

PUBLIC

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17 June 2009

UA 151/09 Prisoners of Conscience/Incommunicado detention

**GAMBIA** Emil Touray (m), Secretary General Gambia Press Union,  
Sarata Jabbi-Dibba (f), Vice President, Gambia Press Union,  
Pa Modou Faal (m), Treasurer, Gambia Press Union,  
Pap Saine (m), Publisher, *The Point* newspaper,  
Ebrma Saweneh (m), Editor, *The Point* newspaper,  
Sam Sarr (m), Editor, *Foroyaa*, opposition newspaper  
Abubcarr Saidy Khan, (m) reporter, *Foroyaa*, opposition newspaper

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The seven individuals named above were arrested by members of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) on 15 June. They are being held incommunicado detention at the NIA headquarters in the capital Banjul. They were arrested for the peaceful expression of their beliefs and Amnesty International fears for their safety.

Emil Touray, Pa Modou Faal and Sarata Jabbi-Dibba, who has a 6 month old baby, were arrested at the offices of the Gambia Press Union at approximately midday on the 15 June. Sam Sarr of the Editor of *Foroyaa* was arrested at his house in Serrekunda at approximately 5 pm. A little while later Abubcarr Saidy Khan was also arrested along with Pap Saine from offices of *The Point* newspaper.

Their arrests follow the publication in *The Point* and *Foroyaa* newspapers of a press release issued on the 11 June by the Gambian Press Union. The press release criticised the way that the President of the Gambia spoke about fellow journalist Deydra Hydara, a former press union president and editor of *the Point* newspaper who was murdered in 2004. The press release also reminded the government that since Deydra Hydara's murder there has been no serious investigation into whom was responsible and no one has been brought to justice.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Journalists and members of the media are under serious threat in Gambia. Since 1994 almost 30 journalists have had to leave the country. More than half of them have had to leave in the last two years alone. Journalists have been subjected to an array of human rights abuses including unlawful arrest and detention, torture, enforced disappearance, and unlawful killing.

Gambians should be able to freely express their views as provided for under Section 207 of the 1997 Gambian Constitution and various regional and international treaties, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights (ICCPR) to which Gambia is a party.

### RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to disclose the whereabouts of Emil Touray, Sarata Jabbi-Dibba, Pa Modou Faal, Pap Saine, Ebrma Saweneh, Sam Sarr and Abubcarr Saidy Khan, immediately, and give them access to family members, lawyers of their choice and any medical attention they may require;
- urging the authorities to ensure that they are not tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- urging the authorities to release the seven immediately and unconditionally.

**APPEALS TO:**

President and Minister of Defence  
Captain (retd.) Alhaji Yahya A. J. J. Jammeh  
Office of the President  
State House, Banjul  
Republic of the Gambia

**Fax: +220 4227 034**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Attorney General and Secretary of State for Justice

Mrs Marie Saine Firdaus  
Department of State for Justice  
Marina Parade  
Banjul  
Republic of the Gambia

**Fax: +220 4225 352**

**Salutation: Dear Secretary of State**

Secretary of State for the Interior

Mr Ousman Sonko  
Office of the President  
State House  
Banjul  
Republic of the Gambia

**Fax: +220 4223 718**

**Salutation: Dear Secretary of State**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Gambia accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 July 2009.