

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 38/02/97

19 February 1997

Further information on UA 26/97 (AFR 38/01/97 (note corrected index number), 27 January 1997) - Fear of ill-treatment / Possible prisoner of conscience

MAURITANIA Messoud Ould Boulkheir)
 Mohammed H. Ould Ismael)
 Abdallahi Ould Iyahi) released
 Hamoud Ould Abdi)
 El Kory Ould Hmeity)

New names: Abderrahmen Ould El-Ghadi, university professor
 Ahmed Ould Tolba, secondary school teacher
Mohammed Salim Ould Dah, newspaper director
 Mohammed Ould Hafed Ismael, professor and member of political opposition
 party
and six other members of political opposition

Amnesty International has learned that the first five people named above - three leading opposition party members, a member of the ruling party and a former trade unionist, arrested on 22 January 1997 (see original UA) - were released on 29 January.

However, Amnesty International has received information that about 10 other people, also arrested on 22 January, remain in incommunicado detention. There are fears that they may be ill-treated while so held. The detainees include:

Abderrahmen Ould El-Ghadi, Professor of Economics at the University of Nouakchott; Ahmed Ould Tolba, a secondary school teacher in Nouakchott; Mohammed Salim Ould Dah, director of *Al Wahdawi* newspaper; and Mohammed Ould Hafed Ould Ismael, Professor at the Ministry of National Education and Secretary-General of the *Alliance populaire progressive*, (APP), Progressive Popular Alliance party. Six other members of the APP are also believed to be held.

Like the five now released, these detainees have also been accused of having unauthorized political links with the government of Libya. Amnesty International is concerned that they may be held solely because of their advocacy for an end to the institution and practices of slavery in Mauritania.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/ airmail letters in French or in your own language:

- welcoming the release of the five activists on 29 January 1997;
- expressing concern at the continued incommunicado detention of Abderrahmen Ould El Ghadi, Ahmed Ould Tolba, Mohammed Salim Ould Dah, Mohammed Ould Hafed Ould Ismael and others;
- urging that they be allowed immediate access to lawyers and their families and requesting assurances that they are being humanely treated;
- urging that they be immediately and unconditionally released unless they are to be charged with recognisably criminal offences and granted prompt and fair trials in accordance with international standards.

APPEALS TO:

Son Excellence
Monsieur Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya

Président de la République
La Présidence - BP 184
NOUAKCHOTT - Mauritania
Telegrams: Le President, Nouakchott, Mauritania
Telexes: 5580 PRIM MTN
Faxes: +222 2 52636
Salutation: Monsieur Le President / Dear Mr President

Monsieur Kaba Ould Elewa
Minister de L'intérieur, Des Posts et Des Telecommunications
Minister de L'intérieur, Des Posts et Des Telecommunications
BP 195, NOUAKCHOTT - Mauritania
Telegrams: Ministre Intérieur, Nouakchott, Mauritania
Salutation: Monsieur Le Ministre / Dear Minister

Monsieur Mohammed Lemine Salem Ould Dah,
Minister de la Justice
Minister de la Justice
NOUAKCHOTT, Mauritania
Telegrams: Minstre de la Justice, Nouakchott, Mauritania
Faxes: +222 2 52860
Salutation: Monsieur Le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Monsieur Le Rédacteur en chef, *Mauritanie Nouvelles*, BP 3901, Nouakchott,
Mauritania

Agence Mauritanienne d'Information, BP 371, Nouakchott, Mauritania

Monsieur le Rédacteur, *Sud Quotidien* : Immeuble Fahd, BP 4130, Dakar, Senegal;
Fax: 221 22 52 90.

and to diplomatic representatives of Mauritania accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 April 1997.