

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER HELD INCOMMUNICADO

President of the Chadian Human Rights Organization (OTDH), Baradine Berdei Targuio, was arrested in front of his wife and children at his home in N'Djamena by masked and armed individuals, on 24 January 2020. Reportedly taken to the National Security Agency (ANS), his family has not seen him since. Given several previous cases of people being tortured and ill-treated at the ANS, Amnesty International believes Baradine Berdei Targuio could also be at risk.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Mr Idriss Deby Itno
President of the Republic of Chad
Présidence de la République du Tchad
BP 74
N'Djamena
TCHAD
Tel: +235 22 51 44 37 - 22 51 51 39
Email: contact@presidence.td

Your Excellency,

*I am writing to you about the case of **Baradine Berdei Targuio**. Baradine Berdei Targuio is the president of the Chadian Human Rights Organization. On 24 January 2020, he was arrested at his house by masked and armed individuals, in front of his wife and children, and reportedly taken to the National Security Agency (ANS). He has not been seen or heard from since, and his family has been left unable to contact him. Arrest and detention in this manner constitutes an enforced disappearance and is unlawful under international human rights law.*

Chad's Criminal Procedure Code provides that defendants should be brought before a court within 48 hours of their arrest, renewable only once, or else they should be released. Baradine Berdei Targuio has not been brought before a court at all, and the maximum detention of four days has been exceeded. International human rights law requires that a detained person is brought promptly before a court after their arrest and has the opportunity to challenge their detention.

In this regard, I ask you to immediately and unconditionally order the release of Mr Baradine Berdei Targuio. In the meantime, I ask you to ensure that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment and that he has access to his family and lawyers of his choosing.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Baradine Berdei Targuio is the President of the Chadian Human Rights Organization, created in 2006. He is known to have addressed an open letter to President Deby about the human rights situation in the northern region of Tibesti, Chad – in the context of the state of emergency in November 2018. On 22 January 2020, two days before his arrest he posted on Facebook about the President's health, saying that he "might be seriously ill and hospitalised in France". He was arrested on 24 January, and no one in his family has been able to get access to him since.

The ANS was created by Decree No. 302 of 8 June 1993, following the 1993 Sovereign National Conference (SNC). It replaced the infamous Documentation and Security Directorate (DDS) and aimed to review the powers and structures of the intelligence agency. While the ANS is not accused of crimes on the same scale as those committed by the DDS – who was responsible for the deaths of 40,000 people between 1982 and 1990 – the two agencies share several features in terms of mandate, structure and methods, which facilitates human rights violations. The broad powers and mandate provided to the ANS have allowed it to repress government critics, such as Mahadine Tadjadine Babouri, Nadjou Kaina and Bertrand Solloh. [More information about the situation in Chad is available in this report.](#)

Although a decree adopted in 2017 gives the ANS powers to "arrest and detain suspects for purposes of investigation, where they present a real or potential threat, in accordance with the laws of the Republic", Chad's Criminal Procedure Code provides that defendants should be brought before a court within 48 hours – renewable only once – or else released. In the case of Mr. Baradine, the four day-delay has expired, and he should therefore be released.

The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which Chad is a signatory, prohibits enforced disappearance. According to the convention "Enforced disappearance is considered to be the arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the State or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorisation, support or acquiescence of the State, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law".

Article 9 of The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights requires anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge to be brought promptly before a judge and entitled to trial within a reasonable time frame, or to be released. Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention is entitled to take proceedings before a court to challenge the lawfulness of their ongoing detention.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 24 March 2020

Please check with Amnesty regional office if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Baradine Berdei Targuio (He/his)