

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 34/033/2002

10 December 2002

**Further information on UA 194/02 (AFR 34/008/2002, 25 June 2002) and follow-ups (AFR 34/010/2002, 1 August 2002; AFR 34/013/2002, 30 August 2002; AFR 30/018/2002, 26 September 2002; AFR 34/021/2002, 28 October 2002)) - Fear for safety/Fear of torture or ill-treatment/incommunicado detention/health concern**

**LIBERIA**

**Hassan Bility (m), journalist and human rights defender  
Mohammad Kamara (m)  
Ansumana Kamara (m)  
Sheikh K.M. Sackor (m), human rights defender**

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Following months of national and international pressure, Hassan Bility was released by the Liberian government and handed over to United States embassy officials on 7 December. He has been flown out of the country to an as yet undisclosed destination. Reginald Goodridge, Liberian Minister for Information, Culture, and Tourism, has said that "the US embassy is at liberty to pick up others detained along with Bility, including Sheikh Sackor".

Sheikh K.M. Sackor remains in incommunicado detention, while Mohammad Kamara and Ansumana Kamara are also still detained without charge. The government had announced on 28 October that the detained men were to be released if they agreed to certain conditions, but they remained in detention. The conditions for their release were not publicly disclosed but the detainees were warned that if they failed to meet them they risked rearrest and detention. Sheikh K.M. Sackor has now been held for five months, while Mohammad Kamara and Ansumana Kamara have been held for six months. They were accused of supporting the armed opposition Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). Hassan Bility also faced the same accusation.

On 21 November, the United States Ambassador in Liberia, John W. Blaney, called for the release of Hassan Bility and Sheikh K.M. Sackor, noting that "their incarceration is a violation of international standards of human rights and legal protection, and is contrary to Liberia's basic legal principles".

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

- welcoming the release of Hassan Bility, who had been detained without charge or trial since 24 June;
- pointing out that the authorities have also consistently failed to charge Sheikh K.M. Sackor, Mohammad Kamara and Ansumana Kamara with any offence and bring them before a competent, independent and impartial court, in accordance with international standards of fair trial, and there appears to be no evidence of any recognizably criminal offence against them;
- reminding the government of its undertaking on 28 October to release also Sheikh K.M. Sackor, Mohammad Kamara and Ansumana Kamara;
- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Sheikh K.M. Sackor, Mohammad Kamara and Ansumana Kamara, adding that their release should not be dependent on the intervention of other governments or their removal from the country.

**APPEALS TO:**

***(As fax numbers are unreliable and there is no telegram service in Liberia, please send postal appeals only)***

President of the Republic of Liberia

His Excellency Mr Charles Taylor  
Office of the President  
Executive Mansion  
PO Box 9001, Capitol Hill  
Monrovia, Republic of Liberia  
**Salutation: Dear President Taylor**

Minister of National Defense  
Daniel Chea  
Minister of National Defense  
Ministry of National Defense  
Monrovia, Republic of Liberia  
**Salutation: Dear Mr Chea**

Minister of Justice  
Counsellor L. Koboi Johnson  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
Ashmun St, PO Box 9006  
Monrovia, Republic of Liberia  
**Salutation: Dear Mr Johnson**

Copies to diplomatic representatives of Liberia accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 January 2003.