



STOP TORTURE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ILLUSTRATIVE CASES

OVERVIEW

Alfreda Disbarro

Female, 31 - Philippines

Criminal suspect on drug charges, she is fighting for police accountability for her torture and effective investigation into her torture.

Ali Aarrass

Male, Belgian-Moroccan national, 52

Security suspect, extradited from Spain to Morocco despite risk of torture, he is fighting for effective investigation into the torture he suffered.

Claudia Medina Tamariz

Female, 33 - Mexico

Criminal suspect, awaiting trial but living at her home. She is fighting for an investigation to be opened into the torture she suffered and adequate medical exams to be carried out.

Dilorom Abdukadirova

Female, 49, - Uzbekistan

A prisoner of conscience, serving an 18-year sentence in Tashkent Women's Prison, Uzbekistan after a trial that violated international fair trial standards, she was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in pre-trial detention.

Moses Akatugba

Male, 25 - Nigeria

Arrested by the Nigerian army at 16 years old for robbery. After eight years in prison, Moses was sentenced to death by hanging. His claims of torture have still not been investigated.



MEXICO: CLAUDIA MEDINA TAMARIZ



NAME: CLAUDIA MEDINA TAMARIZ

GENDER: FEMALE

DATE OF BIRTH: 25 JULY 1980

MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED TO ISAIAS FLORES PINEDA. THEY HAVE THREE CHILDREN.

OCCUPATION: SALES PERSON (HOMEOPATHIC PRODUCTS SOLD DOOR-TO-DOOR).

LIVES: VERACRUZ CITY, MEXICO

On 7 August 2012 at 3am, navy soldiers broke into Claudia Medina's home in Veracruz City. Her hands were tied and she was blind-folded before being put in a pick-up truck and taken to the local naval base.

Claudia was accused of being a member of a violent criminal gang which she denied. According to her testimony, she was given electric shocks before being beaten and kicked. Afterwards, she was tied to a chair and left in the scorching afternoon sun.

The next day Claudia was blindfolded and transferred with a group of other detainees to the Federal Attorney General's Office. When the blind-fold was removed, she realised her husband and brother-in-law had also been arrested. A prosecutor interrogated Claudia and a marine pressured her into signing a statement that she wasn't allowed to read. Later that day, state authorities presented Claudia and the other detainees in front of the media, announcing the arrest of dangerous criminals caught in the act of committing serious offences.

On 13 August, when she was officially presented to the court (Juzgado Tercero de Distrito en Veracruz) she retracted the statement she had been forced to sign in front of the prosecutor and informed the court about her treatment and the circumstances of her detention. All charges against her were dropped, except one - carrying an illegal weapon. Claudia was released on bail pending the outcome of judicial proceedings.

When Claudia testified in court in September 2012 regarding the one charge that remained, she again detailed the torture she had suffered. The judge ordered the Federal Attorney General's Office to investigate the allegations.

To date, despite repeated requests from Claudia, including a complaint to the National Human Rights Commission, no-one has been held to account. The Federal Attorney General's Office is yet to perform its specialist medical and psychological assessment based on the UN-backed Istanbul Protocol in order to document the torture that Claudia suffered and the consequences it has had.



NIGERIA: MOSES AKATUGBA



NAME: MOSES AKATUGBA
GENDER: MALE
DATE OF BIRTH: 29 APRIL 1989
MARITAL STATUS: SINGLE
OCCUPATION: STUDENT
CURRENT LOCATION: DELTA STATE (OKERE PRISON, WARRI)

Moses was awaiting the results of his secondary school exams when his life changed forever. On 27 November 2005, the Nigerian army arrested 16 year old Moses and charged him with stealing three phones and various other communication related items.

Moses describes being shot in the hand and soldiers beating him on the head and back during his arrest. He was initially held at the army barracks, where he said soldiers showed him a corpse and when he was unable to identify the dead man, he was beaten.

