging war against the state (Article 51); disclose official information or documents (Article 55); arousing feelings of discontent among regular forces (Article 62); breaching the public peace (Article 69); and insulting religious beliefs (Article 125). They are not criminals, but pastors.

We also are disturbed that that both Rev. Michael and Rev. Reith are being denied their due process rights. From the time of their initial detention until March 1, both men were held at an undisclosed location and were not granted access to lawyers and family. Recently, the pastors were moved to the high security Kober Prison and reportedly have not been allowed visitation privileges from their attorneys nor their wives.

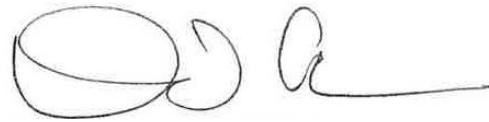
We, as parliamentarians from different jurisdictions and faiths, urge the Sudanese government to cease its persecution of Rev. Yat Michael and Rev. Peter Reith and the Bahri church.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Baroness Elizabeth Berridge
British House of Lords
IPP FoRB Steering Committee



David Anderson, MP
Canadian House of Commons
IPP FoRB Steering Committee



Leonardo Quintão, MP
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies
IPP FoRB Steering Committee



Abid Raja, MP
Norwegian Parliament
IPP FoRB Steering Committee

Other Members of Parliament supporting this letter include:

Lord David Alton
British House of Lords

Senator Raynell Andreychuk
Canadian Senate

Marina Berlinghieri, MP
Italian Parliament

Kelly Block, MP
Canadian House of Commons

Rt. Rev. Christopher Cocksworth
British House of Lords

Baroness Caroline Cox
British House of Lords

Lokmani Dhakal, MP
Nepalese Parliament

Cherylyn Dudley, MP
South African Parliament

Senator David Fawcett
Australian Senate

Heribert Hirte, MP
German Parliament

Senator Rose Freitas
Brazilian Federal Senate

Rômulo José de Gouveia, MP
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies

Sylvi Graham, MP
Norwegian Parliament

Shwe Maung, MP
Myanmar Parliament

Senator José Medeiros
Brazilian Federal Senate

Asiya Nasir, MP
Pakistani Parliament

Kasthuri Patto, MP
Malaysian Parliament

Mario Redondo Poveda, MP
Costa Rican Parliament

Áureo Lídio Ribeiro, MP
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies

Judy Sgro, MP
Canadian House of Commons

Lord Indarjit Singh
British House of Lords

Fábio Souza, MP
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies