

PUBLIC

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UA 259/01

Death Penalty/fear of imminent execution

15 October

GUINEA Twenty-two people, including: Aloi Zoumanigui, Koulako Zoumanigui, Koho

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Executions have resumed in Guinea after more than 15 years. Twenty-two people, including the 15 men named above, are now awaiting execution. It is not known whether they have exercised their right of appeal to a higher court. If any judicial appeal is turned down, they may also petition the President for clemency. Amnesty International is concerned that their death sentences may be confirmed if they do, in which case they may be executed at any time.

The 15 men were convicted of murder and sentenced to death by the Assizes Court in Kankan on 31 July 2001. They are now held at the civilian prison in Kankan. The seven others were sentenced to death earlier in the same session of the Assizes court. All 22 were arrested after 33 people died in clashes over a land dispute between the Tomas and Tomamania ethnic groups in Konissérédou in April 2000.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Guinea resumed executions this year: four people were put to death in February 2001 who had been sentenced to death in 1995. Three others were executed in April. Before this, no executions were known to have taken place since 1984.

Shortly after the February executions, the Minister of Justice said on a visit to various regions (*préfectures*): "It is not the government that decided to execute them, but the judicial system, and it will be this way from now on. Whoever is found guilty of murder will be executed."

A wide range of offences, including murder, carry a mandatory death penalty in Guinea. Executions are by firing squad.

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

- acknowledging the grave nature of the offence of which the men named above were convicted, and saying that you are not attempting to excuse their crime;
- pointing out, however, that the death penalty has never been shown to be a more effective deterrent than other, more humane punishments, and is brutalizing to all involved in its application;
- expressing your opposition to the death penalty, as a violation of the right to life, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

- asking the President to grant clemency to the men, and to commute all death sentences that come before him to more humane punishments.

APPEALS TO:

President

Son Excellence, Général Lansana Conté, Président de la République, La Présidence, Conakry, République de Guinée

Salutation: Son Excellence

Fax: + 224 41 16 73

Minister of Justice

Son Excellence, Monsieur Abou Camara, Ministre de la Justice, Ministère de la Justice, Conakry, République de Guinée

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

Fax: + 224 41 16 17

Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation

Monsieur Moussa SOLANO, Ministre de l'Administration Territoriale et de la Décentralisation, BP 3495 Conakry, République de Guinée

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

Fax: + 224 45 45 07

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Madame Mahawa Bangoura, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, Face au Port, EX-Primature, Conakry, République de Guinée

Salutation: Madame la Ministre

Fax: + 224 41 16 21

Newspapers

L'Indépendant, route du Palais du Peuple, BP 2427 Conakry, République de Guinée

Fax: + 224 41 43 19

E-mail: indepdt@mirinet.net.gn

Le Lynx, Immeuble Balde Zaire Sandervalia, BP 4968 Conakry, République de Guinée

E-mail: le-lynx@mirinet.net.gn

La Lance, route du Palais du Peuple, BP 2427 Conakry, République de Guinée

Fax: + 224 41 23 85

E-mail: lalance@mirinet.net.gn

and to diplomatic representatives of Guinea accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 November 2001.