

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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This is a limited action. Please organize up to 20 appeals per section.

UA 331/93

Legal concern

17 September 1993

DJIBOUTI

Mohamed Houmed Soulleh, president of the Association pour la défense des droits de l'homme et des libertés (ADDHL) and a former member of parliament

Mohamed Houmed Soulleh was arrested in the capital, Djibouti, on 14 September 1993. He is being held in the police headquarters on a charge of defaming the army, after a complaint by the Minister of Defence. He has so far been detained incommunicado and denied access to his lawyer, contrary to the constitution.

He was arrested and charged because of statements he made to the press on behalf of ADDHL on 9 September and since. In them, he criticised government forces for committing gross human rights violations in the recent military offensive against the armed opposition group, Front pour la restauration de l'unité et de la démocratie (FRUD). The defamation charge relates to his accusation that the army shot at an officially authorized delegation investigating the abuses.

Amnesty International has issued urgent appeals to the government to investigate reports of large-scale extrajudicial executions, rape of women, arbitrary detentions and torture of detainees in this military operation in northern Djibouti (UA 328/93, AFR 23/04/93, 16 September 1993). The security forces appear to have targeted civilian members of the Afar ethnic group, from which the FRUD draws most of its support, in reprisal for losses inflicted by the FRUD.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mohamed Houmed Souleh is a former prisoner of conscience and torture survivor who has been arrested several times before for his peaceful criticisms of the government and of human rights violations (see Amnesty International Report 1993). He formed the ADDHL in 1991 and is himself a member of the Afar ethnic group.

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

- expressing concern at the arrest of Mohamed Houmed Soulleh on account of his criticisms of human rights violations;
- urging that he be given immediate access to his family and legal representative, and medical doctor if needed, in accordance with the law;
- appealing for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience.

APPEALS TO

1) Son Excellence Hassan Gouled Aptidon
Président de la République
La Présidence
BP 6
République de Djibouti
Telegrams: Président Hassan Gouled, Djibouti
Telexes: 5871 DJ
Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174
Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République

2) Monsieur Ahmed Boulaleh Barreh
Ministre de l'intérieure
Ministère de l'intérieure
BP 2086
République de Djibouti
Telegrams: Ministère de l'intérieure Barreh, Djibouti
Telexes: 5871 DJ
Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

3) Monsieur Ougoureh Hassan Ibrahim
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
BP 12
République de Djibouti
Telegrams: Ministère de la Justice Ibrahim, Djibouti
Telexes: 5871 DJ
Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Monsieur Ismail Ali Youssouf
Ministre de la défense nationale
Ministere de la défense nationale
BP 1905
République de Djibouti
Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

Monsieur Thiam
Procurateur Général par intérim
BP 12
République de Djibouti
Faxes: + 253 355049 / + 253 350174

Association pour la défense des droits de l'homme et des libertés (ADDHL),
BP 2410, Djibouti, République de Djibouti

and to diplomatic representatives of Djibouti accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 29 October 1993.