

2 June 1998

Further information on UA 24/98 (AFR 24/01/98, 23 January 1998) and follow-ups (AFR 24/02/98, 27 January 1998, AFR 24/04/98, 30 January 1998, AFR 24/06/98, 17 February 1998) - Fear of torture / possible prisoners of conscience / Extrajudicial executions / Death in custody and new concerns: Death penalty / Fear of imminent execution / Legal concern

EQUATORIAL GUINEA Remigio Mete (tried in absentia)
 Atanasio Bitá Rope (tried in absentia)
 Epifanio Moaba Babo (tried in absentia)

and new names: Guillermo Salomón Echuaka "Alex" (tried in absentia)
 Reginaldo Bosio Davis
 Dominic Effiong Ibong (from Nigeria)
 David Sunday Nuachuku (from Nigeria)
 Norberto Biebeda
 Bienvenido Samba Momesori (Reverend)
 Leoncio Kota Ripala
 Alejandro Mbe Bitá
 Emilio Rivas Esara
 Ramón Riesa Malabo "Mancanfly"
 Rubén Mosebi Biacho
 Raimundo Errimola

The fifteen above-named men were sentenced to death by a military court on 1 June 1998 and may be executed imminently. It is usual that people sentenced to death in Equatorial Guinea are executed very quickly.

There is no right of appeal against convictions and sentences imposed by military courts. These courts are neither independent nor impartial and use "most summary" procedures, severely curtailing the right to an adequate defence.

The men named above were tried in Malabo, the capital, between 25 and 29 May 1998 and found guilty of treason, terrorism and illegal possession of explosives. In the trial they claimed they had been tortured to extract confessions from them. The court disregarded these claims, however, despite the fact that most of the defendants still showed signs of torture.

They were among a group of 117, mostly from the Bubi ethnic group, tried in connection with attacks on a number of military barracks on Bioko Island. Forty-two of the defendants were acquitted while others received prison terms of up to 30 years'. The attacks, which occurred in January, left four soldiers and three civilians dead.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and without reservation, on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The government claimed that the attacks were carried out by members of the Movimiento para la Autodeterminación de la Isla de Bioko (MAIB), Movement for the self-determination of Bioko Island, a Bubi political party. The military

and police arrested over 500 people, between 21 January and mid-February, some of whom were leading members of the MAIB or their relatives.

At least two men were apparently extrajudicially executed by the security forces in reprisal for the attacks on military barracks and at least four of those arrested died as a result of torture in custody. Some of those arrested were released.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern that the fifteen people mentioned above have been sentenced to death;
- calling for the commutation of the death sentences;
- expressing concern that the trial was unfair and the defendants had no right of appeal against their convictions or sentences;
- expressing concern that most of the defendants complained that they had been tortured while in pre-trial detention but their complaints were ignored by the court.

APPEALS TO:

President

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

Telegrams: Presidente Obiang Nguema, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial
Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG
Faxes: + 240 9 3313
Salutation: Excelencia / Your Excellency

Prime Minister

Angel Serafín Seriche Dougan
 Primer Ministro
 Gabinete del Primer Ministro
 Malabo

República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Telegrams: Primer Ministro Seriche Dougan, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial
Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG
Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor / Dear Prime Minister

Minister of Justice

Rubén Maye Nsue
 Ministro de Justicia
 Ministerio de Justicia
 Malabo
 Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia Maye Nsue, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial
Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG
Faxes: + 240 9 2824
Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor / Dear Minister

President of the military court
 Coronel Santiago Mouma
 Presidente del consejo de guerra

Jurisdicción Militar de la República
Ministerio de Defensa
Malabo
Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Coronel Mouma, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Salutation: Señor Don / Dear sir

COPIES TO:

Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Miguel Oyono Ndong Mifumu

Vice-Primer Ministro y

Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores

Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores

Guinea Ecuatorial

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.