

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 22/02/97

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Further information on UA 226/96 (AFR 22/04/96, 27 September 1996) - Fear of torture / health concern

CONGO Pierre Otto Mbongo, businessman

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Pierre Otto Mbongo, who suffers from hypertension and diabetes, was moved from his place of detention to hospital in Brazzaville on 12 December 1996 at the request of his doctor. His health was reported to have significantly deteriorated and he was believed to be suffering from heart pains. In January 1997 he was flown to South Africa for further medical examinations and treatment.

Pierre Otto Mbongo, a businessman and supporter of former president Denis Sassou Nguesso, was being sued for bankruptcy prior to his arrest in September 1996 and had been due to appear in court on 21 October 1996. He has not yet been tried and it is not clear whether he will be returned to detention or brought to trial on his return to Congo.

As reported in UA 226/96 Amnesty International was concerned for Pierre Otto Mbongo's health after he was moved on 18 September from Brazzaville central prison to an undisclosed place of detention. The organization had called for his whereabouts to be revealed and for him to have immediate access to a lawyer and doctor.

No further action is required. Many thanks to all those who took part.