
PUBLIC

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UAI 305/02 Detention without charge/
Fear of torture or ill-treatment

10 October 2002

CAMEROON Albert Mukong (m), Ex-Executive Director of Human Rights Defence
Group (HRDG)
Pa Ayamba (m)]
Agbor Nfaw Joseph (m)]Members of the Southern
Enow John Enow (m)]Cameroon National Council
Tabé Danizé Agbor (m)](SCNC)
També Aïtem Valéry (m)]
Ojong Samuel Ndip (m)]

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Albert Mukong, a human rights activist and former executive director of the Human Rights Defence Group (HRDG), and six members of Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC). They are detained without charge at Mamfe Gendarmerie station, South West province. They are at risk of being tortured or ill-treated.

Albert Mukong may have been arrested for speaking out about the right to self-determination of the Anglophone provinces and acting as an adviser to the SCNC, which campaigns for self-determination for the English-speaking minority in Cameroon. Amnesty International considers Albert Mukong a possible prisoner of conscience.

Agbor Nfaw Joseph, Enow John Enow, Tabé Danizé Agbor, També Aïtem Valéry and Ojong Samuel Ndip, all of whom are members of the SCNC, were arrested on 27 September. They were taken to Mamfe Gendarmerie station, where they are still being held. Amnesty International fears that they were arrested solely for their peaceful political activities.

Albert Mukong, together with Pa Ayamba and Nfor N. Nfor, two of the main leaders of SCNC, were arrested on 25 September by the gendarmerie at Ayukaba in South West Province. Nfor N. Nfor was subsequently released, apparently because his poor health deteriorated. Albert Mukong and Pa Ayamba are currently also being held in Mamfe Gendarmerie station.

Under Cameroonian law, detainees should be referred to a judicial authority to be either charged or released within 72 hours of arrest. No charges have yet been brought against any of the above-mentioned detainees. Political detainees and criminal suspects in Cameroon are routinely tortured or ill-treated. The conditions of detention in police stations, gendarmerie *detention centres* and prisons are extremely harsh. Severe overcrowding, poor hygiene and ventilation, inadequate food and medical care results in a high mortality rate amongst detainees.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The SCNC advocates increased autonomy for Cameroon's English-speaking minority and supports independence for the English-speaking North-West and South-West Provinces. In 1972, federal state institutions were replaced by a unitary state in which the French-speaking community is predominant.

Every year, early in October, the SCNC calls for protests against the unification in October 1961 of the English-speaking provinces of South West and North West to the other eight Francophone provinces of Cameroon.

The authorities attributed armed attacks in March 1997 in North West province to the SCNC and the affiliated Southern Cameroon Youth League (SCYL). Ten people, including three gendarmes, died during these attacks. At least ten people arrested in connection with the attacks died as a result of torture and ill-treatment at the time of their arrest or subsequent lack of medical care in detention. In October 1999, 36 alleged SCNC supporters were convicted, after an unfair and politically-motivated trial before a military tribunal in the capital, Yaoundé, of offences relating to the attacks in North-West Province. Three were sentenced to life imprisonment and the others to prison terms of up to 20 years. Eighteen remain imprisoned at the Central Prison, known as Nkondzengui prison, in Yaoundé.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Albert Mukong, Da Ayamba, Agbor Nfaw Joseph, Enow John Enow, Tabé Daniel Agbor, Tambe Atem Valéry and Ojong Samuel Ndip, arrested on 27 and 28 September, and held in Mamfe Gendarmerie station, South West province;
- requesting the reasons for their arrest and detention without charge;
- calling for guarantees that they will not be tortured or ill-treated while in detention;
- urging that they be held in conditions which conform to international standards for the treatment of prisoners, and that they be allowed visits from lawyers, doctors and family members;
- urging that they be released unless they are promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought to trial in accordance with international standards, including Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by Cameroon in 1984.

APPEALS TO:

(please note that fax numbers can be difficult to obtain, but please keep trying)

Prime Minister

S.E. Monsieur Peter MAFANY MUSONGE
Premier ministre, Ministre d'Etat et Chef du
gouvernement
Primature
1000 Yaoundé

République du Cameroun

**Télégram: Premier Ministre, Yaoundé, République du
Cameroun**

Fax: + 237 2235765

Email: spm@spm.gov.cm

**Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Ministre/Dear Prime
Minister**

**Télégram: Délégué général à la Sécurité Nationale,
Yaoundé, République du Cameroun**

Fax: + 237 2207918 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

**Salutation: Monsieur le Délégué général/ Dear
Director**

COPIES TO:

Newspaper

Cameroon Tribune

BP 1218, Yaoundé

République du Cameroun

Fax: + 237 230 43 62

and to diplomatic representatives of Cameroon
accredited to your country.

Minister of Justice

S.E. Monsieur Amadou Abl

Ministre de la Justice

et Garde des Sceaux

Ministère de la Justice

1000 Yaoundé

République du Cameroun

**Télégram: Ministre de la Justice, Yaoundé,
République du Cameroun**

**Fax: + 237 2230005/2222154 (if someone answers
say "Je voudrais envoyer un fax, s'il vous plaît")**

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/ Dear Minister

Director of National Security

M. Pierre MINLO MEDJO

Délégué général à la Sécurité Nationale

1000 Yaoundé

République du Cameroun

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 November 2002.