

URGENT ACTION

PRO-DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST GETS JAIL SENTENCE

On 16 November, Saïkou Yaya Diallo, the legal coordinator of the National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC), was sentenced by Dixinn Court to one- year imprisonment with five months suspended on fabricated 'assault, violence, threats and public insults' charges. He must be immediately and unconditionally released as his conviction stems from his peaceful protesting against President Alpha Condé's running for a third term in office.

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

Mory Doumbouya
Minister of Justice
BP: 564 Conakry
Email: maitredoumbouya@yahoo.com

Dear Minister,

*I am concerned about the unfair conviction on 16 November of pro-democracy activist and member of the National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC), **Saïkou Yaya Diallo**, who has been sentenced to one-year in prison, wholly suspended for 5 months.*

Saïkou Yaya Diallo was arrested on 7 May 2020 and charged with "assault, violence, threats and public insults" and transferred to Conakry prison, where he has since been held. On 25 March, during a FNDC press conference, FNDC members, including Saïkou Yaya Diallo, locked a suspected intelligence agent claiming to be a journalist in an office while waiting for a crowd to disperse outside, presumably to protect the agent from potential violence from the crowd of opposition activists. According to several witnesses, Saïkou Yaya Diallo was not involved in any violence. Prior to his conviction, he was arbitrary detained despite two court-issued release orders.

I am concerned that Saïkou Yaya Diallo has been convicted solely in connection to his pro-democracy activism with the FNDC; he has already spent 6 months in arbitrary detention and is now due to serve another month in line with his sentencing. I am also deeply concerned about Saïkou Yaya Diallo's health whilst in detention as not only does he suffer from chronic diabetes, which requires a strict diet and treatment, but his precondition puts him at a heightened risk of contracting COVID-19.

In light of the above, I urge you to:

- **Quash Saïkou Yaya Diallo's conviction and grant his immediate and unconditional release;**
- **Ensure that, pending his release, Saïkou Yaya Diallo's conditions of detention are in line with international standards, including access to healthcare, water, the appropriate food for his diet, and regular access to his family. If contact visits are restricted due to COVID-19 preventive measures, they must be replaced with other means of contact, for example, by phone, emails or video calls;**
- **End harassment and intimidation against human rights defenders and activists, including members of pro-democracy groups in Guinea.**

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The National Front for the Defence of the Constitution is a coalition of non-governmental groups and opposition parties which boycotted the referendum on March 2020. Since October 2019, the FNDC has been organizing protests against the government's planned constitutional change. The new constitution reset presidential term limits, allowing President Alpha Condé to be elected for a third term.

On 25 March, a suspected government intelligence agent, claiming to be a journalist, was identified during a FNDC press conference at PADES (Parti des Démocrates pour l'Espoir in French) party headquarters in Ratoma by FNDC members. FNDC members, including Saïkou Yaya Diallo, secured the suspected government intelligence agent in an office and questioned her on why she was there and who had sent her. Saïkou Yaya Diallo called a bailiff to establish the presence of the intelligence agent. FNDC members said that she would be released after the press conference to avoid the crowds outside, fearing that she would be lynched by opposition activists in retaliation to the killing of 12 people by security forces following controversial elections in the week before. The police subsequently raided the headquarters of the PADES and arrested 11 individuals, including Saïkou Yaya Diallo.

The Presidential election was held on 18 October and was marred by controversy. On 19 October, the president's main opposition candidate Cellou Dalein Diallo, declared himself the winner. The Independent National Electoral Commission (Céni) however declared President Alpha Condé the winner on 24 October. The result led to clashes between security forces and protesters which resulted in dozens of people being killed since 18 October. On 10 November, prosecutor of Dixinn Sidy, Souleymane Ndiaye announced the arrest of nearly 80 people in connection with the post-election demonstrations with several activists and members of the opposition arrested for "threats likely to disturb the security and public order".

In its report, '*Marching to their death. Justice for victims of crackdown on demonstrations in Guinea*', published 1 October 2020, Amnesty International documented at least 70 arbitrary arrests in Guinea from October 2019 to July 2020 for only exercising their right to freedom of assembly and expression. At least 50 people were killed by police and army members during the same period during protests.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 12 DECEMBER 2020

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Saïkou Yaya Diallo (he/his)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR29/2923/2020/en/