After being transferred to Epkan police station in Delta State he suffered further torture and ill-treatment. Moses told one human rights defender that the police severely beat him with machetes and batons; tied and hanged him for several hours in interrogation rooms and used pliers to pull-out his finger and toe nails in order to force him to sign two confessions.

Moses' trial took place at the High Court in Effurun, Delta State. The investigating officer failed to show up and Moses was convicted solely on the basis of the victim's statement (which Moses' counsel claims to be full of inconsistencies) and the two confessions Moses made under duress.

After eight years in prison, Moses was sentenced to death by hanging. Moses Akatugba was never given the chance to challenge the Court for the alleged acts of torture suffered during his detention. Today he sees his family just twice a month, as he sits and waits on death row.

The pain of torture is unbearable. I never thought I would be alive till this day. The pain I went through in the hands of the officers was unimaginable. In my whole life, I have never been subjected to such inhuman treatment. (Moses, February 2014)

UZBEKISTAN: DILOROM ABDUKADIROVA



Name: Dilorom Abdukadirova

Gender: Female

Date of Birth: 19 August 1965

Marital status: Married. Estranged from her husband.

Family: Four sons. In 2005, her eldest son, Mirodil, worked as a hairdresser. The second eldest son, Mirolim, was a shoemaker. The third and fourth sons, Zuhirdin and Muhirdin, were at school.

Occupation: Farmer

Dilorom Abdukadirova worked with her husband and mother-in-law on their small family farm in Andizhan growing and selling vegetables. On the morning of 13 May 2005, she joined thousands at a protest in Andizhan to voice her concerns about the economy. She had heard the president would be there. Security forces fired on the mostly peaceful protesters and killed hundreds of people. Dilorom fled and reached the Kyrgyzstan border about 25 kilometres away. Dilorom obtained an Australian refugee visa and arrived in Australia in February 2006.

Desperate to be reunited with her family, Dilorom returned to Uzbekistan in January 2010. The Uzbekistani authorities had repeatedly assured her that nothing would happen if she returned home.

When Dilorom arrived at Tashkent airport, she was immediately detained for four days before being allowed to return to her family in Andizhan. In March 2010, she was detained again and charged with attempting to overthrow the constitutional order and illegally exiting Uzbekistan. She was kept in a cell at the Andizhan police department for two weeks, without access to a lawyer or her family.

Her trial took place in April 2010 at the Andizhan Regional Criminal Court. Family members said she looked emaciated and had bruises on her face. They were also shocked to see her without her hijab. As a devout Muslim the family doesn't believe she would have removed her head scarf by choice.

Dilorom told her family that she had gone to the protest on that morning because she believed the President would be there to listen to people's concerns. When the shooting began, she panicked and fled for safety with the rest of the crowd. After an unfair trial, Dilorom was found guilty and sentenced to 10 years and two months in prison. Her family wrote to the authorities to complain about Dilorom's treatment in detention.

In 2012, following a closed trial inside Tashkent Women's Prison, Dilorom's sentence was extended by eight years after she had been accused of allegedly breaking prison rules. Today Dilorom remains in prison, where her family fears she is again being ill-treated.

MOROCCO/WESTERN SAHARA: ALI AARRASS



NAME: ALI AARRASS

GENDER: MALE

DATE OF BIRTH: 4 MARCH 1962

MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED TO HOURIA. THEY HAVE AN 8YR OLD DAUGHTER.

OCCUPATION: COFFEE SHOP OWNER

NATIONALITY: BELGIAN-MOROCCAN

BACKGROUND: BORN IN MELILLA, SPAIN. HE MOVED TO BELGIUM WHEN HE WAS 15YRS OLD AND BECAME A BELGIAN NATIONAL IN 1989. IN 2005, HE RETURNED TO MELILLA WITH HIS WIFE TO BE CLOSE TO HIS AGEING FATHER.

In 2006, the Spanish authorities investigated Ali Aarrass for terrorism - they found no evidence against him. However, two years later Moroccan authorities requested his extradition on fresh terrorism charges. On 14 December 2010, Ali was extradited to Morocco despite UN Human Rights Committee warnings that he was at risk of torture and unfair trial.

