

PUBLIC

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Fear of torture/Incommunicado detention

30 April 2004

NIGERIA

Buba Galadima (m), opposition leader

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Buba Galadima, who is a member of the Conference of Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP) and chairman of the mobilisation committee of the CNPP. He was arrested at his office on the evening of 29 April, by intelligence officers from the State Security Services in the capital Abuja. He is being held incommunicado detention without charge and is at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Buba Galadima was to be involved in an anti-government protest which was due to take place on 3 May. Protestors were to march against a range of issues such as election rigging, corruption, poverty and crime. Abuja police have refused permission for the march to go ahead as they fear it will be taken over by "hoodlums and miscreants". Some opposition figures have also advised against the march for fear of repression by security forces.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

President Obasanjo came to office in May 1999, with a pledge to reorganise the federal police in order to render them more effective in ensuring the security of Nigerian citizens. The police had been neglected and under-funded by the previous military administration. They had little credibility due to reports of corruption, and their alleged involvement in cases of human rights violations such as extrajudicial executions, torture and the cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of suspects held while in custody during the time of military governments. Despite this pledge, the Nigerian police continue to have an appalling human rights record due to their alleged use of extrajudicial executions, excessive use of force and incidents of deaths in custody.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of opposition leader Buba Galadima, who is being held incommunicado detention;
- calling for Buba Galadima's current location to be made public, for him to be granted access to his family, lawyer and any medical treatment he may require;
- asking the authorities to charge him with a recognisably criminal offence or to release him immediately;
- calling for guarantees that he will not be tortured or ill-treated while in detention, as the Nigerian Constitution states in section 34 that "every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly- (a) no person shall be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment."
- urging that he be held in conditions which conform to international standards for the treatment of prisoners;
- reminding the authorities that the Nigerian Constitution states in section 40 that "every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular he may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests"

APPEALS TO:

Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice
Chief Akinlolu Olujinmi
Attorney-General's Chambers
Federal Secretariat Complex
10th floor, Shehu Shagari Way
PMB 192 Abuja
Nigeria

Telegram: Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Abuja, Nigeria

Fax: +234 9 5235208

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Police Affairs
Chief Broderick Bozimo
New Federal Secretariat complex
Shehu Shagari Way
Abuja, Nigeria

Telegram: Minister of Police Affairs, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Fax: +234 9 5232450

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO)
PO Box 11682,
Ikeja General Post Office
Lagos
Nigeria

Fax: +234 1 493 9324

to diplomatic representatives of Nigeria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 11 June 2004.