

PUBLIC

AI Index

14 October 2004

Further Information on UA 284/04 (AFR 38/003/2004, 8 October 2004) Fear of torture or ill-treatment/incommunicado detention New Concern: Prisoners of conscience

MAURITANIA **Abderrahmane Ould Mini (m)**
 Moustafa Ould Cheibany (m)
 Cheikh Ould Abdallahi (m)
 Dahanna Ould Sidi Mahmoud Ould Salah (m)
 Amar Ould Amar Jowda (m)
New Names: **Saleh Ould Hannena (m)**
 Ahmedou Ould Mbareck (m)
 Jemil Ould Mansour (m)
 Cheikh Mohamed El Hacem Ould Dedew (m)
 El Moctar Ould Mohamed Moussa (m)
 At least ten others

In June 2003, the government of President Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya defeated a military coup, and scores of army officers were arrested. Amnesty International has received further information about some of the men accused of involvement in the military coup and subsequent alleged coups in August and September 2004. These men are being held incommunicado, and are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Former Military Commander Saleh Ould Hannena, who is the main suspect in the June 2003 defeated coup, was reportedly arrested on 9 October 2004 in the town of Rosso near the border with Senegal. He had been excluded from the army in 2000 after he apparently wrote a statement denouncing the corruption within the army. He is being held incommunicado as is Army Captain Ahmedou Ould Mbareck who was also arrested on 9 October.

Former prisoner of conscience (POC) Jemil Ould Mansour, Imam (religious leader) Cheikh Mohamed El Hacem Ould Dedew and Former Ambassador El Moctar Ould Mohamed Moussa were arrested in Nouakchott on 10 October 2004. On the same day, the authorities issued a statement in which they claimed that the three men were arrested following an alleged inquiry into the recruitment of young people, who were said to be trained in the North of Cote d'Ivoire to perform terrorist acts in Mauritania. Amnesty International considers the three men to be prisoners of conscience, who are detained on the basis of false accusations and calls for their immediate and unconditional release.

Jemil Ould Mansour is the Vice Chair of the opposition *Parti de la convergence démocratique* (PCD), Party of the Democratic Convergence which was created in early 2004 and has so far been denied legal recognition by the Ministry of Interior. He had previously been arrested in May 2003 along with fellow POC Cheikh Mohamed El Hacem Ould Dedew.

On 3 June 2003, they were both charged with "plotting against the constitutional regime and attack against public order (*"complot contre le régime constitutionnel et incitation à l'atteinte à l'ordre public intérieur et extérieur de l'État"*). Jemil Ould Mansour escaped from prison during the defeated coup on 8 June 2003 and sought refuge in Belgium. He was re-arrested in January 2004 upon return to Mauritania and held for two weeks prior to his recent arrest in October 2004. Cheikh Mohamed El Hacem Ould Dedew was provisionally released in August 2003, prior to his latest arrest.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in French, Arabic or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of the ten men named above and at least ten others, detained incommunicado since the latest alleged coup attempt in September 2004;
- seeking assurances that the detainees will not be tortured or ill-treated, especially following reports that one of them has allegedly been tortured;
- calling for them to be given regular access to their families, lawyers and any medical attention they may need;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the three prisoners of conscience, Jemil Ould Mansour, Cheikh Mohamed El Hacen Ould Dedew, and El Moctar Ould Mohamed Moussa who were arrested on falsified charges on 10 October 2004;
- urging the authorities to ensure that all Mauritanian law enforcement agencies respect internationally agreed procedures for arrest and detention, and that they give lawyers and human rights organisations access to all places of detention, and to take immediate action against any member of the security forces suspected of human rights abuses.

APPEALS TO: (It may be very difficult to send faxes to Mauritania.)

Attorney General

Procureur Général près de la Cour suprême

M. Abdelrahman Ould Abdi

Palais de Justice

Nouakchott, Mauritania

Fax: + 222 525 5194

Salutation: Monsieur le Procureur Général / Dear Attorney General

President of the Republic

Président de la République

Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya

Présidence de la République

B.P. 184

Nouakchott, Mauritania

Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear Mr President

Minister for the Interior, Post and Telecommunications

Ministre de l'Intérieur, des Postes et Télécommunications

M. Mohamed Ghaly Ould Chérif Ahmed

B.P. 195

Nouakchott, Mauritania

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Minister of Justice

Ministre de la Justice

M. Diabira Bakary

B.P. 350

Nouakchott, Mauritania

Fax: + 222 525 7002 (if someone answers, say "je voudrais envoyer un fax, s'il vous plaît - I'd like to send a fax, please")

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

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 November 2004