

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 52/92 (AFR 24/02/92, 13 February 1992) -

Arbitrary arrests, fear of torture

Equatorial Guinea: Plácido Mikó ABOGO

Celestino Bacale OBIANG

José Antonio DORRONSORO

Arsenio MOLONGA

José Luis NVUMBA

and also

Pedro Motu MAMIAGA

Recent information indicates that, contrary to first reports, three of the above mentioned people, Celestino Bacale Obiang, Arsenio Molonga and José Luis Nvumba, were not arrested on 9 February 1992. They had in fact evaded arrest and sought refuge in a foreign embassy and in the office of the United Nations Development Program where they remained for several days. José Antonio Dorronsororo, who was arrested on 9 February and reportedly tortured, was subsequently released. All four are reported to have been formally charged with insulting the head of state. They are not allowed to leave Malabo and they have to report to the police daily.

Plácido Mikó Abogo is still in detention. He is reported to have been severely tortured. The government responded to Amnesty International's initial expressions of concern saying that Plácido Mikó Abogo is being charged with assaulting the security forces that arrested him. However, people who witnessed his arrest said that eight police officers kicked his head and other parts of his body repeatedly, causing him very severe injuries. He is said to have been tortured again in custody.

Another person was arrested on 23 February 1992. Pedro Motu Mamiaga had been arrested in December 1990 apparently for advocating political pluralism. He was held without charge or trial until he was released in a general amnesty. It is reported that he was arrested after refusing to return to his village and remain there on the order of a security official. He is said to be detained in the office of the Moroccan soldiers who act as bodyguards for President Obiang Nguema.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:

- acknowledging that AI has received the government's response to its previous expressions of concern and stating that AI remains concerned

that according to eyewitness reports, Plácido Mikó Abogo was severely beaten at the time of his arrest and that he was also reportedly subjected to further torture in prison;

- urging that Plácido Mikó Abogo be given all necessary medical treatment;
- expressing concern about reports that Plácido Mikó Abogo continues to be detained, apparently for exercising his right to freely express his political views;

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- seeking confirmation of reports that Celestino Bacale Obiang, José Antonio Dorransoro, Arsenio Molonga and José Luis Nvumba have been charged with insulting the head of state and expressing concern that these charges may not be consistent with their constitutional right to freedom of expression (Article 13 (b) of Equatorial Guinea's new Constitution);
- expressing concern about the alleged arbitrary arrest of Pedro Motu Mamiaga;
- urging that unless all six people are charged with a recognizably criminal offence and promptly tried in accordance with international standards of fairness they should be released or have the restrictions on their movement lifted immediately.

APPEALS TO:

1) President:

Su Excelencia

Coronel General Teodoro Obiang Nguema

Presidente de la República

Gabinete del Presidente de la República

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Presidente Obiang Nguema Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Salutation: Su Excelencia / Your Excellency

2) Minister of Justice and Religion:

Su Excelencia

Mariano Nsué Nguema

Ministro de Justicia y Culto

Ministerio de Justicia y Culto

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia Nsué Nguema

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Salutation: Su Excelencia / Your Excellency

3) Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Su Excelencia

Benjamín Mba Ekua Mikó

Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores

Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores Mba Ekua

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Salutation: Su Excelencia / Your Excellency

and to diplomatic representatives of Equatorial Guinea in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section, if sending appeals after 7 April 1992.