

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 247/90 (AFR 60/09/90, 15 June 1990, AFR 60/07/90
15 August, AFR 60/09/90 17 October) - Death in Detention/Legal Concern

BURKINA FASO: Sixteen students, including:

Jean-Clément BAGRE
Sie Souleymane COULIBALY
Boukary DABO
Seni KONANDA

All students detained in May 1990 who remained in detention were released by early May 1991. Among those released were some eight students who had been forcibly conscripted into the armed forces.

Amnesty International considered that the students were prisoners of conscience. They had been arrested following student protests and demonstrations at the University of Ouagadougou. None was charged with any offence and they were denied visits from their families and from their lawyers.

In October 1990 Amnesty International learned that one of the students, Boukary Dabo, a medical student in the seventh year of his studies, had died in detention. It appeared that his death was probably due to ill-treatment.

It was not clear, however, whether he died shortly after his arrest in May 1990 or after several months in incommunicado detention. Despite calls by Amnesty International and a local human rights organization for an investigation into the circumstances of his death, no official inquiry is known to have taken place.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Airmail letters, in FRENCH if possible:

- welcoming the fact that all students detained since May 1990 were finally released by May 1991, but expressing concern that some of them were held without charge or trial for almost a year;
- repeating your concern about the death in custody of Boukary Dabo and requesting that an official investigation be set up, which should be headed by an independent and impartial figure, such as a judge, to establish the cause of Boukary Dabo's death, and that its findings be made public;
- urging that, if members of the security forces are found to have been involved in ill-treating Boukary Dabo, they be prosecuted;
- calling on the government to take immediate action to ensure that detainees cannot be tortured, in particular by ending the practice of prolonged incommunicado detention.

APPEALS TO:

Son Excellence Capitaine Blaise Compaoré
Président du Front Populaire
Chef de l'Etat et Chef du Gouvernement
Présidence du Faso
BP 7031
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Monsieur le Capitaine Gilbert Diendéré
Secrétaire chargé de la Défense et de
la sécurité
Comité exécutif du Front populaire
Secrétariat général du gouvernement
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Monsieur André Roch Kaboré
Ministre d'Etat
Secrétariat général du gouvernement
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

COPIES TO:

Monsieur Alidou Ouedraogo
Président
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01 BP 584
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and to diplomatic representatives of Burkina Faso in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat if sending appeals after 31 July 1991.