After being forcibly removed to Morocco, Ali said Moroccan intelligence held him in secret detention for 12 days in Témara, near the capital Rabat. He described being beaten on the soles of his feet, electric shocks to his testicles, being suspended for long periods from the wrists and being burnt with cigarettes.

Ali was then formally arrested by Moroccan police and transferred to Salé II prison. Other prisoners have described being shocked by the torture marks on Ali's body and how traumatised he was when he arrived. The Moroccan authorities ignored the signs.

On 19 November 2011, Ali was convicted of the illegal use of weapons and participation in a group intending to commit acts of terrorism. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison, reduced to 12 years on appeal. His conviction was based solely on statements extracted by torture.

From 10 July - 7 August 2013 Ali went on hunger strike to protest ill-treatment by prison authorities. He ended the strike following a visit by Morocco's National Council for Human Rights.

Ali remains in Salé II prison. He describes continued ill-treatment by members of the prison administration including being forced to strip naked in his cell and being prevented from sleeping during the night. To-date, the Moroccan authorities have failed to adequately investigate his torture despite multiple complaints from his family, his lawyers and Amnesty.

"Experiencing injustice, and being deprived of one's freedom causes great psychological and physical damage. But what is even more morally devastating is being abandoned, forgotten, when relatives and friends give up the fight, while one is walled in and helpless - those on whom one counts on to support us and fight for justice to be done. I thank God this is not my case. But I urge you to think of all those who are in that situation, victims of arbitrary detention who are abandoned by all." (Ali Aarrass)

PHILIPPINES: ALFREDA DISBARRO



NAME: ALFREDA DISBARRO
GENDER: FEMALE
DATE OF BIRTH: JANUARY 29 1982
MARITAL STATUS: SINGLE
FAMILY: ONE DAUGHTER

The account below is based on Alfreda's testimony and sworn affidavit.

Early-evening on 3 October 2013, single mother Alfreda Disbarro was at an internet cafe near her house in Barnagay San Antonio, Paranaque. She states that she was approached by two police officers and unofficial police auxiliary, who accused her of being a drug pusher. Alfreda vehemently denied the allegation and voluntarily emptied her pockets revealing just a mobile phone and a five-peso coin. Without warning, the unofficial police auxiliary pointed a gun at her while the police officer punched her in the chest. She was handcuffed and taken to the Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU) at the Paranaque Police headquarters.

On arrival at police headquarters, Alfreda was frisked by a male unofficial police auxiliary. Her hands were tied behind her back and she was taken to a room with five other detainees.

Two hours later a senior police officer took Alfreda to a kitchen. Attempting to force an admission of guilt, the senior police officer pinned Alfreda against a wall. He repeatedly punched her in the stomach and face, hit her with a club, poked his fingers in her eyes, slapped her, forced her to eat a mop and banged her head against the wall. One of the arresting officers took-over beating Alfreda using his fists and a wooden stick.

On 4 October, Alfreda was taken to the Barangay Hall of Barangay San Antonio where police produced three one-hundred-dollar bills and a sachet of drugs. Alfreda protested her innocence.

Alfreda was woken the next morning and told to sign a blank sheet of paper, she was also photographed with the money and the sachet of drugs. Later Alfreda was taken to a women's detention facility. She was in such pain in the days that followed the beatings that she couldn't eat, had difficulty breathing and kept vomiting.

Alfreda went before the Prosecutor on 8 October charged with the sale and possession of illegal drugs but was not asked about what the police had done to her.

Following a complaint by Alfreda's sister to the Commission on Human Rights, Alfreda underwent a medical examination on 10 October. The Doctor found numerous bruises and marks on Alfreda's body that had been inflicted in the past 7-14 days. The Doctor concluded that the injuries had been caused by a blunt, hard object and recommended a Scan to check for internal injuries.

Alfreda is currently detained in a local city Jail and is awaiting trial on the charges she faces.