

URGENT ACTION

YOUTH ACTIVIST UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASED

Alain Didah Kemba, spokesperson of the Chadian youth movement IYINA, was unconditionally released on 26 February after being presented before the prosecutor. Three days earlier, he had been released from detention for health reasons. He was having difficulty standing as he reported that he had been beaten during an interrogation while in detention. He was never formally charged.

Alain Didah Kemba, spokesperson of the Chadian youth movement IYINA (*we are tired* in local Arabic), was unconditionally released on 26 February after being presented before the prosecutor who decided not to charge him. On 23 February, Alain was released from detention for health reasons. Before this release, his lawyer told Amnesty International that his client could barely stand on his feet as Alain said that he was beaten on his leg joints and the soles of his feet by police officers during an interrogation.

Alain was arrested early in the morning on 19 February by a police officer. Later that day, the police spokesperson told the media that Alain had been arrested by a police commander while he was about to burn a tire with gasoline he was holding in a bottle. His lawyer was also told the same thing when he went to the Police Headquarters to ask about his client. On the same day, the Public Prosecutor told Amnesty International that he knew nothing about Alain's arrest or his whereabouts.

On 20 February, Alain's lawyer attempted to visit him twice at the Police Headquarters in Ndjamená, but the police denied having him in custody. Later, his friends and family were able to confirm that Alain was detained at the Police Headquarters. It was only after this confirmation that Alain's lawyer was able to see him.

Alain was never formally charged and had denied ever being in possession of a bottle of gasoline at the time of his arrest. He said he was on his normal morning run and the police arrested him as he was running past a tire.

Over the past two years human rights defenders and government critics have been repeatedly repressed in Chad as dissent has been growing over President Deby's victory for a fifth term and austerity measures taken by the government to counter the economic crisis. Alain has been a vocal critic of the government speaking out against the austerity measures and has participated in several peaceful protests organised by IYINA.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the first update of UA 44/18. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr20/7933/2018/en/>

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