

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

**AI Index: AFR 31/08/93**

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**15 June 1993**

**Further information on UA 148/93 (AFR 31/01/93), 7 May 1993 - Legal Concern**

**COTE D'IVOIRE:Chantal LEBA (female), and over 40 other students at risk of prosecution under new and controversial legislation**

All 44 students arrested on 19 April 1993 were provisionally released on 22 May 1993. However, the charges against them have not been dropped and they still face prosecution under an unjust law introduced in July 1992 to curtail their internationally-recognized rights of freedom of association and expression. The students, some or all of whom may have been prisoners of conscience, were held at the Maison d'Arrêt et de Correction d'Abidjan (MACA), where conditions are reportedly harsh.

The 44 students, including former prisoner of conscience Chantal Leba, were arrested on 19 April 1993, following a public meeting called by the Fédération estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire (FESCI), Ivorian Federation of Students and School Pupils, at the University of Cocody in the capital, Abidjan, which became violent when it was broken up by the security forces. Another student leader, Anganor Gbalou, who was arrested on 9 May 1993 and charged in connection with the same events was also released on 22 May 1993.

Although no evidence has been produced to suggest they were involved in any acts of violence or vandalism, the students remain charged with physical assault and wilful destruction of public property and vehicles under a new law which is being used for the first time since its introduction in July 1992. Law No. 92-464, relating to the repression of certain forms of violence, provides for the imprisonment of anyone who organizes or participates in a meeting which becomes violent, whether or not they have participated in or are responsible for inciting those acts. Conviction under this law can carry a sentence of up to 20 years' imprisonment.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/airmail letters either in French, English or in your own language:**

- welcoming the provisional release of the students arrested in connection with events at the University of Cocody in the capital, Abidjan, on 19 April 1993 but expressing concern that some of the students, including Chantal Leba, were reportedly severely beaten at the time of their arrest;

- expressing concern that they still face prosecution under a law adopted in July 1992 which curtails internationally-recognized rights of freedom of association and expression by providing for the prosecution of people who are deemed responsible for acts of violence with which they may not have been

directly involved;

- calling on the authorities to drop these charges against the students.

Page 2 of FU 148/93

**APPEALS TO**

1. President:

Son Excellence Félix Houphouët-Boigny  
Président de la République  
La Présidence, Boulevard Clozel, Abidjan  
République de Côte d'Ivoire

**Telegrams: Président Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

**Telexes: 23754 PRESID CI or  
23169 PRELIT CI**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President**

2. Prime Minister:

M. Alassane Ouattara  
Premier Ministre  
Le Primature, Abidjan  
République de Côte d'Ivoire

**Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Ministre / Dear Prime Minister**

3. Minister of Justice:

Mme Jacqueline Lohoues-Oble  
Ministre de la Justice  
Ministère de la Justice  
Boulevard Angoulvant, BP V107, Abidjan  
République de Côte d'Ivoire

**Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

**Telexes: 23752 MINAFET CI (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Salutation: Madame le Ministre / Dear Minister**

4. Minister of Interior:

M. Emile-Constant Bombet  
Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité  
Ministère de l'Intérieure et de la Sécurité  
Boulevard Angoulvant, Abidjan  
République de Côte d'Ivoire

**Telegrams: Ministre Intérieur, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO the following newspapers:**

1) La Voie  
17 BP 656  
Abidjan 17  
République de Côte d'Ivoire

2) Fraternité Matin  
01 BP 1807  
Abidjan 01  
République de Côte d'Ivoire

and to diplomatic representatives of Côte d'Ivoire accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 July 1993.