

Distrib: PG/SC  
To: Health professionals  
CAFRAN and Chad coordinators [for information and optional action]  
From: Medical Office / Africa Regional Program

## **MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION**

### **Ngarléjy Yorongar le Moïban CHAD**

Theme: POC / ill-health / lack of adequate medical care

#### **Summary**

Amnesty International is concerned that Ngarléjy Yorongar le Moïban, who is serving a three year sentence in NDjaména Central Prison in Chad for defamation, is suffering from malaria and typhoid fever and is not being provided with adequate medical care in prison. Since last week, Ngarléjy Yorongar has not been allowed to receive visits from his lawyers and members of his family or to see his doctor. Amnesty International considers the charges against Ngarléjy Yorongar le Moïban to be politically motivated and is calling for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience.

#### **Recommended Actions**

Appeals are requested, preferably in French, from health professionals to the addresses below:

- o introducing yourself as a member of Amnesty International's health professional network
- o explaining that Amnesty International considers Ngarléjy Yorongar a prisoner of conscience solely detained for peacefully expressing his political views, and calling for his immediate and unconditional release
- o expressing concern at reports that Ngarléjy Yorongar is suffering from serious health problems
- o asking for details on whatever medical care Ngarléjy Yorongar is receiving in NDjaména Central Prison and urging the authorities to provide him with adequate medical care and to transfer him to hospital if necessary in accordance with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners [Rule 22 (2)]
- o urging the authorities to abide by the international standards that Chad has signed and ratified, in particular Article 7 of the ICCPR [No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment] and Article 16 [2] of the African Charter [States [...] shall take the necessary measures to protect the health of their people and to ensure that they receive medical attention when they are sick].
- o urging the authorities to grant Ngarléjy Yorongar access to his lawyer, his doctor and members of his family

If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of dispatch of your letter, please send a follow up letter seeking a response. Please check with the medical team if you are sending appeals after 18 December 1998, and send copies of any replies you do receive to the International Secretariat (att: medical team).

**ADDRESSES [Fax tones to Chad are sometimes difficult to obtain; if you experience problems, please keep trying at different times of the day]**

Président Idriss Déby

Président de la République  
Présidence de la République  
BP 74 NDjaména, République du Tchad  
Fax: +235.51.4501  
Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President

Monsieur Limane Mahamat  
Ministre de la Justice, Garde des Sceaux  
Ministère de la Justice  
NDjaména, République du Tchad  
Fax: +235.52.5885  
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Directeur de l'Administration Pénitentiaire /  
Director of the Prison Service  
Ministère de la Justice  
NDjaména, République du Tchad  
Fax: +235.52.5885  
Salutation: Monsieur le Directeur / Dear Director

**COPIES TO:**

Minister of Health  
Monsieur Kedallah Younous HAMIT  
Ministre de la Santé Publique  
Ministère de la Santé Publique  
N'Djaména, Tchad

Président de l'Ordre des Médecins  
H\_pital Central de N'Djaména  
N'Djaména, Tchad  
Le Rédacteur en chef  
N'Djaména-Hebdo  
BP 760, N'Djaména, République du Tchad

and to diplomatic representatives of Chad accredited to your country.

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

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
Article 19**

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***MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION***

**Ngarléjy Yorongar le Moïban  
CHAD**

Amnesty International is concerned that Ngarléjy Yorongar le Moïban, who is serving a three year sentence in NDjaména Central Prison in Chad after having been convicted on defamation charges, is suffering from malaria and typhoid fever. He is reportedly not being provided with adequate medical care and was recently not allowed to see his doctor. Prison conditions in Chad are very harsh and amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Since last week, Ngarléjy Yorongar has not been allowed to receive visits from his lawyers and members of his family. Amnesty International considers the charges against Ngarléjy Yorongar le Moïban to be politically motivated, and believes that criminal legislation should not be used in such a way as to stifle criticism of state authorities or to intimidate those who voice legitimate concerns about the

actions or practices of public offices. Amnesty International considers Ngarléjy Yorongar to be a prisoner of conscience and is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

Ngarléjy Yorongar has a high public profile in Chad as a major critic of the government and the President. As a result, he has been the victim of politically motivated arrests on several previous occasions in the last few years.

In an interview with the Chadian newspaper *l'Observateur* which was published on 9 July 1997, Ngarléjy Yorongar accused Wadal Abdelkader Kamougué, president of the National Assembly and the parliamentary representative of the *Union pour le renouveau et la démocratie* [Union for Renewal and Democracy, *URD*] who ran as a presidential candidate in July 1996, of accepting 15 million French francs [approximately £ 1.5 million] from the French oil company Elf to finance his election campaign. Elf, which already has a large operation in Chad, is part of a consortium of companies which is due to start construction of a controversial 1,050km pipeline through Chad and Cameroon in the near future. In June 1997, Ngarléjy Yorongar had also accused President Idriss Déby in a letter of keeping the running of the oil industry in his family.

In August 1997, Wadal Abdelkader Kamougué brought a defamation charge against Ngarléjy Yorongar whose parliamentary immunity was lifted by a vote in the National Assembly of Chad on 26 May 1998. On 3 June 1998, Ngarléjy Yorongar was arrested and formally charged with defamation of Idriss Déby and of Wadal Abdelkader Kamougué. Despite international protest including an appeal by the European Parliament on 18 June 1998 to release him, Ngarléjy Yorongar was sentenced to three years imprisonment and a fine of 500,000 CFA [Central African Franc, approx US \$900] on 20 July 1998 after a trial that did not conform to international standards. His prison sentence is one year longer than the maximum sentence required by law and longer than the prosecution had requested.

Madame Sy Koumbo Singa Gali and Polycarpe Togamissi, two journalists working for *l'Observateur* were also arrested and later convicted after an unfair trial of complicity in the defamation. Both were given two year suspended sentences and ordered to pay large fines before being provisionally released on 12 June 1998 by the court of first instance.

### **Background information**

Critics of the Chadian government, in particular human rights activists and journalists, continue to be the victims of death threats and ill-treatment by the Chadian security forces, including the Agence Nationale de Sécurité [National Security Agency, ANS]. The human rights situation in Chad has been extremely fragile since violent clashes on 30 October 1997 between the security forces and the Forces Armées pour la République Fédérale [FARF], an armed opposition group in southern Chad. At least 80 people were killed and others arrested and tortured following the clashes. There are frequent reports of killings, arbitrary arrests, torture and other human rights abuses.

In March 1998, following the massacre of over 100 people [apparently in reprisal for the activities of the FARF], the government imposed a temporary ban on the activities of several human rights organizations, severely restricting freedom of expression in Chad.