

PUBLIC

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30 October 2003

UA 310/03

Possible "disappearance"/ fear for safety

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Bienvenido Samba Momesori (m), pastor

Bienvenido Samba Momesori, a Protestant pastor, was reportedly arrested by plainclothes police officers in the capital Malabo on 26 October. His whereabouts are unknown and Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

According to reports, the police officers visited the home of Pastor Bienvenido Samba Momesori on the evening of 26 October, but his daughter told them that he was celebrating a mass at his church, *Asamblea de Dios* (Assembly of God). The police officers arrested Pastor Bienvenido Samba Momesori at the church and took him and his daughter to the main police station in Malabo. Shortly afterwards, police officers allegedly told his daughter to return home as her father had been released. However, he has not been seen since arriving at the police station and there has been no information on his whereabouts. His wife visited Black Beach prison in Malabo, but was told that her husband was not detained there.

Bienvenido Samba Momesori was accused of involvement in attacks against military barracks in January 1998 and was tried along with more than 110 others in May 1998 in a five-day summary military trial, which fell far short of international fair trial standards. Bienvenido Samba Momesori denied the charges against him. He was sentenced to death, but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo in September 1998. He was released after being granted an amnesty in October 2002.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prison conditions in Equatorial Guinea are very harsh and amount very frequently to torture and ill-treatment. Food is scarce and prisoners are often denied medical treatment, particularly prisoners of conscience who have been tortured. There are currently more than 30 prisoners of conscience in the country, who were convicted in June 2002 on charges of rebellion and attempting to overthrow the government, on the basis of confessions allegedly extracted under torture after an unfair trial. Two prisoners of conscience died in July and August 2002 as a result of poor prison conditions and lack of medical treatment for the injuries they had sustained as a result of torture. In August 2003, prisoner of conscience Felipe Ondo Obiang, leader of *Fuerza Demócrata Republicana* (FDR), Democratic Republican Force, was secretly sent to Evinayong prison, where he is being held in harsh conditions. He has been kept in solitary confinement and his physical and mental health has reportedly deteriorated. (See UA 164/03, AFR 24/006/2003, 11 June 2003 and follow-ups).

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Pastor Bienvenido Samba Momesori, who was reportedly arrested by plainclothes police officers at his church, the *Asamblea de Dios*, on 26 October, and who has not been seen since his arrest;
- calling on the authorities to publicly reveal his whereabouts, and grant him immediate access to his family, lawyers and any medical treatment he may require;
- calling for assurances that, if he is in detention, he is humanely treated and not subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment;
- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Pastor Bienvenido Samba Momesori unless he is to be charged with a clear and identifiable criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo

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: Excelencia/ Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Rubén Mayé Nsue Mangué

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: Sr. Ministro/ Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Pastor Micha Ondo Bile

Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores

Malabo

República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Fax: + 240 9 3132/2320

and 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 11 December 2003.