

# URGENT ACTION

## ARRESTS IN GAMBIA FOR DISTRIBUTING T-SHIRTS

**A former Minister of Information and Communication and three other men have been charged with treason after distributing Coalition for Change – The Gambia (CCG) t-shirts calling for an ‘End to Dictatorship Now’ in The Gambia. They are being detained in Banjul, the capital city, and have not had access to lawyers or their families.**

Charges were brought against **Dr Amadou Scattred Janneh, Michael C. Ucheh Thomas, Modou Keita and Ebrima Jallow** at the Banjul Magistrate Court on 13 June. The case has now been transferred to the High Court, as the magistrate court does not have the jurisdiction to hear treason cases. The men remain in detention in Mile prison.

Dr Amadou Scattred Janneh, who has American citizenship, was arrested in his office on the 7 June for being in possession of CCG t-shirts, which call for an ‘End to Dictatorship Now’ in The Gambia. Michael C. Ucheh Thomas, a Nigerian, and Modou Keita and Ebrima Jallow, both Gambians, were arrested on the same day, accused of printing the t-shirts. The whereabouts of the four men were not known until the 13 June when they were brought before Banjul Magistrate Court.

According to CCG Spokesperson Ndey Tapha Sosseh, “The Coalition for Change - The Gambia is an organization with the objectives of ending The Gambia’s dictatorship and as well as the climate of fear that has so consumed Gambian society.”

Amnesty International considers the detention and charges against Dr Amadou Scattred Janneh, Michael C. Ucheh Thomas, Modou Keita and Ebrima Jallow as violations of their freedom of expression, assembly and association. Amnesty International believes them to be prisoners of conscience and calls for their immediate and unconditional release.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:**

- Stating that Amnesty International considers the charges against Dr Amadou Scattred Janneh, Michael C. Ucheh Thomas, Modou Keita and Ebrima Jallow as violations of their freedom of expression, assembly and association and requesting that the authorities drop the charges and immediately and unconditionally release them;
- Reminding the Gambian authorities that action of this kind violates international and regional human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights (ICCPR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR);

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 01 AUGUST 2011 TO:**

President of The Gambia

Dr. Alhaji Yahya Jammeh

Private Mail Bag

State House

Banjul, The Gambia

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Minister of the Interior and NGO Affairs

Ousman Sonko

21 OAU Boulevard

Banjul

The Gambia

Email: [oussonko@yahoo.com](mailto:oussonko@yahoo.com)

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

### **And copies to:**

ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace & Security (PAPs)

Grl. Mahamane Toure

ECOWAS Executive Secretariat,

60, Yakubu Gowon Crescent, Asokoro

District P.M.B 401 Abuja, Nigeria

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dr. Amadou Scattered Janneh is the former Secretary of State for Communication, Information & Technology in the Gambian government. He taught for several years as assistant professor at the African & African-American Studies University of Tennessee, Knoxville, US.

Journalists and human rights activists are routinely subjected to human rights violations, such as unlawful arrests and detentions, torture, unfair trials, harassment, assaults and death threats, making it extremely difficult for them to do their work. Several journalists have been harassed, threatened and been detained and unlawfully arrested if suspected of providing information to online news sources or foreign journalists or publications.

In 2006, Ebrima Manneh was arrested in a similar circumstance and was subjected to enforced disappearance. In 2005, Deyda Hydara, the former president of the Gambia press union, was extra-judicially executed.

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