

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Torture/Extrajudicial Execution

25 March 1993

- SIERRA LEONE - Ernest Allen, Permanent Secretary at the Department of Defence
- Fatmata Binta Jalloh (female), businesswoman
 - Foday Kallon, employee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 - Rosaline Kamara (female), an official at the Sierra Leone Embassy in Russia
 - Ernest Bai Koroma, Managing Director of Reliance Insurance and Transport Corporation of Sierra Leone
 - Bockarie Samura

and at least one other

The six people named above and at least one other person were arrested on about 18 March 1993 on suspicion of involvement in a plot to overthrow the government. They have not been charged with any offence and are detained incommunicado.

Amnesty International is concerned that they may be subjected to torture or ill-treatment, or may be executed without any trial or after a parody of a trial before a special military court.

The seven people are apparently suspected of involvement in a plot to overthrow the government of Captain Valentine Strasser which seized power in a military coup in April 1992. On 11 March 1993 the government said it had uncovered a conspiracy to purchase arms and missiles from Ukraine and accused former President J. S. Momoh, currently in exile in neighbouring Guinea, of plotting to return to power by force. The detainees are being held incommunicado at the police headquarters in Freetown, the capital, and have been denied access to families and lawyers.

The detainees are held without charge or trial. Following the coup in April 1992, emergency legislation was introduced which gave the security forces unlimited powers of administrative detention without charge or trial and specifically prevented challenges against such detention in the courts. Over 150 people, including more than 40 former government ministers and officials, have been detained since April 1992 and are held without charge or trial at Pademba Road Prison in Freetown.

On 29 December 1992, 26 people were executed after grossly unfair summary trials before a special military tribunal or possibly after no trials at all - some after being severely tortured. Three others were executed extrajudicially.

They were alleged to have been involved in two separate conspiracies against the government in November and December 1992. Despite subsequent evidence that no coup attempts in fact took place, several detainees remain in incommunicado detention without charge or trial, accused of involvement in these alleged conspiracies (see UA 416/92, AFR 51/05/92, 31 December 1992 and follow-ups AFR 51/01/93, 11 January 1993 and AFR 51/02/93, 29 January 1993).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the detention without charge or trial of those named above in connection with an alleged conspiracy against the government;
- seeking information about the charges against them;
- expressing concern that they too might be subjected to torture or ill-treatment or executed summarily after unfair trials, as were 29 people in late December 1992;

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- urging that they be given immediate access to lawyers and families, and to be either charged promptly in open court with recognizably criminal offences and brought to trial with full rights of defence, or else released without delay.

APPEALS TO

1) Captain Valentine E.M. Strasser
Chairman, Supreme Council of State
National Provisional Ruling Council
State House

Independence Avenue

Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telegrams: Captain Strasser, Chairman NPRC, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telexes: 3230

Salutation: Dear Captain Strasser

2) Lieutenant Solomon A.J. Musa
Deputy Chairman
National Provisional Ruling Council
State House

Independence Avenue

Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telegrams: Lieutenant Musa, Vice-Chairman NPRC, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telexes: 3230

Salutation: Dear Lieutenant Musa

3) Lieutenant Karifa Kargbo
Secretary General
National Provisional Ruling Council
State House

Independence Avenue

Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telegrams: Lieutenant Kargbo, Secretary General NPRC, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telexes: 3230

Salutation: Dear Lieutenant Kargbo

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Captain Julius Maada Bio

Liaison Officer for Finance, Foreign Affairs & Information

Supreme Council of State

State House

Independence Avenue
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Human rights organization:
Society for the Preservation
of Human Rights in Sierra Leone
PMB 915
Freetown
Sierra Leone

Newspapers:

New Citizen, 5 Hannah Benka-Coker Street, Brookfields, Freetown, Sierra
Leone

Daily Mail, PO Box 53, Freetown, Sierra Leone

The Vision, 60 Old Railway Line, Brookfields, Freetown, Sierra Leone

and to diplomatic representatives of Sierra Leone accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 May 1993.