

# URGENT ACTION

## HEALTH FEARS FOR DETAINED SOMALIS IN UGANDA

**The health of Mohammad Hassan Haji and Abdu Rashid Abdulalli Omar, both Somali nationals detained in Uganda, has greatly deteriorated in the past weeks. They face forcible return to Somalia, where they would be at risk of human rights abuses.**

18-year-old **Abdul Rashid Abdullahi Omar**, who has been diagnosed with manic depression, and 25-year-old **Mohammad Hassan Haji** have been detained by the Ugandan authorities since November and December 2009. They are being held at the Central Police Station in Kampala, Uganda's capital. Their health is deteriorating because they are kept in unsanitary conditions in an overcrowded cell without natural light and are not allowed outside their cell to exercise. Their continuing detention without prospect of release and fear of deportation to Somalia is having a serious psychological impact. In mid January, Mohammad Hassan Haji was threatened with imminent deportation. They have also been told that they will not be released unless they pay a bribe to the police.

Mohammad Hassan Haji has been prevented from having his asylum claim examined by the Ugandan authorities. Further, he has been unable to challenge a March 2010 court decision that he should be deported back to Somalia. The Ugandan authorities have reportedly said that he represents a risk to state security, but after more than 13 months in detention, they have yet to charge him in relation to these allegations. Mohammad Hassan Haji was convicted of "illegal entry" after being arrested in Katuna, near the Ugandan border with Rwanda.

Abdul Rashid Abdullahi Omar was arrested at the Sudan/Uganda border after he boarded a bus to Sudan. He was charged with "illegal entry," reportedly convicted and has since been under threat of deportation to Somalia. He is registered as a refugee with UNHCR in Kenya, where most of his family lives. The Ugandan authorities have reportedly agreed to deport him to Kenya instead of Somalia, provided his family is traced. However, despite his mental health condition and the fact that his brother lives in Uganda, he remains in police custody without adequate medical care and in unhealthy conditions of detention.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:

- Demanding that Mohammad Hassan Haji is immediately provided with the full opportunity to claim asylum;
- Urging the Ugandan authorities to immediately release the two men;
- Urging them to ensure that both men have access to adequate medical care, and that Abdul Rashid Abdullahi Omar is able to obtain medical and psychological treatment appropriate to his mental health condition;
- Urging the Ugandan authorities to comply with their non-refoulement obligations, immediately revoke deportation orders to Somalia against both men, and halt all forcible returns to southern and central Somalia, where all Somalis are at risk of serious human rights abuses;
- Reminding the Ugandan authorities that asylum-seekers should only be detained as a last resort, after justifying in each individual case that it is a necessary and proportionate measure, and that no other alternative will suffice;

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 MARCH 2011 TO:

Minister of Internal Affairs  
Hon. Ali Kirunda Kivejinja  
Crested Towers, PO Box 7084  
Kampala, Uganda  
Fax: +256 414 343 088  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Commissioner for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees  
Martin Owor  
Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)  
Post Office Building, Yusuf Lule Road  
P.O. Box 341, Kampala, Uganda  
Fax: +256 414 341 139 (please keep trying if you don't get through first time)  
**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

**And copies to:**  
Josephine Ali Ekwang  
Commissioner, Inspections & Legal Services, Directorate of Citizenship & Immigration Control  
Ministry of Internal Affairs  
Plot 75, Jjinja Road, PO Box 7191  
Kampala, Uganda  
Fax: +256 414 343 088

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 122/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR59/007/2010/en>

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INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All Somalis are at risk of being killed or injured in the generalized violence and indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks that occur in southern and central Somalia, given the consistent failure of all parties to the ongoing conflict to respect international humanitarian law. Therefore, Amnesty International opposes all forcible returns to southern and central Somalia and recommends that all Somalis from southern and central Somalia be granted international protection, in line with the most recent advice of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), unless they are ineligible for such protection.

Further information on UA: 122/10 Index: AFR 59/006/2011 Issue Date: 10 February 2011

