

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 23/11/91

Distr: UA/SC

30 October 1991

Further information on UA 305/91 (AFR 23/05/91, 11 September) and follow-up AFR 23/06 91 (15 October) - Medical Concern

DJIBOUTI:Aref Mohamed Aref, lawyer,

and Ali Aref Bourhane, politician (new name)

---

Amnesty International is concerned about the health of Aref Mohamed Aref and his uncle, Ali Aref Bourhane, as they have reportedly been refused their regular supply of food since 26 October 1991. They are held at Ali-Adde prison at Dikhil, a remote prison near the Ethiopian border.

In early September 1991 the prison authorities stopped providing food for Aref Mohamed Aref and Ali Aref Bourhane. Their families, unable to visit them regularly because of the distance, then arranged for food to be provided by a supplier in Dikhil. The military guards at the prison, however, have now refused to accept this food for the two detainees who have been left with only biscuits to eat.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Aref Mohamed Aref, 39, a lawyer who has previously defended political prisoners in Djibouti, was arrested on 13 January 1991 together with his uncle, Ali Aref Bourhane, 57, a prominent government opponent and former Prime Minister (président du gouvernement) before independence from France in 1977, and many other members of the Afar ethnic group. They and over a dozen others are awaiting trial for attempting to overthrow the government (atteinte à la sécurité de l'Etat), for which the death penalty could be imposed. Amnesty International believes they could be prisoners of conscience.

Aref Mohamed Aref was sent back to Ali-Adde prison from hospital in the capital, Djibouti, in early October 1991 after medical treatment in hospital for tachycardia (abnormally rapid heartbeat) and food poisoning.

#### FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/faxes/airmail letters in French if possible:

- expressing concern at reports that Maître Aref Mohamed Aref and Ali Aref Bourhane have been refused their daily food supply from their relatives and urging that they be given a proper diet immediately;
- expressing concern that they are being held in a remote prison where conditions are poor and medical facilities are inadequate and their relatives do not have regular access to them;
- urging that they be examined by a doctor to ensure that the two men, and particularly Aref Mohamed Aref, have not suffered physiological damage as a consequence of being deprived of food and that they receive any necessary medical

treatment;

page 2 of FU 305/91

- explaining also Amnesty International's concern that they and others arrested with them have been held for a long period in pre-trial detention, and that the court which would try their case, the State Security Tribunal, does not meet international standards of impartiality;

- expressing the fear that they may be detained solely on account of their non-violent opposition to the government.

**APPEALS TO:**

**1.**

Son Excellence Monsieur Hassan Gouled APTIDON  
Président de la République  
La Présidence

**Son Excellence**

Djibouti, République de Djibouti

**Telegrams: President Aptidon, La Presidence, Djibouti**

**Faxes: + 253 3550 49; + 253 3501 74**

**2.**

Son Excellence Monsieur Barkad Gourad HAMADOU  
Premier Ministre  
Office du Premier Ministre

**Son Excellence**

BP 2086, Djibouti, République de Djibouti

**Telegrams: Premier Ministre Hamadou, Djibouti**

**3.**

Monsieur Ahmed Boulaleh BARREH  
Ministre de l'Intérieur  
Ministère de l'Intérieur

**Monsieur**

BP 2086, Djibouti, République de Djibouti

**Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur Barreh, Djibouti**

**4.**

Monsieur Ismael Omar GUELLE  
Chef du cabinet présidentiel  
La Présidence

**Monsieur**

BP 6, Djibouti, République de Djibouti

**Telegrams: Chef du cabinet presidentiel, Djibouti**

**COPIES TO:**

**1.**

Mohamed Djama ELABE  
Ministre de la Santé

Ministère de la Santé  
Djibouti, République de Djibouti

**2.**

Monsieur Ougoureh Hassan IBRAHIM  
Ministre de la Justice  
Ministère de la Justice  
BP 12  
Djibouti, République de Djibouti

**3.**

Monsieur Moumin Bahdon FARAH  
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères  
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères  
BP 1863  
Djibouti, République de Djibouti

and to diplomatic representatives of Djibouti in your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 December 1991.