



## PRESS RELEASE

**PALU seeks Urgent Interim Orders at the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) against the Governments of South Sudan and Kenya for the production of Mr Morris Mabior Awikjok Bak**

Yesterday, Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023, the Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) applied for urgent Interim Orders at the First Instance Division of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) against the Governments of South Sudan and Kenya, regarding the arbitrary arrest, unlawful detention and enforced disappearance of **Mr. Morris Mabior Awikjok Bak**, who was abducted from his apartment in Nairobi, Kenya on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

According to eyewitness accounts Kenyan and South Sudanese Security and Immigration officials were complicit in the abduction of Morris from his residential apartment in Chokaa, Nairobi on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2023. It is believed that either on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> or Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023, Morris was illegally deported to Juba, South Sudan. It is further believed that to date Morris remains arbitrarily detained, incommunicado, at the headquarters of the South Sudan National Security Service (NSS), also known as the 'Blue House'. All this has made his family, friends and associates extremely concerned that his life may be in danger or that he may be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

Up until the filling of this Application for Urgent Orders at the First Instance Division in the EACJ, the family and friends of Morris has not been informed of the reasons surrounding his arrest, nor has he been brought before a competent Court or Tribunal, despite the clear provisions within the Constitution and laws of both Kenya and South Sudan, and indeed the requirements of several provisions of international law, including the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (the EAC Treaty).

PALU in its submission requests the two governments to: -

1. Provide the Court with precise and credible information as to the exact whereabouts of the subject, Mr. Morris Mabior Awikjok Bak
2. Provide assurance to the Court that two respondent governments will immediately allow Morris' family, friends, associates, doctors and lawyers to access him;
3. Provide the Court with the reasons for the arrest and continued detention of Morris.



## Notes to Editors

**Mr. Morris Mabior Awikjok Bak** is South Sudanese, a former civil servant and a strong critic of several officials and institutions within the current Government of South Sudan. He has consistently complained about the lack of democracy, good governance or rule of law; and against rampant corruption and violations of human and peoples' rights perpetrated by the South Sudan Government. Morris has openly criticized and accused numerous individuals in the South Sudan Government including **General Akol Koor Kuc** who is the Director-General (DG) of the Internal Security Bureau (ISB) of the National Security Service (NSS) of carrying out various criminal activities, including corruption as well as arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture and extrajudicial execution of South Sudanese citizens within the country and abroad. Following credible threats by the NSS, Morris fled South Sudan in April 2021 and settled in Nairobi, Kenya where he has resided since.

The Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) is a continental membership forum for African lawyers and lawyers' associations. PALU was founded in 2002, by African Bar leaders and eminent lawyers, to reflect the aspirations and concerns of the African people, and to promote and defend their shared interests. It brings together the continent's five regional lawyers' associations, over fifty-four national lawyers' associations and over 1,000 individual lawyers. It is a prominent litigant at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the East African Court of Justice, both based in Arusha, Tanzania

**Signed and released in Arusha, Tanzania on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

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