

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 24/15/95

UA 235/95

Prisoners of conscience / Fear of torture 12 October 1995

**EQUATORIAL GUINEA Felipe Ondo Obiang, former parliamentarian  
Bonifacio Nguema Esono, former government minister**

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Felipe Ondo Obiang and Bonifacio Nguema Esono were arrested on 11 October 1995, at their homes in Malabo, the capital of Equatorial Guinea on Bioko Island, apparently for no other reason than their peaceful opposition to the government.

Following their arrest the two men were reportedly driven by high ranking security officers to Malabo airport and put on a military plane bound for Bata, the capital of the continental region of Río Muni. Their place of detention in Bata is not known. Amnesty International fears that they may face torture in detention.

On 10 October Felipe Ondo Obiang and Bonifacio Nguema Esono had been summoned to the central police station in Malabo where they were asked to sign a paper indicating their agreement to a document sent to the police by the Minister of Interior. The document stated that the two men were involved in activities which endangered national security and that they were to leave Bioko Island within 48 hours. Both men refused to sign.

Felipe Ondo Obiang and Bonifacio Nguema Esono are two of the founder members of the opposition party *Fuerza Demócrata Republicana* (FDR) Republican Democratic Force, created in August 1995 but not yet legalized. Felipe Ondo Obiang was dismissed from his post as president of the *Cámara de Representates del Pueblo*, Chamber of Peoples' Representatives, the Equatorial Guinean parliament, in November 1994 after he criticised the country's human rights record. Bonifacio Nguema Esono was a minister under the previous government of Francisco Macías Nguema who was overthrown in 1979 by his nephew Teodoro Obiang Nguema, the current president.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Equatorial Guinea held the first democratic municipal elections on 17 September 1995 which were monitored by about 27 international observers, including foreign diplomats in the country. The elections were won by the ruling *Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial* (PDGE), Equatorial Guinean Democratic Party, led by President Obiang Nguema. Opposition parties are contesting the results.

During the election campaign Felipe Ondo Obiang and Bonifacio Nguema Esono had called on the population to vote for the parties in the Joint Opposition Platform.

Since the elections, hundreds of people have been arrested for voting for opposition parties. Sixty of those arrested are currently being held at Malabo police station. In Miboman, a village near Ebebiyín, in the north east corner of Río Muni, at least one person was killed and several others seriously injured when the security forces opened fire on the villagers who were celebrating the victory of local opposition candidates.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Spanish or your own language:**

- expressing concern at the arbitrary arrest of Felipe Ondo Obiang and Bonifacio Nguema Esono, and calling for their immediate and unconditional release as prisoners of conscience, arrested solely on account of their peaceful opposition to the government;

- expressing fears that, as no steps have been taken to end the practice of torture in Equatorial Guinea, they are at risk of being tortured or ill-treated and seeking assurances that they will be treated humanely in accordance with international standards for the treatment of detainees;
- calling for the two men to be granted immediate access to family members, lawyers and medical personnel;
- expressing concern about the reported arbitrary arrests of hundreds of people suspected of voting for opposition parties and the unlawful killing of at least one person by the security forces.

**APPEALS TO:**

**1. President**

Teodoro Obiang Nguema  
Presidente de la República  
Gabinete del Presidente de la República  
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial  
**Faxes: + 2409 3313**  
**Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG**  
**Telegrams: Presidente Nguema, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea**  
**Salutation: Su Excelencia / Your Excellency**

**2. Minister of Justice**

Francisco Javier Ndong Mbengono  
Ministro de Justicia y Culto  
Ministerio de Justicia y Culto  
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial**  
**Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG**  
**Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor / Dear Minister**

**3. Minister of Interior**

Julio Ndong Ela Mangué  
Ministro del Interior  
Ministerio del Interior  
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial  
**Telegrams: Ministro de Interior, Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial**  
**Telexes: 5405 GBNOM 5405 EG**  
**Salutation: Excelentísimo Señor / Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

**Foreign Minister**

Miguel Oyono Ndong Mifumu  
Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores y Cooperación  
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores  
Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial  
**Faxes: + 2409 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 26 November 1995.