

URGENT ACTION

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE, SEVEN MEN STILL IN JAIL

Two prisoners of conscience remain in arbitrary detention in Dapaong, Northern Togo. The Appeal Court of Kara on 6 June rejected their request to be released on bail. Seven other men remain in detention in relation to the protests held in Mango in November 2015 and April 2016.

Prisoners of conscience **Adamou Moussa** and **Zékeria Namoro** were arrested on 1 April after they questioned the commemoration of Togo's Independence Day and called for justice for the people killed, ill-treated and arbitrarily detained following demonstrations against plans to create a nature reserve in Mango in November 2015. They were charged with 'incitement to commit a crime' and remain at the Prison of Dapaong. They deny having called on people not to participate in the celebrations. The investigating judge had supported their request for release on bail in May on the grounds that the gravity of the charges against them did not justify their continued pre-trial detention. The prosecutor appealed the decision of the judge and, on 6 June, the Appeal Court of Kara rejected their bail request.

Seven other men remain in detention in relation to the protests that happened in Mango in November 2015 and April 2016. They were subjected to ill-treatment at the time of their arrest and they were made to sign statements which they did not understand.

No one has been held accountable for the arbitrary and excessive use of force which led to seven people being killed during demonstrations in Mango in November 2015 and for the torture the people who were arrested in relation to these protests were subjected to.

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Adamou Moussa and Zékeria Namoro, as they are prisoners of conscience, detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to ensure the seven other men are brought to trial in proceedings that meet international fair standards and that they are accorded their right to be released on bail pending the determination of their case;
- Urging them to investigate the reports of torture and ill-treatment and to bring those responsible to justice and offer full reparations to the victims in accordance with international fair trial standards;
- Calling on the authorities to bring those responsible for the killing of the seven demonstrators to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 AUGUST 2016 TO:

Président of the Republic of Togo

Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé

Boulevard du Mono, Lomé, Togo

Email: dircomprtogo@gmail.com

Twitter : @FEGnassingbe

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Pius Kokouvi Agbetomey

Ministry of Justice

3 rue de l'OCAM,

BP 121, Lomé, Togo

Email: minjusticetogo@yahoo.fr

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Robert Dussey

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

BP 900, Lomé, Togo

Email: maeirtgce@hotmail.fr

Twitter: @rdsusse

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY Mr YACKOLEY KOKOU JOHNSON Embassy of the Republic of Togo, 8 Rue Alfred Roll 75017 Paris, (00) 331 43 80 12 13

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 94/16. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr57/3895/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The arrest of **Adamou Moussa** and **Zékeria Namoro** in April 2016 sparked spontaneous demonstrations in Mango which were met with violence as security forces used tear-gas and batons against demonstrators. According to medical sources, 13 civilians and three members of the security forces were wounded. **Issa Issaka** and **Baba Awali** were arrested on 1 April in relation to these demonstrations, though both of them claim not to have taken part in the demonstrations. Issa Issaka was arrested as he was leaving town and was hit with belts and forced to stare at the sun for about 15 minutes before being taken to the Gendarmerie of Mango. Baba Awali was arrested on his way to the mosque and was hit with batons on the way to the police station in Mango. Both men have been charged with 'disrupting public peace', including by taking part in an assembly without undertaking the required administrative formalities.

In November 2015, security forces killed seven people and wounded at least 117 others, including pregnant women and children, in Mango in northern Togo, during demonstrations against plans to create a nature reserve in the area. A policeman was killed on 26 November 2015 in clashes with protesters who resorted to violence after security forces opened fire during their peaceful demonstration.

During the November 2015 demonstrations in Mango **Ousmane Naba**, **Mama Kakarafou**, **Rabiou Souleymane**, **Ablaye Cheregneme** and **Alimiyaou Abdou** were arrested and subjected to torture and ill-treatment. They remain in detention. Alimiyaou Abdou told Amnesty International that he did not take part in the demonstrations. While the other four organized the demonstrations, they claim they did not advocate violence. They were charged with taking part in an assembly without undertaking the required administrative formalities, committing acts of violence during such assemblies and deteriorating private and public property. They were subjected to torture and ill-treatment, including beatings with belts, batons and rifle butts or being handcuffed with their hands behind their back over 10 hours, at the time of their arrest and during transfers to different detention centers. They were asked to sign statements which they did not understand.

When Amnesty International visited the five men in detention in December 2015, Alimiyaou Abdou still had open wounds on his backs, legs and hands from the torture and ill-treatment he was subjected to.

Further information on UA: 94/16 Index: AFR 57/4419/2016 Issue Date: 11 July 2016

