

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 77/92 (AFR 31/02/92, 5 March 1992) and follow-up: AFR 31/05/92 of 24 April 1992 - Legal Concern

CÔTE D'IVOIRE: Adou Jean-François  
Aka Kouassi  
Akassi Thomas  
Kalifa Touré, engineer, journalist and member of the  
Front Populaire ivoirien (FPI), the Ivorian Popular

Front

Ouattara Lancina  
Teha Emmanuel

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and new names: Charles AHIPEAUD, relative of Martial AHIPEAUD, President of  
the Fédération estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire  
(FESCI) Ivorian Federation of Student and School Pupils  
Michel GBAGBO, son of Laurent Gbagbo, FPI leader

During February there were two demonstrations against the government in the capital, Abidjan. The demonstrations criticized the government's refusal to act on the findings of a Commission of Inquiry into an apparently punitive raid launched by the army on Abidjan University's Yopougon student residence on 17 May 1991, following confrontation between students and the security forces. The February 1992 demonstrations started peacefully, but on both occasions there was also rioting and damage to property.

On 30 April, 56 prisoners were tried in Abidjan and 45 were sentenced to one year's imprisonment each on the grounds that they shared responsibility for damage caused during the demonstrations and subsequent riots. They were convicted under the terms of Article 26 of the Penal Code which establishes the criminal responsibility of someone "associated" with a crime, even if they have not themselves carried out the criminal act. In the case of demonstrations followed by or accompanied by violence, the interpretation given to Article 26 by the Ivorian courts means that non-violent demonstrators are being punished for the violent acts of others and Amnesty International has concluded that prisoners arrested last February who have been convicted on this basis are prisoners of conscience.

Of those named in UA 77/92, Aka Kouassi, Akassi Thomas and Teha Emmanuel are all known to have been amongst 52 people released uncharged on 13 April. Kalifa Touré was released on bail on 22 April, but rearrested and among the 45 convicted and sentenced on 30 April. The current status of Adou Jean-François and Ouattara Lancina is not known. Also convicted on 30 April were: Michel Gbagbo, son of Laurent Gbagbo, the leader of the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), the main opposition party and, Charles Ahipeaud, relative of Martial Ahipeaud, the leader of the Fédération

estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire (FESCI), Ivorian Federation of Student and School Pupils. Both Laurent Gbagbo and Martial Ahipeaud had earlier been sentenced to terms of imprisonment for similar offences.

A further 26 people had already been convicted in connection with the February demonstrations (see UA 60/92 (AFR 31/01/92 of 19 February and follow-ups AFR 31/03/92 of 10 March 1992 and AFR 31/04/92 of 24 April 1992 for details).

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**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters**

- expressing concern at the conviction and one year prison sentences imposed on 45 people on 30 April, including Kalifa Touré, Michel Gbagbo, and Charles Ahipeaud, in connection with the February demonstrations in Abidjan;
- stating that by making those present at a demonstration responsible before the law for alleged actions of others which they have neither ordered nor condoned, they are effectively punishing them for exercising their right to freedom of association with others;
- explaining that Amnesty International has concluded that the 45 are prisoners of conscience, and call on the authorities to release these prisoners immediately and unconditionally.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) President:

Son Excellence

Felix Houphouët-Boigny

Président de la République

La Présidence, Boulevard Clozel, Abidjan

République de Côte d'Ivoire

**Telegrams: President Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire**

**Telexes: 23754 PRESID CI or 23169 PRELIT CI**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Président /**

**Dear President**

2) Prime Minister:

M. Alassane Ouattara

Premier Ministre

Le Primature, Abidjan

République de Côte D'Ivoire

**Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Ministre /**

**Dear Prime Minister**

3) Minister of Justice:

Mme Jacqueline Lohoues-Oble

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

Boulevard Angoulvant, BP V107, Abidjan

République de Côte d'Ivoire

**Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire**

**Telexes: 23752 MINAFET CI (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Salutation: Madame le Ministre /**

**Dear Minister**

4) Minister of Interior:

M. Emile-Constant Bombet

Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité

**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / :**

**Dear Minister**

Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité  
Boulevard Angoulvant, Abidjan  
République de Côte d'Ivoire  
**Telegrams: Ministre Interier, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire**

5) State Prosecutor: **Salutation: Monsieur le Procureur /**  
M. A Yokoun **Dear Sir**  
Procureur général de la République  
Ministère de la Justice  
Boulevard Angoulvant, BP V 107 Abidjan  
République de Côte d'Ivoire  
**Telegrams: Procureur General Yokoun, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:** diplomatic representatives of Côte d'Ivoire in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 June 1992.