

# URGENT ACTION

## COUP SUSPECT'S TEENAGE SON HELD INCOMMUNICADO

**Yusupha Lowe, the 16 year old son of Bai Lowe, a man accused of being involved in the 30 December 2014 attempted coup in Gambia, was arrested on 1 January. Initial reports indicated that he was being held at the National Intelligence Agency headquarters, but credible sources now indicate that he is no longer being held there.**

**Yusupha Lowe**, the 16 year old son of Bai Lowe (who is alleged to have been involved in the attempted coup of 30 December 2014 in Gambia) was arrested together with his 19-year-old uncle, Pa Alieu Lowe and his father's ex-wife, Jariatou Lowe, on 1 January. They were taken from Bai Lowe's residence at around 1:00pm by men in plain clothes claiming to be following presidential orders. A few weeks later, Jariatou Lowe was released without charge. However, Yusupha Lowe and Pa Alieu Lowe remain in incommunicado detention, without being charged and having no access to lawyers or family members. Initial reports had indicated that Yusupha Lowe was being held at the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) headquarters in Banjul, Gambia, but credible sources now indicate that he is no longer being held there. His current whereabouts remain unknown and his family is concerned about his safety.

Relatives of people suspected to have been involved in the 30 December 2014 coup attempt have been subjected to reprisals by Gambian security forces. It is unclear how many people remain in incommunicado detention. Amnesty International is concerned about the unlawful detention without charge of Yusupha Lowe and other relatives of the December 2014 coup suspects, well beyond the 72 hour time limit provided in Gambia's constitution and other human rights laws and treaties.

The Gambian government has refused to acknowledge the detention of Yusupha Lowe and many others and has not provided information on their whereabouts, effectively holding them outside of the protection of the law. This amounts to enforced disappearance, a crime under international law. As their whereabouts remain unknown, they are at a high risk of torture and other abuses.

### **Please write immediately in English or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities to immediately reveal the whereabouts of Yusupha Lowe and all other detainees;
- Calling on the authorities to promptly charge Yusupha Lowe and all other detainees with an internationally recognizable criminal offense should there be sufficient evidence or else immediately release them;
- Calling on the authorities to immediately provide all the people detained in relation to the December 2014 coup attempt access to their families and lawyers;
- Urging authorities to ensure that all detainees are not subjected to torture or ill-treatment while in detention.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 JULY 2015 TO:**

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Mama Fatima Singhateh

Ministry of Justice and Attorney General

Chambers

Marina Parade

Banjul, Gambia

Email: info@moj.gov.gm

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Neneh Macdouall Gaye

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

4, Marina Parade

Banjul, Gambia

Fax: +220 422 7917

Email: info@mofa.gov.gm

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Gunmen attacked the presidential palace in the Gambian capital Banjul on 30 December 2014. At least four assailants, among them Colonel Lamin Sanneh and Alhaji Jaja Nass, were reportedly killed while one other assailant was detained by security forces. The Gambian authorities have not returned the bodies of those killed to their families.

Aside from Yusupha Lowe, several other family members of coup suspects are also being held incommunicado.

Meta Njie, the mother of Colonel Lamin Sanneh who was killed during the attempted coup, was arrested and detained on 1 January. Meta Njie was visiting her sick elderly mother in the municipality of Fajikunda when four men who identified themselves as members of the NIA came into the house and took her away. Since then, no official news about her whereabouts has been provided. Informal sources indicate that she could also be detained at the NIA headquarters in Banjul. There is concern about her health.

Mariam Njie, a woman in the her late sixties and who is the mother of Alhaji Jaja Nass, killed during the attempted coup, was detained on 5 January in the municipality of Kotu together with her daughter, her son and her brother. All of them were taken to the NIA headquarters where they were threaten with death and that their heads would be chopped off. The daughter and the son were released on the same day; the brother a few weeks later, but the whereabouts of Mariam Njie are unknown.

Essa Bojang, a man in his 60s with a physical disability and the father of the suspected coup plotter Dawda Bojang, was also arrested and detained on 1 January.

The arrest and prolonged detention of family members of the alleged coup plotters, who have had no opportunity to challenge their detention, violates the basic legal protections provided for by the country's constitution, as well as regional and international human rights law.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture released a report in March 2015, following his 2014 visit to the country, highlighting the high risk of torture, arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearances. This statement of the Special Rapporteur increases Amnesty International's concern for those people who are in detention in Gambia, especially in relation to the 30 December 2014 failed coup.

Name: Yusupha Lowe  
Gender m/f: m

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