

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Arrest and beating of political activists

4 March 1992

GUINEA BISSAU:

Dr. BALDÉ  
Heráclito CARVALHO  
Braima DABO  
Manuel Mancama FATI  
Mário Júlio MANGO  
Joaquim Diniz SEQUEIRA  
and three others

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Nine political activists were severely beaten after they were arrested on 25 and 26 February 1992 in the capital, Bissau.

Those arrested are members of two political parties, the Partido da Convergência Democrática, Democratic Convergence Party, and the Resistência da Guiné-Bissau - Movimento Bafatá, Guinea-Bissau Resistance - Bafata Movement. Some of them, including Manuel Mancama Fati and Mário Júlio Mango, were arrested on 25 February. They had been driving through the streets using megaphones to announce a demonstration planned for 29 February in defiance of an Interior Ministry ban on demonstrations during the Carnival period (the festivities before the Lent fast). The others were arrested in similar circumstances on 26 February. On each occasion those arrested were taken to a police station in the city centre known as the Segunda Esquadra (Second Squadron) where they were held for about an hour and severely kicked and beaten with truncheons. None were charged with any offence.

At least three sustained severe injuries. Members of the opposition parties said that the Central Hospital refused to admit them for treatment. They were subsequently treated by a doctor attached to the Swedish Embassy. The diplomatic corps in Bissau protested to the government about the beatings.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A multi-party political system was introduced following changes to Guinea-Bissau's Constitution in May 1991. Since then several political parties have been formed to contest parliamentary and presidential elections, the date of which has not yet been decided. On several occasions in 1991 political activists were detained for short periods while they were canvassing for party members or promoting their party programs: some were reported to have been beaten after their arrest. Opposition political activities have also been obstructed in other ways. Following the events of 26 February the demonstration planned for 29 February was postponed.

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

- expressing concern about the beatings of political activists after they were arrested on 25 and 26 February 1992;

- requesting clarification of reports that they were denied treatment in the Central Hospital;

- asking whether those who carried out the beatings are being brought to justice;

- calling on the government to take immediate and effective action to ensure that the police conform to national laws and international standards concerning the arrest and treatment of prisoners, for example, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials states, in Article 5, "No law-enforcement

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official may inflict, instigate or tolerate any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment..."

**APPEALS TO**

1) President:

Sua Excelência

**Excelência / Dear President**

Presidente João Bernardo Vieira  
Gabinete do Presidente da República  
Praça dos Heróis Nacionais, Bissau  
República da Guiné-Bissau

**Telegrams: Presidente João Bernardo Vieira, Bissau, República da Guiné-Bissau**

**Telexes: 251 PCR BI**

2) Minister of Justice:

Sua Excelência

**Excelência / Dear Minister**

Eurico Correia Monteiro  
Ministro da Justiça, Bissau  
República da Guiné-Bissau

**Telegrams: Ministro da Justiça Eurico Correia Monteiro, Bissau,  
República da Guiné-Bissau**

3) Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Sua Excelência

**Excelência / Dear Minister**

Júlio Semedo  
Ministro de Negócios Estrangeiros  
Ministério de Negócios Estrangeiros  
Bissau, República da Guiné-Bissau

**Telegrams: Ministro de Negócios Estrangeiros Júlio Semedo, Bissau,  
República da Guiné-Bissau**

**Telexes: 249 MNESTRA BI**

4) Minister of the Interior:

Sua Excelência

**Excelência / Dear Minister**

Mário Silva  
Ministro da Administração Interna  
Avenida da Unidade Africana, Bissau  
República da Guiné-Bissau

**Telegrams: Ministro da Administração Interna Mário Silva, Bissau,  
República da Guiné-Bissau**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Attorney General:

Sua Excelência

Mário Lopes

Procurador Geral da República

Procuradoria Geral da República

Bissau, República da Guiné-Bissau

and to diplomatic representatives of Guinea-Bissau in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 April 1992.