

URGENT ACTION

TWO PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE, SEVEN MEN HELD

Two men are arbitrarily detained in Dapaong, northern Togo, after they questioned the commemoration of the country's Independence Day and called for justice for people who were killed during protests in Mango in November 2015. The two are prisoners of conscience. Seven other men are in detention in relation to two protests in Mango.

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. Both men were held at the Gendarmerie of Mango for a day, then transferred to the Brigade de Recherche de la Gendarmerie, in Dapaong. During the transfer, gendarmes insulted them and asked them why they opposed the decisions of the government. During interrogation, the gendarmes accused Zékeria Namoro of sharing information on the human rights situation in Mango with journalists, diaspora groups and human rights organisations. The two who have been charged with 'incitement to commit a crime' are now at the Prison of Dapaong. They risk up to five years imprisonment and a fine of up to CFA 20 million (about \$33,613). They have not had access to a lawyer.

Their arrest 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.

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.

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.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 JUNE 2016 TO:

Président of the Republic of Togo

Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé
Boulevard du Mono, Lomé, Togo
Email: dircomprto@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: @rdussey

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, Fax (00) 331 43 80 06 05

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Adamou Moussa was arrested during a meeting at the Prefecture of Mango, while Zékeria Namoro was arrested by three gendarmes while on his way from his school to Mango.

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.

As of April 2016, five men remain in prolonged detention in relation to these protests, including four who organized the demonstrations: Ousmane Naba, Mama Kakarafou, Rabiou Souleymane and Ablaye Cheregneme and one, Alimiyaou Abdou who told Amnesty International that he did not take part in the demonstrations. They were all arrested in November 2015.

Even though the four claim they did not advocate violence and one says he was not part of the demonstrations, 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 ten 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 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.

In November 2015, the National Assembly adopted a new Criminal Code. While the Code contains a number of positive human rights developments, including the criminalization of torture in line with international standards, certain provisions undermine the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. It criminalizes defamation and publishing false news, with these offences carrying prison terms. It further restricts the right to freedom of peaceful assembly by criminalizing the participation and organization of assemblies which have not been subjected to the necessary administrative formalities, independently of the size of the assembly, with sentences ranging from a fine of CFA 50 million (USD 84 033) to five years imprisonment if violence occurs. It holds the organizers and peaceful demonstrators responsible for the violent or criminal behaviour of other protesters and liable for the corporal or material damages caused.

Togo's Independence Day is on 27 April. It marks the independence of Togo from France in 1960.

Name: Adamou Moussa, Zékeria Namoro, Issa Issaka, Baba Awali, Ousmane Naba, Mama Kakarafou, Rabiou Souleymane, Ablaye Cheregneme and Alimiyaou Abdou

Gender: m

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