

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NEEDS URGENT MEDICAL CARE

Human rights defender Joaquín Elo Ayeto is in urgent need of medical assistance while in detention at Black Beach Prison. According to our sources for the last couple of weeks he has been experiencing severe diarrhoea and high fever. On 5 August, Joaquín's lawyer wrote to the judge asking for his client's immediate transfer to a hospital. There has been no response. He has been detained since 25 February and has had no access to his family or lawyers for several weeks.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*Minister of Justice, Religious Affairs & Penitentiary Institutions
Mr Salvador Ondo Ncumu
Ministry of Justice, Religious Affairs & Penitentiary Institutions
Malabo II, Frente al Ministerio de Comercio
Equatorial Guinea*

Dear Minister,

*I am writing to bring to your attention the case of human rights defender **Joaquín Elo Ayeto**, a member of Somos+ Platform and the political opposition party, Convergence for Social Democracy (CPDS). He was arrested on 25 February at his house in Malabo and accused of having information on a plot to kill the president. He is detained at Black Beach prison.*

According to reliable reports received by Amnesty International, Joaquín Elo Ayeto is seriously ill and needs urgent access to health care. For the last couple of weeks, he has been experiencing severe diarrhoea and a high fever, which could be symptoms of serious illnesses like malaria.

Joaquín's lawyers wrote to the Investigating Magistrate Number 2 from Malabo, Mr. Oscr Bechekú Eñeso, on 5 August asking for the immediate transfer of Joaquín to a hospital. So far, there has been no response to this appeal and Joaquín's health continues to deteriorate.

Joaquín has not been allowed access to his family and lawyers for several weeks.

I am extremely concerned for Joaquín's life and health. I urge you, as Minister of Justice, to ensure that Joaquín has immediate access to the health care he needs, including transfer to a hospital if needed. In addition, Joaquín should be immediately and unconditionally released because he has been arbitrarily detained. The circumstances of his arrest and the fact that the charges against him are constantly changing seems to indicate that he is detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his human rights. Pending Joaquín Elo Ayeto's transfer and release, I urge you to make sure that all measures are taken to guarantee that he is not subjected again to any ill-treatment and that he is granted access to his family and lawyers.

Yours sincerely,

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Joaquín Elo Ayeto is a member of the opposition political party Convergence for Social Democracy (Convergencia Para la Democracia Social), (CPDS) and a member of the coordination body for Somos+, a civil society platform with around 15 young men and women working to challenge injustices affecting young people. The platform was established in 2015 to enable young people to respond to the arbitrary arrests of some of their peers during the Africa Cup of Nations.

Joaquín Elo Ayeto has been arrested and detained several times, including in Black Beach Prison. On 29 November 2016, two military officers brutally beat him after he had posted an online article about an officer refusing to pay a road toll. After this incident Joaquín Elo Ayeto went straight to court to file a complaint against the two officers.

He was told by a judge that his articles were giving the country a bad image. He was sent to Black Beach Prison in Malabo where he spent over a month. For the first five days of his detention he was held in isolation; subsequently he had access to some of his family and friends. When the judicial year resumed in January 2017 the magistrate decided to release him. He has never been told why he was sent to jail. On 27 June 2017, Joaquín Elo Ayeto was again arrested. Earlier, Joaquín Elo and others from Somos+ had taken part in an event calling for justice for the killing of a young taxi driver, Jose Vidal Ndoing Micha, allegedly by the army. Two hours later, the police arrived at Joaquín Elo's home with a judicial warrant and he was taken to the Ministry of Security where he was interrogated and then sent to a cell. A week later he was released.

Joaquín was arrested for the third time on Monday 25 February 2019 at 6:00am. He was at his home in Malabo. He was in his room on the first floor when he heard some noise on the ground floor where his tenants were. When he came down to the ground floor, he saw seven police officers. One of them asked him if he was Joaquín Elo Ayeto and when he identified himself he was asked to wait outside as the officers went upstairs to his room. They took his camera, his laptop, his mobile phone, a USB and some magazines from his political party. He was arrested and first taken to the Central Police station (known as Guantanamo) in Malabo. He was brought before a judge on Friday 1 March 2019. When he was before the judge, Joaquín insisted on showing injuries he sustained from torture in police custody. The judge refused to hear his testimony. The only thing he said was that he would receive medical treatment in prison for those injuries. The judge ordered his pre-trial detention at Black Beach Prison. On Saturday 2 March when his lawyer went to the prison to see him he was denied access. His family has also not been able to visit him. You can find more information on the situation of Human Rights defenders and Activists here <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr24/9793/2019/en/>

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [27 09 2019]

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Joaquin Elo Ayeto (He/Him/His)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr24/9981/2019/en/>