

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 60/92 (AFR 31/01/92, 19 February 1992) and follow-up AFR 31/03/92 of 10 March 1992 - Legal concern

Côte d'Ivoire: Martial Ahipeaud, President of *Fédération*

estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire (FESCI),

Ivorian Federation of Students and School Pupils

Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the opposition *Front populaire ivoirien* (FPI), Ivorian Popular Front

Simone Gbagbo, wife of Laurent Gbagbo

Laurent AKOUN, former President of the *Syndicat national des Enseignants du Secondaire de Côte d'Ivoire*

(SYNESCI), National Union of Secondary School

Teachers, and leading member of the FPI

René Dégny Ségui, President of the *Ligue ivoirienne des Droits de l'Homme* (LIDHO), Ivorian League of Human

Rights

Francis Wodié, President of the opposition *Parti Ivoirien des Travailleurs* (PIT), Ivorian Workers' Party, and

former head of Amnesty International's Ivorian

Section

and new names Gnato Zerebi, leading member of FESCI

Molle Molle, FPI parliamentarian.

Louis Dacoury Tabley, member of FPI Secretariat

~~Raymond Koukou Kessie, leading member of *Syndicat*~~

~~*national des enseignants du supérieur* (SYNARES),~~

National Union of University Teachers

Georges Coffy, an opposition journalist

Lazare Koffi Koffi, secretary of the

FPI section in Adzope

Marius Koutezan, chairman of the FPI's youth

During February there were two demonstrations against the government in the capital, Abidjan. The demonstrations criticized the government's refusal to act on the findings of a Commission of Inquiry into an apparently punitive raid launched by the army on Abidjan University's Yopougon student residence on 17 May 1991, which followed confrontation between students and the security forces. The demonstrations started peacefully, but later on there were violent attacks by some marchers.

In total, 26 people, including those named above, have been convicted under the procedure of *flagrant délit*, a procedure for those 'caught in the act' which meant that the immunity from prosecution granted to parliamentarians was invalidated and also hastened the trial proceedings. They were tried under the terms of Article

26 of the Penal Code which establishes the criminal responsibility of someone associated with a crime, even if they have not themselves carried out the criminal act. They have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment from one to three years. All of those convicted are believed to have appealed, but no date has yet been set for the appeals to be heard.

If, as it seems, those convicted were not personally involved in using or calling for violence, they appear to be prisoners of conscience, imprisoned on account of their membership of or leading roles in particular political organizations.

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Please see UA 77/92 (AFR 31/02/92 of 5 March 1992) and follow-up AFR 31/05/92 of 24 April 1992 for information about those still awaiting trial in the context of these demonstrations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern about the conviction of 26 people, including those named above, in connection with recent demonstrations in Abidjan;
- stating that by making the leaders of organizations responsible before the law for the actions of their members which they have neither ordered nor condoned, they are effectively punishing them for exercising their right to freedom of association with others;
- calling on the authorities to release any of the 26 in whose case there was no evidence of personal use or advocacy of violence.

APPEALS TO

1. President:

Son Excellence

Felix Houphouët-Boigny

Président de la République

La Présidence, Boulevard Clozel, Abidjan

République de Côte d'Ivoire

Telegrams: President Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Telexes: 23754 PRESID CI or 23169 PRELIT CI

Monsieur le Président /

Dear President

2) Prime Minister:

M. Alassane Ouattara

Premier Ministre

Le Primature, Abidjan

République de Côte d'Ivoire

Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Monsieur le Premier Ministre /

Dear Prime Minister

3) Minister of Justice:

Mme Jacqueline Lohouès-Oble

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

Boulevard Angoulvant, BP V107, Abidjan

République de Côte d'Ivoire

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Telexes: 23752 MINAFET CI (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Madame le Ministre /

Dear Minister

4) Minister of Interieur:

M. Emile-Constant Bombet
Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité
Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité
Boulevard Angoulvant, Abidjan
République de Côte d'Ivoire

Monsieur le Ministre /
Dear Minister

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: diplomatic representatives of Côte d'Ivoire in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 June 1992.