

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 57/17/99

23 June 1999

Further information on EXTRA 58/99 (AFR 57/04/99, 7 May 1999) - Fear of torture / Fear for safety / Prisoners of conscience

TOGOTengue Nestor, human rights defender
Gayibor François, human rights defender
Sant'Anna Brice

Tengue Nestor, Gayibor François and Sant'Anna Brice were provisionally released from detention on 18 June 1999.

While Amnesty International welcomes the release of the three men, it is concerned that their release is provisional, and that police investigations into their cases are reported to be continuing. They have been charged with *dénonciation calomnieuse et d'atteinte à l'honneur* (false accusations and libel). While they were in detention, Amnesty International considered all three to be prisoners of conscience, and is calling for all charges against them to be dropped immediately.

The three men were arrested on 3 May 1999 in Lomé, following accusations that they had sent false information about human rights violations committed by government forces to international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International. Their arrests were linked to the publication in May of an Amnesty International report which accused the Togolese government of allowing the security forces to carry out grave human rights violations with impunity before, during and after the 1998 elections.

Nadjombe Antoine Koffi, a Togolese Amnesty International member, who was also arrested in connection with the report on Togo, was also released on 18 June (see UA 112/99, AFR 57/06/99, 18 May 1999, and follow-up, AFR 57/16/99, 23 June 1999).

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in French or in your own language:

- welcoming the provisional release of Tengue Nestor, Gayibor François and Sant'Anna Brice on 18 June 1999;
- expressing concern that they were prisoners of conscience, detained solely because of their human rights work;
- urging the authorities to drop immediately all charges against the three men;
- calling on the authorities to give immediate and unconditional guarantees for the safety of members of Amnesty International and other human rights defenders in Togo;
- urging the authorities to ensure that human rights defenders in Togo are allowed to carry out their work without hindrance.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

Son Excellence

Monsieur le Général Gnassingbé Eyadéma

Président de la République, Palais Présidentiel, Avenue de la Marina,

Lomé, Togo

Telegrams:Président, Lomé, Togo

Faxes:+ 228 21 68 12 (attention of Président de la République)

Salutation:Son Excellence / Your Excellency

Minister of the Interior

Général Sizing Akawilou Wala

Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité,

Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité, Rue Albert Sarraut, Lomé, Togo

Telegrams:Ministre l'Intérieur, Lomé, Togo

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister of Justice

Général Seyi Mémène (ancien ministre de l'Intérieur)

Garde des Sceaux, Ministre de la Justice, Ministère de la Justice, Avenue de la Marina, Rue Colonel de Roux, Lamé, Togo

Telegrams:Ministre Justice, Lamé, Togo

Salutation:Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Public Prosecutor

Monsieur Gbandjaba Dabré

Procureur Général, BP 342, Lomé, Togo

Telegrams:Procureur Général, Lomé, Togo

Salutation: Monsieur le Procureur Général / Dear Mr Gbandjaba

COPIES TO:

Crocodile (Newspaper), BP 60087 Lomé, Togo

Togo presse, BP 891 Lomé, Togo

and to diplomatic representatives of Togo accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 August 1999.