

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 320/93 Fear of Imminent Execution

13 September 1993

EQUATORIAL GUINEA: Orlando Cartagena
Francisco Medina (or Benevina)

Orlando Cartagena and Francisco Medina were brought before a court martial in the morning of 13 September 1993. They were sentenced to death at mid-day. They have no right of appeal against their convictions and sentences. Executions could be carried out very soon.

The two men were among at least 21 defendants who were arrested on 13 August 1993 on Annobon Island, 670 kilometres from the capital Malabo on Bioko Island. The other defendants received sentences of between 20 and 30 years' imprisonment. They were tried in Bata, the capital of the mainland province of Río Muni. Military courts in Equatorial Guinea have no independence or impartiality and they use summary procedures which severely curtail the right to an adequate defence.

Amnesty International does not yet know the precise charges the defendants faced. They were arrested in the wake of an incident which the government called "a rebellion" in which at least two civilians were killed. The government alleged that rebels had attempted to kidnap and kill the governor of Annobon. According to independent sources the two civilians were extrajudicially executed by a member of the Equatorial Guinean security forces after an argument in a bar between two government officials and a group of civilians. Between 20 and 30 people were subsequently arrested, severely beaten and taken to Bata.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Unrest on Annobon, which has a population of approximately 2,000, is not new. In the past two years people have reportedly protested on many occasions about their state of abject poverty and total neglect by the government. The situation is said to have worsened recently as no food or medical supplies have been sent to the island for over a year. Several people were reportedly arrested and severely beaten in June 1993 for protesting about a report on *Radio Exterior de España* (Spanish External Radio) that the Equatorial Guinean government had refused permission for planes belonging to the Spanish Cooperation, the Spanish Government's relief and development department, to fly badly needed supplies to the island.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters either in Portuguese, English or your own language:

- expressing concern that Orlando Cartagena and Francisco Medina (or Benevina) have been sentenced to death;
- explaining that Amnesty International opposes the death penalty on the grounds

that it violates the fundamental right to life;
- calling for the commutation of the sentences;
- expressing concern that the trial was unfair and that the defendants had no right to appeal against their convictions or sentences;
- expressing concern also that the defendants were reportedly badly beaten after their arrest.

APPEALS TO

1) President

Coronel Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
Presidente de la República
Ministro de Defensa Nacional

Gabinete del Presidente de la República,
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Presidente Obiang Nguema, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Faxes: + 240-9 3313

Salutation: Su Excelencia/Your Excellency

2) Prime Minister

Silvestre Siale Bileka
Primer Ministro

Gabinete del Primer Ministro
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Primer Ministro Siale Bileka, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor/Dear Prime Minister

3) Minister of Justice and Religion

Mariano Nsué Nguema
Ministro de Justicia y Culto
Ministerio de Justicia y Culto

Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia Nsué Nguema Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor/Dear Minister

4) Foreign Minister

Benjamín Mba Ekua Mikó
Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores & Francofonía
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores Mba Ekua, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG

Faxes: + 240-9 2320

Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor/Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS 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 25 October 1993.