

EQUATORIAL GUINEA **Felipe Ondó Obiang - former parliamentarian & leader of the Fuerza Democrática Republicana (FDR), Republican Democratic Force**
Emilio Ndongo Biyogo- member of the Unión Popular (UP), Popular Union
Guillermo Nguema Elá - former Finance Minister & leader of the Fuerza Democrática Republicana (FDR), Republican Democratic Force
General Jaime Obama Owono Nchama
Lt. Col. Lorenzo Ondó Elá
Lt. Col. Segismundo Obama Esono
Commandant Mariano Ndongo Esangui
And At least 40 Civilians and military personnel

Those named above are being held in Bata Public Prison, in the main city in the continental part of Equatorial Guinea, following a series of arrests by the security forces which began on 14 March. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety, following reports that some of them may have been tortured or ill-treated in prison, which is a routine punishment for political detainees in Equatorial Guinea. All are being held without charge and are possible prisoners of conscience.

Felipe Ondó Obiang, former parliamentarian and leader of the not yet legalized opposition party, Fuerza Democrática Republicana (FDR), Republican Democratic Force and his brother-in-law Emilio Ndongo Biyogo, member of Unión Popular (UP), Popular Union, were arrested in Malabo, the capital of Equatorial Guinea on Bioko Island, on the afternoon of 14 March. They had just come back from Bata, where they had been confined by the authorities for several weeks. Their whereabouts were unknown for one day despite attempts by their families to find them at possible places of detention in Malabo. They were taken to Bata Public Prison, where eyewitnesses report seeing them on 15 March, with severe injuries, thought to be caused by torture following their arrest in Malabo.

Guillermo Nguema Elá, former minister of Finance and member of the FDR was arrested on 15 March in Malabo and then taken to Bata Public Prison. A number of his and Felipe Ondó Obiang's relatives and friends were reportedly arrested in Mongomo, a town near the border with Gabon, where other high-ranking government officials come from. They too were reportedly transferred to Bata Public Prison.

According to reports, the authorities have also arrested other civilians and military personnel, including those named above, allegedly connected with the FDR in Bata, Malabo and Mongomo, as part of the recent wave of arrests. They are also apparently being held in Bata Public Prison. Opposition parties have asked the authorities why the arrests have taken place, but have not been given a reason. Some of those arrested, including Felipe Ondó Obiang and Guillermo Nguema Elá have been detained in the past for their peaceful political activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Despite the fact that for many years the authorities of Equatorial Guinea have promised not to obstruct peaceful political activities, a number of political opponents including members of the opposition *Convergencia para la Democracia Social (CDPS), Convergence for Social Democracy* have been harassed and arrested in the last few months. In addition, opposition political parties have found it more difficult to mobilize their supporters as a result of years of repression and internal dissension and defections, which have often been engineered by the ruling party, the *Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial (PDGE), Equatorial Guinea Democratic Party*.

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

- **seeking urgent assurances that Felipe Ondó Obiang, Emilio Ndongo Biyogo, Guillermo Nguema Elá as well as civilian and military personnel detained since 14 March, will be safeguarded from any form of ill-treatment or torture;**
- **urging that they be allowed immediate and continued access to their family, medical care and legal counsel;**
- **asking the authorities to give the reason for their arrest;**
- **calling for them to be immediately and unconditionally released, unless they are to be promptly charged with recognizably criminal offences.**

APPEALS TO:

**President of the Republic
General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
Presidente de la República
Gabinete del Presidente de la República
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Telegrams: Presidente de la República, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Fax: + 240 9 3313/3334
Salutation: Your Excellency/Excelencia**

**Minister of Interior
Clemente Ngonga Nguema Andema
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio del Interior
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Telegrams: Ministro del Interior, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Fax: + 240 9 2683/2688
Salutation: Dear Interior Minister/ Sr. Ministro**

**Minister of Justice
Rubén Mayé Nsue Mangue
Ministro de Justicia y Culto
Ministerio de Justicia y Culto
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia y Culto, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial**

Fax: + 240 9 2115

Salutation: Dear Justice Minister/ Sr. Ministro

COPIES TO:

Diplomatic representatives of Equatorial Guinea accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 April 2002