

PUBLIC

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14 January 1999

**Further information on 315/98 (AFR 38/08/98, 22 December 1998) - Held incommunicado/fear of ill-treatment/prisoners of conscience**

**MAURITANIA** Ahmed Ould Daddah, opposition party leader,  
Mohameden Ould Babah, opposition party leader,  
Maître Mohameden Ould Ichiddou, human rights lawyer

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The three men named above remain under *résidence surveillée*, house arrest, outside of any legal process, in the remote town of Boumdeid. They are now reportedly under constant armed guard in a room so small that they cannot all lie down at the same moment, and they are denied access to news media. Between 16 December 1998 and 3 January 1999 they were allowed out to exercise only once. After 17 days in incommunicado detention, they were each allowed a visit by one family member. A delegation from the Mauritanian Bar Association had previously travelled to Boumdeid, but was denied access to the prisoners.

Boumdeid is remote, making access to medical facilities difficult. This raises concerns about the health of the prisoners, particularly Ahmed Ould Daddah, who has a heart condition.

There have been numerous demonstrations in the capital, Nouakchott, demanding the release of the three prisoners. These have been suppressed by the security forces and several women have reportedly been injured.

Maître Ichiddou is a supporter (not a member, as stated in UA 315/98) of the *Union des Forces Démocratiques - Ere Nouvelle* (UFD-EN), Union of Democratic Forces - New Era party, and he is a human rights lawyer.

The UFD-EN has cited appeals from Urgent Action participants in its daily electronic bulletin to back up its campaign for the release of the prisoners.

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

- reiterating concern that Ahmed Ould Daddah, Mohameden Ould Babah and Maître Mohameden Ould Ichiddou remain under house arrest, with no legal basis, for their non-violent political activities;
- urging that as a minimum they are immediately allowed to consult doctors and lawyers of their choice and granted regular access to their families;
- stating that Amnesty International believes them to be prisoners of conscience and urging that they are immediately and unconditionally released;
- urging that the security forces respect the right of those demonstrating for the prisoners' release to exercise their right to freedom of expression and association;
- reminding the government of Mauritania of its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Article 19: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression" and Article 20: "Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association".

**APPEALS TO:**

Son Excellence  
Monsieur Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya  
Président de la République  
La Présidence - BP 184  
NOUAKCHOTT - Mauritania

**Telegrams: Le President, Nouakchott, Mauritania**  
**Telexes: 5580 PRIM MTN**  
**Faxes: +222 2 56890 / +222 2 52636**  
**Salutation: Monsieur Le President / Dear Mr President**

Monsieur Cheikh El Avia Ould Mohamed Khouna  
Ministre des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères,  
BP 230  
NOUAKCHOTT - Mauritania

**Telegrams: Ministre des Affaires étrangères, Nouakchott, Mauritania**  
**Faxes: +222 2 52860**  
**Salutation: Monsieur Le Ministre / Dear Minister**

Monsieur Dah Ould Abdel Jelil  
Ministre de l'Intérieur, Postes et Télécommunications  
Ministère de l'Intérieur  
BP 195  
NOUAKCHOTT  
Mauritania

**Telegrams: Ministre de l'Intérieur, Nouakchott, Mauritania**  
**Faxes: +222 2 52020**  
**Salutation: Monsieur Le Ministre / Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

*La Tribune* (newspaper), BP 6227, Nouakchott, Mauritania  
**Faxes: +222 2 50209**

Union des Forces Démocratiques, BP 5290, Nouakchott, Mauritania  
**Faxes: +222 2 56570**  
**E-mail: mailbox@ufd-en.org**

Monsieur le Préfet  
Boumdeid  
Mauritania

and to diplomatic representatives of Mauritania accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 February 1999.

***"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression"***

Article 19, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

***"Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association"***

Article 20, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

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