

EXTERNAL

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MEDICAL CONCERN

©Moussa HABOUBA
CAMEROON

Amnesty International is appealing to the Cameroonian authorities on behalf of Moussa Habouba who has been held without charge or trial in administrative detention for more than six years. He is now reported to be in ill-health and in need of medical care. Moussa Habouba, who is married with one child, was a representative of Cameroon Airlines in Europe at the time of his arrest in April 1984 in connection with an unsuccessful coup attempt.

On 6 April 1984 members of the security forces attacked the presidential palace and key installations in the capital, Yaoundé, in an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government of President Paul Biya. Over 1,000 people, both soldiers and civilians, were subsequently arrested. Moussa Habouba was recalled to Cameroon from Paris, where he was based, and was arrested at Douala airport immediately upon his return on 30 April 1984. Some 170 people were convicted after trials held *in camera* before military tribunals; 51 of them were executed. Many were acquitted but not released and others, including Moussa Habouba, were never charged with any offence or brought to trial.

In mid-1990 Moussa Habouba was transferred from Nkondengui prison in Yaoundé, where he had spent six years in particularly harsh conditions, to the Central Prison in Bafoussam, Western Province, some 200 kilometres northwest of Yaoundé. According to reports, he was admitted to hospital in Bafoussam but was returned to prison after a short time. Recent information indicates that he is suffering from serious hypertension and malaria and is not receiving medical care. Amnesty International is calling on the Cameroonian authorities to ensure that he receives immediate medical attention.

Although in April 1990 President Biya announced that all those still detained in connection with the 1984 coup attempt would be released, at least 77 are still held despite further promises by President Biya in July and November 1990 that all political prisoners were to be freed. At least 61 continue to serve prison sentences imposed after unfair trials, and some 16 others are held in administrative detention either after being acquitted in 1984 of all charges relating to the coup or, like Moussa Habouba, without having been charged or tried.

No justification for Moussa Habouba's continued detention has been provided by the Cameroonian authorities. Amnesty International believes that he is a prisoner of conscience and is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

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To: Medical professionals
 From: Medical Office / Research Department - Africa
 Date: 22 January 1991

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

**Moussa HABOUBA
 CAMEROON**

Keywords

Theme: ill-health/detention without charge or trial

Summary

Moussa Habouba has been held without charge or trial since his arrest in April 1984 in connection with an unsuccessful coup attempt. He is currently detained in Bafoussam prison, Mifi Department, in the west of Cameroon and is reported to be suffering from both hypertension (*une tension artérielle*) and malaria (*le paludisme*). He is not receiving medication or any other medical attention.

Recommended Actions

Letters are requested from medical professionals, where possible in French, to the Cameroonian President, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Health, the prison governor and the Prefet (*Préfet*) of Mifi Department whose addresses are given below. Letters should:

- express concern about reports that Moussa Habouba, who has been held without charge or trial since April 1984, is suffering from serious hypertension and malaria for which he is not receiving adequate medical attention
- seek information about his current state of health, assurances that he has now had access to a doctor and information about the medical care available to him in Bafoussam prison
 - express concern that Moussa Habouba has been held for more than six years without charge or trial and that the government has provided no justification for his continued detention
 - urge his immediate and unconditional release on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience,

imprisoned for his non-violent political opinions

Addresses

Son Excellence Monsieur Paul Biya
Président de la République
Palais de la Présidence
1000 Yaoundé, Cameroun

Téléx: 8207 PRESID RN, 8230 PRESID RN, 8595 PRESID B RN
Télégrams: Président Biya, Yaoundé, Cameroun

M. Gilbert Andzé Tsoungui
Ministre de l'Administration territoriale
Ministère de l'Administration territoriale
1000 Yaoundé, Cameroun

Téléx: 8503 MINAT RN, 8268 MINAT RN
Télégrams: Ministre Tsoungui, Yaoundé, Cameroun

Professeur Joseph Mbéde
Ministre de la Santé
Ministère de la Santé
1000 Yaoundé 4, Cameroun

Télégrams: Ministre Santé, Yaoundé, Cameroun

Monsieur le Régisseur
Prison centrale
Bafoussam, Cameroun

Télégrams: M. le Régisseur, Prison centrale, Bafoussam, Cameroun

Monsieur Lambert Mèke
Préfet du Département de la Mifi
La Préfecture
6000 Bafoussam, Cameroun

Télégrams to: M. Mèke, Préfecture. Bafoussam, Cameroun