

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST ONCE AGAIN DETAINED ON BOGUS CHARGES

One month after his release, pro-democracy activist Oumar Sylla, alias Foniké Mengué, has once again been arrested and arbitrarily detained. He was riding a motorbike with a friend to mobilize protesters on 29 September when he was arrested by police officers in plain clothing in Matoto municipality in the Guinean capital, Conakry. He refused to follow the police officers on account that they failed to present an arrest warrant. Nevertheless, they brutally carried out his arrest which resulted in him sustaining injuries to his hand and finger. He has since been held in Conakry prison on fabricated charges. Oumar Sylla is a prisoner of conscience who must be immediately and unconditionally released.

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

Maitre Mory Doumbaya

Minister of Justice

BP: 564 Conakry

Email: maitredoumbouya@yahoo.com

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you concerning **Oumar Sylla (alias Foniké Mengué)**, a pro-democracy activist and mobilisation coordinator for National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC), who was arrested on 29 September.

He has been falsely charged with “unauthorised gathering, disturbance of public order, destruction of public property and endangering state security” and is currently being held in Conakry prison, in the Guinean capital. The police officers refused his lawyers access to him during his custody in the Direction of Judiciary Police headquarters (DPJ).

Oumar Sylla was riding a motorbike with a friend through the neighbourhood of Matoto in the Guinean capital, to mobilize people to engage in a protest against President Condé's candidacy for the 18 October presidential elections, when he was arrested. During his arrest, he refused to follow the police officers without them presenting an arrest warrant. The officers tore his shirt and mask and injured his hand and finger during the arrest. This is the second time this year that the authorities have arbitrarily arrested and detained Oumar Sylla in an attempt to silence him and reduce the FNDC's protest mobilization efforts against President Alpha Condé running for a third term.

In light of the above, I urge you to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Oumar Sylla and ensure that the charges against him are dropped;
- Ensure that, pending his release, Oumar Sylla's conditions of detention are in line with international standards, including access to water, food and regular access to his family and lawyer. If contact visits are restricted due to COVID-19 preventive measures, they must be replaced with other means of communication, by phone, video call or emails, for example;
- End the harassment, intimidation and arrests of members of civil society and individuals for simply exercising their right to freedom of expression.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Members of opposition and pro-democracy movement FNDC announced they were holding a protest on 29 September against President Condé's candidacy for the 18 October presidential elections. The protest was banned by local authorities on 22 September. The municipal authorities invoke the incompatibility between the ongoing electoral campaign and other marches.

A few days before, President Condé announced the extension of restrictions measures, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including ban on public gatherings over 100 people and national movement restrictions, until October 2020. Rallies held by government supporters in recent days have nevertheless been allowed.

Oumar Sylla was freed from Conakry prison, in the Guinean capital, a month ago after the judge dismissed all charges against him and ordered his release. He had been arbitrary detained for 132 days from April to August 2020.

In the report "*Marching to their deaths. Justice for victims of crackdown on demonstrations in Guinea*" published on 1 October (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr29/2937/2020/fr/>), Amnesty International documented at least 70 arbitrary arrests in Guinea from October 2019 to July 2020. Arrests of citizens for solely exercising their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression. At least 50 people were killed by police and army members during the same period in protests.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 9 December 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Oumar Sylla (he/his)

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

Mr. Mamadou Diawara,
Attorney General
hawamadydiawara@yahoo.fr

And copies to:

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