

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

**AI Index: AFR 24/06/92
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Please refer to UA 52/92, AFR 24/0292, Arbitrary arrest, fear of torture, issued on 13 February 1992; and its update, AFR 24/03/92 of 24 February 1992.

UA 111/92 Fear of unfair trial

3 April 1992

EQUATORIAL GUINEA:

Plácido Mikó Abogo

Amnesty International has just received information that Plácido Mikó Abogo, a member of the Central Committee of an opposition political party, the *Convergencia para la Democracia Social*, Convergence for Social Democracy, who was arrested on 9 February 1992, is about to be tried. Some reports suggest that his trial might begin as soon as 3 April 1992. It has not been possible to confirm these reports. No details are available of any formal charges against him. However, at the time of his arrest he was apparently accused of insulting the head of the state and of trying to send subversive propaganda out of the country. A government's reply to Amnesty International's Urgent Action issued on behalf of Plácido Mikó Abogo soon after his arrest (UA 52/92, AFR 24/02/92 of 13 February 1992) stated that Plácido Mikó Abogo was being charged with assaulting the members of the security forces that arrested him.

Plácido Mikó Abogo has been in detention since his arrest on 9 February 1992; he is reported to have been severely tortured and is said to be seriously ill as a result.

Amnesty International is concerned that Plácido Mikó Abogo's arrest and detention and also now his trial is due to his non-violent political activities. The organization is also concerned that Plácido Mikó Abogo may not be given a fair trial and that statements obtained under torture may be presented as evidence against him. In the past political prisoners have been convicted after unfair trials which did not conform to international standards of fairness, and statements made under torture have regularly been admitted as court evidence against them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Until late 1991 Equatorial Guinea was officially a one party state: the only permitted political party was the Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial, Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea, led by President Obiang Nguema. However, following pressure from within as well as outside the country, a revised Constitution introducing a multi-party political system and providing for freedom of expression and association was promulgated on 17 November 1991.

A law permitting political parties was passed in late December 1991.

Equatorial Guinea became a party to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights in 1986 and to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1987.

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RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Please send telegrams/telexes/express airmail letters:

- expressing concern at reports that Plácido Mikó Abogo is about to be brought to trial and that it appears he is being tried for exercising his right to freedom of expression as guaranteed by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 13(b) of the newly amended Equatorial Guinean Constitution;
- expressing concern at reports that Plácido Mikó Abogo was severely beaten at the time of his arrest and in detention and has been ill as a result;
- urging the authorities to ensure that his trial conforms to international standards of fairness and in particular that no statements made under torture are presented in court as evidence against him;
- urging that, if, as Amnesty International believes, he is imprisoned for exercising his right to freedom of expression, he should be released immediately.

APPEALS TO:

1) President:

Su Excelencia
Coronel General Teodoro Obiang Nguema
Presidente de la República
Gabinete del Presidente de la República
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial

**Su Excelencia /
Your Excellency**

Telegrams: Presidente Obiang Nguema, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

2) Minister of Justice and Religion

Su Excelencia
Mariano Nsué Nguema
Ministro de Justicia y Culto
Ministerio de Justicia y Culto
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial

**Su Excelencia /
Your Excellency**

**Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia y Culto Nsué Nguema
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial**

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

3) Minister of Foreign Affairs

Su Excelencia Benjamín Mba Ekua Mikó

Su Excelencia /

Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores
Malabo

Your Excellency

República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores Mba Ekua

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Equatorial Guinea in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section, if sending appeals after 30 April 1990.