

PUBLIC

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23 March 2004

Further Information on UA 116/04 (AFR 24/003/2004, 19 March 2004) - Torture/Health concern/Fear for safety

EQUATORIAL GUINEA Nick du TOIT (m), South African citizen  
N.G. "Bones" Boonzaaier (m), South African citizen

Weja Chicampo, leader of the the *Movimiento para la Auto-determinación de la Isla de Bioko* (MAIB), Movement for the Self-determination of Bioko Island

New names: Mark ANTHONY SCHMIDT (m), South African citizen  
Georgio Fernando Patricio CARDOSO (m) ]  
Americo JAO Pimentel Riveiro (m) ] South African citizens of  
Abel AUGUSTO (m) ] Angolan origin  
Jose PASSOCAS (m) ]  
George OLIMPIC NUNEZ ALLERSON (m) ]  
Samvel DABRINIAN (m) ]  
ASHOT KARAPETYAN (m) ]  
Samvel MATSHKALIAN (m) ] Armenian citizens  
Razmik KHACHATRYAN (m) ]  
Suren MURADYAN (m) ]  
ASHOT SIMONYAN (m) ]

The government of Equatorial Guinea has released a list of the 14 people detained incommunicado in Black Beach prison in the capital, Malabo. They are the surviving members of a group of 15 alleged mercenaries arrested on 9 March in Malabo and accused of plotting a coup against President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. One of them died on 17 March, apparently as a result of torture.

Some or all have reportedly been severely tortured. Only a South African government delegation has been allowed to visit them. Torture in incommunicado detention is a routine practice in Equatorial Guinea.

In their official statement, the government said that it would carry out an "international trial which would meet all the legal standards". The statement said that the people detained had confessed to planning acts aiming at destabilizing the regime (*actos de desestabilización de régimen*) and to "committing selective assassinations and to using violence to change the democratically constituted government" (*cometer asesinatos selectivos y cambiar por la violencia el gobierno democráticamente constituido en el país*). These charges carry the death penalty.

The authorities claimed that Gerhard Eugen Nershez died as a result of a severe attack of cerebral malaria and that the German consul in Yaoundé (capital of neighbouring Cameroon), who is in charge of Equatorial Guinea, had seen the corpse on 18 March. According to the people who saw him, Gerhard Eugen Nershez appeared to have severe injuries caused by torture on his hands and feet.

Amnesty International remains concerned by the prolonged incommunicado detention of these 14 men and by the risk of torture and harsh conditions which are a pattern in Black Beach prison.

Although Amnesty International does not condone the activities of mercenaries, anyone arrested on suspicion of involvement in such activities has the right not to be subjected to torture and the right to a fair trial.

On 22 March 2004, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan mandated a top UN official, Tuliameni Kalomoh, as his new envoy to Equatorial Guinea "to discuss with the authorities the situation on the ground and its implications for peace and security in the sub-region".

Amnesty International has received no further information about Weja Chicampo. He is still detained incommunicado in Black Beach prison, and Amnesty International remains very concerned for his health.

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

- expressing concern that the 15 foreign nationals arrested on 9 March in Malabo have reportedly been tortured in custody, and one has died, reportedly as a result of torture;
- urging the authorities to improve conditions in the prison and stop torturing the detainees;
- urging the authorities to provide all prisoners with enough food and water and adequate medical treatment;
- urging the authorities to end the incommunicado detention of Weja Chicampo and provide him immediately with adequate medical care and food and water;
- calling for an independent enquiry into the death of Gerhard Eugen Nershz, and for anyone found to have tortured him to be brought to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic

General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo

Gabinete del Presidente de la República

Malabo

República de Guinea Ecuatorial

**Telegrams:      Presidente de la República, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial**

**Fax:               + 240 09 3313 / 3334**

**Salutation:     Excelencia/ Your Excellency**

Minister of Justice

Rubén Mayé Nsue Mangué

Ministerio de Justicia y Culto

Malabo

República de Guinea Ecuatorial

**Telegrams:     Ministro de Justicia y Culto, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial**

**Fax:               + 240 09 2115**

**Salutation:     Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Pastor Micha Ondo Bile

Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores

Malabo

República de Guinea Ecuatorial

**Fax:               + 240 09 3132/2320**

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 1 May 2004.