

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 17/03/96

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Further information (1) on UA 94/96 (AFR 17/01/96, 4 April 1996) - Fear of Torture / Legal Concern

**CAMEROON** More than 40 members of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) including:  
**Lawrence CHIMASA**  
**Charles NKWANKYUO**

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Amnesty International has received reports that members of the Social Democratic Front (SDF), one of the main opposition political parties in Cameroon, arrested in March and April 1996 have been released.

Dozens of people were arrested in Limbe, South-West Province, in early March 1996 following demonstrations organized by the SDF in protest against the government's appointment of its representatives to head some local government authorities in place of elected mayors following local government elections in January 1996. Many continued to be detained even after a court order that they be released.

Lawrence Chimasa, an SDF official, was arrested in Bamenda, North-West Province, on 12 March 1996 and Charles Nkwankyuo, also an SDF official, was arrested in Limbe on 1 April 1996. Charles Nkwankyuo is reported to have been released after 48 hours.

Amnesty International remains concerned that critics and opponents of the government of President Paul Biya, including members of opposition political parties and journalists, continue to be repeatedly harassed and detained in Cameroon. Detainees are usually held for short periods of time without charge or trial, although in 1995 several were charged with criminal offences, tried and convicted.

No further action by Urgent Action participants is requested at this stage. Thank you to all those who took part in this action.