

Chad: Extrajudicial execution

On 16 August 1996, **Bichara Digui**, a member of the *Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès* (RDP), Rally for Democracy and Progress, a political opposition party, was fatally shot by three unidentified men, believed to be members of the security forces, as he returned to his home in N'Djaména; his driver was seriously injured. Members of the security forces who were nearby did not intervene.

Bichara Digui had revealed to Amnesty International delegates who visited Chad in April 1996, that since his release from detention in December 1994, he had been summoned on a number of occasions by the Chadian authorities, including the Presidency, where he had reportedly received death threats. Amnesty International believes he may have been targeted because of his past links with the *Conseil national de redressement* (CNR), National Council for Recovery, and his subsequent peaceful political opposition to the government. No investigation is known to have been initiated into the

circumstances of Bichara Digui's death.

Bichara Digui was formerly a member of the executive committee of the CNR - an armed opposition movement. He and a number of other CNR supporters were arrested immediately after the extrajudicial execution of **Abbass Koty Yacoub**, then leader of the CNR, in October 1993.

Abbas Koty had returned from exile after signing a peace accord with the Chadian authorities. They were held without charge or trial until December 1994; Amnesty International considers that they may have been prisoners of conscience.

The response of the Chadian authorities to sporadic but ongoing insurgency in the country has been characterized by systematic violations of human rights against real or perceived opponents and their communities. Many violations, including extrajudicial executions, fit into a pattern of intimidation of the civilian population. Some individuals appear to have been targeted because of the real or perceived activities of their relatives, others are the random victims of violations because they live in areas where armed groups are active and where the population is automatically considered by the security forces to be sympathizers or supporters of the armed groups.

In addition to such random attacks, there is also a systematic pattern of human rights violations against more prominent opponents and critics of the government - such as Bichara Digui - who have variously been subjected to arbitrary arrest, threats, detention without trial, unfair trial, torture and extrajudicial execution or "disappearance". These human rights violations also remain uninvestigated. In many cases perpetrators are believed to be members of particular units of the security forces, sometimes under the direct control of the President. However, the lack of investigation means the identity of perpetrators is never officially established

and human rights violators operate with impunity.

Extrajudicial executions are prohibited by international human rights treaties which Chad has ratified such as the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** and the **African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights**. The right to life is also safeguarded in the Chadian constitution. Yet the Chadian authorities appear to have taken no effective measures to prevent extrajudicial executions in practice.

WHAT YOU CAN DO : Write a letter to the Chadian government explaining that you are raising the case of Bichara Digu as an illustration of the many other cases of extrajudicial execution that occur in Chad.

* urge the government to investigate Bichara Digu's death and bring to justice those responsible in accordance with international standards of fairness. The findings of any such investigation should be made public and the complainants, witnesses and investigators should be protected against violence or any other form of intimidation.

* express concern that Bichara Digu appears to have been targeted by members of the security forces because of his peaceful political opposition, and because of his previous association with an armed opposition group.

* express concern that the killing of Bichara Digu appears to be part of a systematic pattern of human rights violations against real and suspected opponents of the government.

* stress that all human rights violations including past violations must be investigated and human rights violators brought to justice if there is to be respect for human rights now and in the future.

* welcome Chad's ratification in June 1995 of international human rights treaties

and call on the Chadian authorities to take immediate steps to ensure adherence to these treaties and thus implement effective safeguards against extrajudicial executions.

Send a copy of one of your letters to the Chadian authorities to your own government. Urge your government to encourage the Chadian authorities to investigate the killing of Bichara Digu and past violations. Ask for their help in encouraging the Chadian government to end the impunity of the security forces. Urge your government to be vigilant in monitoring Chad's human rights record and in calling on the Chadian authorities to adhere to the international treaties they have ratified, thus putting in place effective safeguards against extrajudicial executions.

President : President Idriss Déby, Président de la République, Présidence de la République, BP 74, N'Djaména, Chad
Fax : + 235 51 45 01/51 46 53

Minister of Defence: Monsieur Youssouf Togoimi, Ministre des Forces armées, Ministère des Forces armées, N'Djaména, Chad

Minister of Interior: Monsieur Ahmat Nimir, Ministre de la Sécurité publique, Ministère de l'Intérieur, N'Djaména, Chad

Minister of Justice: Monsieur Abdelkerim Nadjo, Ministre de la Justice et Garde des Sceaux, Ministère de la Justice, N'Djaména, Chad.

Copies can be sent to : Monsieur Domaye Nodjigoto Daniel, Président de la Commission nationale des droits de l'homme, Palais du 15 janvier, BP 426, N'Djaména, Chad

Amended authorities list :

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