

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 225/93 (AFR 44/06/93, 9 July 1993, and follow-ups: AFR 44/08/93, 26 July 1993 and AFR 44/09/93, 5 August 1993 ) - Legal Concern

**NIGERIA:** Beko Ransome-Kuti, 52, doctor, Chairman of the Campaign for Democracy, President of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights  
Femi Falana, lawyer, member of the Campaign for Democracy, President of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADL)  
Chief Gani Fawehinmi, 55, human rights lawyer, member of the Campaign for Democracy  
Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, member of the Social Democratic Party (SDP)

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Beko Ransome-Kuti, Femi Falana and Chief Gani Fawehinmi were released unconditionally on 29 August 1993. It is not yet clear whether Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu remains in detention or whether he has also been freed.

Beko Ransome-Kuti, Femi Falana and Chief Gani Fawehinmi, all human rights activists and leading members of the Campaign for Democracy, were arrested in early July after the Campaign for Democracy called for a week of protest against the government's decision on 23 June to annul the results of the presidential election on 12 June. On 12 July they were charged with sedition and conspiracy and remanded in custody until 30 September. On 28 July bail was granted and the conditions met but the authorities refused to release them and continued to detain them under the provisions of the State Security (Detention of Persons) Decree No.2 of 1984. This permits administrative detention for renewable periods of six weeks thus effectively providing for indefinite detention without charge or trial of anyone suspected of threatening national security. On 29 August, Chief Ernest Shonekan, the head of the newly-installed Interim Federal Executive Council, announced their unconditional release on humanitarian grounds after he had apparently met them in Abuja.

It is not clear whether Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, a prominent member of the Social Democratic Party, remains in detention or whether he has also been released.

He was arrested on 20 July after calling for a boycott of new presidential elections ordered by General Ibrahim Babangida for 14 August, but subsequently abandoned. He was detained in Abuja without charge or trial. Amnesty International believes that he was arrested because of his non-violent opposition to the government.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 26 August 1993 General Ibrahim Babangida resigned as President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and installed a non-elected interim

government. The new interim government is headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan, a civilian who was also the Chairman of the Transitional Council set up in January to run the day-to-day affairs of the country until a return to civilian rule scheduled for August. Several former officials retain their position in the new 32-member Interim Federal Executive Council, including General Sani Abacha who will remain in charge of the Defence Ministry. Chief Shonekan has undertaken to organize fresh presidential elections within the next seven months and to hand over power to an elected civilian government by March 1994.

However, protest against the annulment of the results of the June 1993 presidential election and failure to return to a civilian government continues.

The Nigeria Labour Congress, a trade union organization, has refused to accept the new interim government and has called for an indefinite general strike.

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

- welcoming the unconditional release of Beko Ransome-Kuti, Femi Falana and Chief Gani Fawehinmi;
- expressing concern, however, that they were detained for nearly two months because of their non-violent opposition to the government;
- seeking confirmation that Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu has also been unconditionally released and urging that, if he is still detained, he be immediately and unconditionally released as he is a prisoner of conscience.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) Chief Ernest Shonekan  
Head of the Interim Federal  
Executive Council  
State House  
Abuja  
Federal Capital Territory  
Nigeria

**Telegrams: Ernest Shonekan, State House, Abuja, Nigeria**

**Telexes: [0905] 91529 or 91530 EXTNAL NG (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Salutation: Dear Mr Shonekan**

2) Mr Clement Akpamgbo  
Attorney General of the Federation,  
Secretary for Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
Abuja  
Federal Capital Territory  
Nigeria

**Telegrams: Attorney General Akpamgbo, Abuja, Nigeria**

**Telexes: [0905] 91529 or 91530 EXTNAL NG (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Salutation: Dear Attorney General**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Chief Matthew Mbu  
Secretary for Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Maputo Street  
Abuja  
Federal Capital Territory  
Nigeria

Daily Times  
PMB 21340  
Ikeja, Lagos  
Nigeria

The Guardian  
PMB 1217  
Oshodi, Lagos  
Nigeria

Newswatch  
PMB 21499  
Ikeja, Lagos  
Nigeria

and to diplomatic representatives of Nigeria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 October 1993.