

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Torture/death in detention

23 November 1992

CAMEROON: Ghandi CHE NGWA, accountant, aged 30

Ghandi Che Ngwa, a detainee held under state of emergency regulations, died on about 18 November 1992 at the Military Hospital in Bamenda, reportedly as a result of injuries sustained during torture. Amnesty International is calling on the authorities to investigate reports of his torture and to bring those responsible for his death to justice.

Ghandi Che Ngwa, an internal auditor for a government development agency, was reportedly arrested on 9 November 1992 at his Bamenda office and taken to the headquarters of the Brigade mixte mobile (BMM), the security police, in Bamenda, capital of North-West Province.

There he was allegedly suspended by his arms and legs from an iron bar and severely beaten.

Four days later he was transferred to the Military Hospital in Bamenda, apparently with a swollen and bruised body and with some of his toenails missing. He died a week later from his injuries. He was apparently accused of involvement in an attack on the house of the Prime Minister's sister, although unofficial sources suggest he was not involved in the violence which followed the announcement of the election results in Cameroon.

Five other detainees were also transferred to the Military Hospital at the same time as Ghandi Che Ngwa. Detainees have reportedly been beaten daily at the headquarters of the BMM and tortured with electric shocks. Dr Solomon Nfor Gwei, the head of a government-appointed human rights monitoring body, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (Comité national des droits de l'homme et des libertés), reportedly visited some 200 detainees in one detention centre in Bamenda on 22 November 1992. Many said they had been severely beaten.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The final results of the presidential elections on 11 October 1992 were announced by the Supreme Court on 23 October, with the incumbent, President Paul Biya, winning a majority of votes over his main rival, John Fru Ndi of the Social Democratic Front (SDF). Following rioting in Bamenda in which at least three people died, the government imposed a state of emergency in North-West Province on 27 October 1992 and hundreds of people, mostly SDF supporters, have been arrested in Bamenda and other towns and are being held without charge or trial, usually incommunicado. John Fru Ndi and over 120 of his supporters remain under house arrest (see EXTRA 90/92, AFR 17/16/92, 30 October 1992). Dr Victorin François Hameni Bieleu, the SDF's campaign manager, apparently also remains in detention (see UA 350/92, AFR 17/17/92, 11 November 1992).

Under Cameroon's Law relating to the State of Emergency (Loi relative à l'état d'urgence), No. 90/47 of 19 December 1990, a state of emergency can be declared by presidential decree for up to six months, and people who are considered to be a threat to public safety may be held in administrative detention without charge or trial: by order of the Minister of Territorial Administration (minister of the interior) for up to four months, by Provincial

Governors and Senior Divisional Officers for up to 15 and seven days respectively. The law provides no safeguards against abuse of these emergency powers or against arbitrary detention.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in French or English, or in your own language:

- expressing concern at reports of the death in detention of Ghandi Che Ngwa on about 18 November 1992 at the Military Hospital in Bamenda as a result of injuries sustained during torture;

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- calling on the Cameroonian authorities to investigate reports of his torture and to bring those responsible for his death to justice;

- urging the authorities to issue orders to the security forces in North-West Province making it clear that torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including beating prisoners, are illegal and not allowed in any circumstances;

- calling on the authorities to ensure that all detainees are safeguarded from ill-treatment and torture, and are given immediate access to their lawyers and families, and to appropriate medical treatment.

APPEALS TO

1) President:

Son Excellence Monsieur Paul Biya
Président de la République
Palais de l'Unité
Yaoundé, Cameroon

**Telegrams: President Biya, Yaounde,
Cameroon**

Faxes: + 237 221699

**Telexes: 8207 PRESID KN (Secretariat
général)
8595 PRESID B KN (Cabinet civil)**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la
République / Dear President**

3) Minister of the Interior:

M. Gilbert Andzé Tsoungui
Ministre de l'Administration territoriale
Ministère de l'Administration territoriale
1000 Yaoundé 4, Cameroon

**Telegrams: Ministre de l'Administration
territoriale Tsoungui, Yaounde,
Cameroon**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre /
Dear Minister**

COPIES OF SOME OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Mr Luc-René Bell
Governor of North-West Province
Governor's Office

2) Prime Minister:

Mr Simon Achidi Achu
Prime Minister
Prime Minister's Office
Immeuble Etoile
Yaoundé, Cameroon

**Telegrams: Prime Minister Achu, Yaounde,
Cameroon**

Faxes: + 237 235765

Telexes: 8282 KN

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister /
Monsieur le Premier Ministre**

4) Delegate General of National Security:

M. Jean Fochivé
Délégué-général
Sûreté nationale
Yaoundé, Cameroon

**Telegrams: Deleque-general Surete national
Fochive, Yaounde, Cameroon**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Délégué-général /
Dear Sir**

5000 Bamenda, Cameroon

Dr Solomon Nfor Gwei
President

National Commission on Human Rights and
Freedoms
PO Box 287, Yaoundé, Cameroon

and the following newspapers:

Postwatch, PO Box 235, Bamenda, Cameroon
Our People, BP 244, Bamenda, Cameroon
Cameroon Tribune, BP 1218, Yaoundé,
Cameroon

Cameroon Post, BP 1981, Yaoundé, Cameroon
The Gazette, PO Box 408, Limbe, Cameroon
Cameroon Outlook, BP 124, Limbe, Cameroon
La Gazette, BP 5485, Douala, Cameroon
Dikalo, BP 12656, Douala, Cameroon

and to diplomatic representatives of Cameroon accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 January 1993.