

Public

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To: Health professionals
From: Medical team / Africa Program
Date: 17 September 2002

Further information on

MEDICAL ACTION

Medical care urgently needed for over 60 political prisoners,

Equatorial Guinea:

New information: death of Juan Asumu Sima

(original action was sent out on 10 July 2002, AFR 24/012/2002)

Key words torture/ill-treatment / ill-health / lack of medical care / unfair trial

Death of Juan Asumu Sima

Juan Asumu Sima died in the morning of Saturday 31 August 2002 in Black Beach prison, Malabo. Amnesty International does not have information on the exact cause of death, but it is believed that, although he is elderly, the injuries he sustained during torture and harsh prison conditions may have contributed to his death.

Background information

Juan Asumu Sima was part of a group of 144 people arrested after 15 March 2002 and tried between 23 May and 9 June 2002. Sixty-eight detainees were found guilty of attempting to overthrow the government. Juan Asumu Sima was sentenced to six years and eight months in prison. Amongst the others sentenced were Felipe Ondó Obiang, Donato Ondó Ondó, Guillermo Nguema Elá, Mariano Ekuá, Laureano Ondó Monsuy and Ovono Akubenga.

According to reports, Juan Asumu Sima was severely tortured in pre-trial detention. At the time of the trial had to be assisted to the stand by his co-defendants and had to sit down during the questioning. He reportedly had scars, consistent with torture/ill-treatment, on legs and arms. Like several other defendants he repeatedly asked for medical treatment during the trial, but it was denied.

Since the trial he and fellow detainees had been imprisoned in Black Beach prison in Malabo. Conditions in Black Beach prison are reported to be very harsh, which includes lack of adequate food and water, overcrowding, lack of hygiene and medical treatment. Since late June the prisoners had not been allowed to receive food from their families. The prison food consisted of a plate of rice with peas once a day. Amnesty International has been informed that in the last few weeks the prisoners' "menu" was reduced to a daily loaf of bread and water.

Recommended actions & addresses

Please write letters in Spanish, French or your own language to the authorities below, using professionally-headed paper if you use this in your profession:

- referring to your previous letter (if applicable);
- expressing concern at the death of Juan Asumu Sima and requesting information on the cause of death;
- expressing concern at harsh prison conditions in Black Beach prison negatively affecting the health of prisoners, including Felipe Ondó Obiang, Donato Ondó Ondó, Guillermo Nguema Elá, Mariano Ekua, Laureano Ondó Monsuy and Ovono Akubenga;
- calling on the authorities to improve the conditions in which the men are held, in accordance with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, including ensuring that they have access to adequate medical care, adequate food, clothing, the opportunity to exercise daily, and reducing overcrowding;
- expressing concern at reports of torture in pre-trial detention of some 60 prisoners, currently held in Black Beach prison, including the men named above;
- urging the authorities to open an independent investigation into the torture allegations and to bring perpetrators to justice.

Addresses

President of the Republic

General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
Presidente de la República
Gabinete del Presidente de la República
Palacio Tres de Agosto
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República de Guinea Ecuatorial
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Minister of Justice

Sr. Don Rubén Maye Nsue Mangué
Ministro de Justicia y Culto
Ministerio de Justicia y Culto
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Minister of Interior

Sr Don Clemente Ngonga Nguema Andema
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Minister of Health

Sr Don Marcelino Nguema Onguene
Ministro de Sanidad
Ministerio de Sanidad
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Copies to:**Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Sr Don Santiago Nsobeya Efuman
Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores
Malabo
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Fax: + 240 9 3132/2320

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission

Sr Don Salomón Nguema Owono
Presidente de la Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo y de la
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo
CP 51
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial

and to diplomatic representatives of Equatorial Guinea accredited to your country.

If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of dispatch of your letter, please send a follow up letter seeking a response, referring to your previous letter(s). Please do not be discouraged by the possible lack of replies to your letters. They are noticed. Please check with the medical team if you are sending appeals after 16 November, and send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat (att: medical team).

Monitoring of action

If you have access to e-mail you can help our attempt to monitor letter-writing actions. If you write one, two, three or more letters, please send us an e-mail and let us know. Please write in the subject line of your e-mail the index number of the action and the number of letters you write e.g. AFR 24/016/2002

Please send your message to medical@amnesty.org Thank you.