

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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11 November 1992

CAMEROON Dr Victorin François Hameni Bieleu, President of the Union des forces démocratiques du Cameroun

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Dr Victorin François Hameni Bieleu, arrested on 3 November 1992 in Nkongsamba, Coastal Province, Cameroon, is currently held without charge or trial. He is a diabetic and has apparently been refused urgently required medication and the special diet that he needs. He is believed to have recently been transferred from the gendarmerie headquarters in the capital, Yaoundé, but his present place of detention has not been revealed.

Amnesty International believes that Dr Bieleu may be a prisoner of conscience, arrested because of his non-violent opposition to the government. He is President of the opposition party Union des forces démocratiques du Cameroun (UFDC), Union of Cameroonians Democratic Forces, and campaign manager for John Fru Ndi, head of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) party and the leading opposition candidate in the recent presidential elections.

Dr Bieleu was arrested after visiting 50 opposition supporters detained without charge in Nkongsamba Prison since 23 October 1992. Following his visit, he reportedly requested the authorities to release nine women detainees and to transfer others to hospital who were in poor health as a result of beatings.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The final results of the presidential elections on 11 October 1992 were announced by the Supreme Court on 23 October, with the incumbent, President Paul Biya, winning a majority of votes over his main rival, John Fru Ndi. Amid reports of widespread vote-rigging and electoral fraud, the SDF declared that it would not accept the results of the election and called for a general strike. Following the imposition of a state of emergency in North-West Province on 27 October 1992, large-scale arrests have taken place, mostly of SDF supporters (see EXTRA 90/92, AFR 17/16/92, 30 October 1992).

There have also been arrests of opposition activists outside North-West Province, particularly in Douala. Such detainees appear to be held under the Law relating to the Maintenance of Law and Order (Loi relative au maintien de l'ordre), No. 90/54 of 19 December 1990, which gives the authorities unlimited powers of administrative detention, without any legal safeguards, of people accused of "banditry". This law has been misused to imprison the government's opponents.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in French or English or in your own language:

- expressing concern about reports that Dr Victorin François Hameni Bieleu, who is a diabetic, is being denied access to essential medication and diet;

- seeking information about his current state of health and place of detention, and urging that he be given immediate access to full and appropriate medical treatment;
- appealing also for him to be given immediate access to his lawyer and family;
- stating that Amnesty International believes that Dr Bieleu may be a prisoner of conscience arrested because of his non-violent criticism of the government, and calling on the Cameroonian authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally if he is not to be charged and brought to court on recognizably criminal charges.

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**APPEALS TO**

1) President:

Son Excellence Monsieur Paul Biya  
Président de la République  
Palais de l'Unité  
Yaoundé, Cameroon

**Salutation: Monsieur le Président  
de la République /  
Dear President**

**Telegrams: President Biya, Yaounde, Cameroon**

**Faxes: + 237 221699**

**Telexes: 8207 PRESID KN (Secretariat général), 8595 PRESID B KN (Cabinet civil)**

2) Prime Minister:

Mr Simon Achidi Achu  
Prime Minister  
Prime Minister's Office  
Immeuble Etoile  
Yaoundé, Cameroon

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

**Telegrams: Prime Minister Achu, Yaounde, Cameroon**

**Faxes: + 237 235765**

**Telexes: 8282 KN**

3) Minister of the Interior:

M. Gilbert Andzé Tsoungui  
Ministre de l'Administration territoriale  
Ministère de l'Administration territoriale  
1000 Yaoundé 4, Cameroon

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

**Telegrams: Ministre de l'Administration territoriale Tsoungui, Yaounde, Cameroon**

4) Delegate General of National Security:

M. Jean Fochivé  
Délégué-général Sûreté nationale  
Yaoundé, Cameroon

**Salutation: Monsieur le Délégué-général /  
Dear Sir**

**Telegrams: Deleque-general Surete national Fochive, Yaounde, Cameroon**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Minister of Foreign Affairs:  
M. Jacques-Roger Booh Booh  
Ministre des Affaires étrangères  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères  
1000 Yaoundé 4, Cameroon

Dr Solomon Nfor Gwei  
President  
National Commission on Human Rights and  
Freedoms  
PO Box 287  
Yaoundé, Cameroon

and the following newspapers:

Cameroon Post, BP 1981, Yaoundé, Cameroon  
L'Unité, BP 867, Yaoundé, Cameroon

Peuple d'Afrique, BP 1287, Yaoundé, Cameroon  
L'Expression, BP 5646, Douala, Cameroon  
La Gazette, BP 5485, Douala, Cameroon  
Dikalo, BP 12656, Douala, Cameroon  
Challenge Nouveau, BP 13088, Douala, Cameroon

and to diplomatic representatives of Cameroon accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 December 1992.