

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 24/002/2008

28 March 2008

Further Information on UA 37/08 (AFR 24/001/2008, 11 February 2008) Detention without charge or trial/harsh detention conditions New concern: Medical concern

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Brígida Asongsua Elo (f)

Brígida Asongsua Elo, who is detained without charge or trial in Malabo Central Police Station, is being denied access to the medical treatment she needs.

Amnesty International has learned that Brígida Asongsua Elo is suffering from hypertension, for which she only receives sporadic treatment. It is not known how often she receives this treatment. As a result of the hypertension, she often feels dizzy and has blackouts, and also bleeds from her nose and mouth. It is only when this happens that she is taken to the hospital for outpatient treatment and then taken back to the police station. Doctors at the hospital are believed to have recommended that Brígida Asongsua Elo is admitted as an inpatient for tests and treatment, but the police have refused to allow it.

Brígida Asongsua Elo continues to be held in harsh conditions which amount to cruel and degrading treatment. She is being held in a common cell together with 70 to 100 mainly male detainees. There are no toilet or bathroom facilities in the cell, so she has no privacy.

In late February or early March, the president of the Malabo Appeal Court (*Tribunal de Instrucción y Primera Instancia*) informed Brígida Asongsua Elo's lawyer that the court had issued a judicial order for her to be brought before the court for questioning, in order to determine whether her arrest and detention were legal. However, the police have so far failed to comply with this judicial order and she continues to be held without charge or trial. She has not yet been told why she was arrested.

On 21 January, Brígida Asongsua Elo's lawyer filed a writ of *habeas corpus* on her behalf. On 13 February, Amnesty International wrote to the President of the Appeal Court, urging the court to consider, as a matter of urgency, the writ of *habeas corpus* and to immediately release Brígida Asongsua Elo if her detention was found to be unlawful. There has been no response to the *habeas corpus* writ.

After the original Urgent Action was issued on 11 February, the Equatorial Guinea Minister of Information accused Amnesty International of manipulating the information which, he said, was false and contentious.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as soon as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern about Brígida Asongsua Elo's health;
- urging the authorities to allow Brígida Asongsua Elo to receive the medical treatment she requires in a hospital, as recommended by doctors;
- calling for her immediate and unconditional release unless she is charged with a recognisably criminal offence;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that the police comply immediately with the judicial order demanding that Brígida Asongsua Elo be brought before the *Tribunal de Instrucción y Primera Instancia*.

APPEALS TO:

President

General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
Presidente de la República
Gabinete del Presidente de la República, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 3313/ 3334

Salutation: Excelencia/Your Excellency

Attorney General

Sr. Don José Oló Obono
Fiscal General de la República, Fiscalía General de la República, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 1338

Salutation: Sr Fiscal/ Dear Attorney General

Minister of National Security

Sr Don Manuel Nguema Mba
Ministro de Seguridad Nacional, Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional, Malabo, Ecuatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 8259

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Sr Don Pastor Micha Ondo Bile
Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 3132/ 2320

President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission

Sr Don Salomón Nguema Owono
Presidente de la Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo y de la
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo
Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo, Avenida de la Independencia s/n
Apartado 51, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

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and to diplomatic representatives of Equatorial Guinea accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 9 May 2008.