

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Arrest of human rights activists

28 November 1990

GUINEA : Amadou Oury BAH, aged 33, employee at BICIGUI bank  
Thierno SOW

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The two men named above, both members of the Organisation guinéenne des droits de l'homme (OGDH), Guinean Human Rights Organisation, were among five people arrested on Sunday 25 November 1990, before a demonstration which was due to take place. Three others who were arrested, Ivo Binder, a Czech journalist, Samba Touré, a member of the OGDH and reporter for the Reuters newsagency, and Boubacar Telli BAH, also an OGDH member, were released soon after their arrest.

The OGDH, a non-governmental human rights monitoring group, had called on supporters to join a demonstration to protest against the death of at least one student, Sékou Traoré, during a student demonstration three days earlier.

Students have been on strike in Guinea for several weeks now. On 22 November, they marched from the university to the Presidency in support of their demands for better conditions. The army is reported to have opened fire on the demonstrators when the participants tried to involve school pupils. The exact circumstances of the killing are not known. On 27 November, the government of Guinea announced that it was setting up a commission of inquiry into the incidents during the student demonstration.

The two human rights activists are reportedly accused of holding an unauthorized demonstration and acts of violence, although no formal charges are believed to have been brought against them. The OGDH which has been reporting on human rights violations in Guinea during 1990 has never used or advocated violence. The organization is awaiting formal recognition in Guinea, but has become affiliated to the International Federation for Human Rights.

Amnesty International is concerned that the two detainees appear to be prisoners of conscience, arrested for peacefully exercising their basic rights to freedom of expression and assembly in order to protest against human rights violations.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern about the arrest on 25 November 1990 of two human rights activists before a demonstration organised against police action resulting in the death of at least one student at an earlier demonstration;
- inquiring about the legal basis for their detention and any charges brought against the two men;
- urging the authorities to investigate the circumstances of the student death and to make public the findings of the commission of enquiry;
- seeking assurances that they are safeguarded from any ill-treatment and that they have prompt and regular access to relatives, legal counsel and independent medical personnel;

- explaining that Amnesty International believes they are prisoners of conscience arrested for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly and appealing to the authorities to release them immediately.

**APPEALS TO:**

Son Excellence  
 Le Général de Brigade  
 Lansana CONTE  
 Président du Comité Militaire de Redressement National  
 Présidence de la République  
 Conakry, Guinea

Telegrams: President Conté, Conakry, Guinea  
 Telexes: 22323 PRG GE or 22345 PALPEU GE

Son Excellence  
 Monsieur Jean TRAORE  
 Ministre des Affaires étrangères  
 Ministère des Affaires étrangères  
 Conakry, Guinea

Telegrams: Ministre Affaires Etrangères, Conakry, Guinea  
 Telexes: 22334 MINAFE GE

Monsieur Bassirou BARRY  
 Ministre de la Justice  
 Ministère de la Justice  
 Conakry, Guinea

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Conakry, Guinea  
 Telexes: 22334 MINAFE GE (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Lieutenant-Colonel  
 Babacar N'DIAYE  
 Ministre-Secrétaire permanent du Comité Militaire de  
 Redressement National  
 La Présidence  
 Conakry, Guinea

Telegrams: Ministre permanent N'Diaye, Conakry, Guinea  
 Telexes: 22323 PRG GE or 22345 PALPEU GE

**COPIES TO:**

- Horoya (newspaper), BP 341, Conakry, Guinea
- OGDH, BP 615 bis Conakry, Guinea

and to diplomatic representatives of Guinea in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 9 January 1991.