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Fear of Torture/Extrajudicial Execution

17 September

CHAD: Lieutenant Laoukein BARDÉ, army officer
Souleymane KABO, 16-year-old pupil
Youssef KABO, unemployed
Joseph MADJIMBANG, former Ambassador to Egypt
Zakaria MOURSAL, bank employee
Ahmed NAHOR, trader, former prefect (governor) of Moyen-Chari
Gali Gatta N'GOTHÉ, lecturer, former adviser to the President
Edouard SAILLY, former presidential press director
Hissein Seydou THIAM, trader

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The nine people named above have been arrested over the past four months in Chad's capital N'Djamena. Amnesty International has just received news of the arrests. They are believed to be held incommunicado, and uncharged, at a secret detention centre in N'Djamena. Amnesty International is concerned that some of them may be prisoners of conscience, detained because of their peaceful opposition to the Government, and is further concerned that they are all at risk of torture and extrajudicial execution.

Gali Gatta N'Gothe is an economist in his early 40's who returned to Chad in 1986 having lived in exile since 1982. After his return to Chad he became adviser to President Hissein Habré and in 1987 he was appointed as Director of Cotonchad, a state company, and then became lecturer in economics at N'Djamena University. Gali Gatta N'Gothé is widely known for his pro-democracy views. Amnesty International believes that he is a prisoner of conscience detained without charge or trial because of his peaceful opposition to the government.

The arrests occurred following the distribution in N'Djamena of leaflets criticizing the government and its repression of growing armed opposition activities against the government in eastern Chad near the border with Sudan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

More than 400 people have been detained for political reasons in Chad since mid-1987. These include more than 180 people from the Hadjeraï ethnic group arrested in mid-1987, at least 20 supporters of former President Goukouni Oueddeï, who returned voluntarily to Chad but were arrested in June and July 1988, along with more than 200 other prisoners belonging to the Zaghawa ethnic group detained in April and May 1989. Most of these prisoners appear to have been arrested and detained arbitrarily by Chad's security service because of their ethnic origin and their family connections with other government opponents. The Chadian government has failed to account for what has happened to these prisoners and refused to disclose any information about their fate or their whereabouts. There have been reports from unofficial sources that many of them have been subjected to torture or executed extrajudicially. Most have effectively "disappeared" while in the custody of the security service.

Dozens of prisoners, including civilians and soldiers, were killed by government forces in March 1990 in north-east Chad, in the towns of Bahai, Tine and Iriba near the frontier with Sudan, an area affected by armed conflict between government troops and insurgents belonging to the Front Patriotique du Salut (FIS), the Patriotic Front of Salvation, a coalition of armed opposition groups led by Idriss Deby.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the arrest of the people named above and about reports that they are apparently being held incommunicado;
- requesting clarification of the reasons for their arrest;
- requesting assurances that they are being humanely treated while in detention;
- urging the authorities to inform the relatives and lawyers of those named above as to where they are being detained and requesting that they be allowed immediate access to lawyers, relatives and doctors;
- expressing concern at reports that they may be prisoners of conscience detained on account of their political views, and urging the government to release them immediately and unconditionally if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

Son Excellence Monsieur Hissein Habré
Président de la République du Tchad
N'Djamena, République du Tchad

Telegrams: President Habre, N'Djamena, Chad
Telexes: 5201 PRESIREP KD or 5307 PRESIREP KD
Faxes: + 235 51 4501

Monsieur Acheikh Ibn Omar
Ministre des affaires étrangères
N'Djamena, République du Tchad

Telegrams: Ministre affaires etrangeres, N'Djamena, Chad
Telexes: 5238 MINAFFET KD

Monsieur Koré Guini
Directeur
Direction de la documentation et de la sécurité (DSS)
N'Djamena, République du Tchad

Telegrams: Directeur DDS, N'Djamena, Chad
Telexes: 5343 DIPOL KD

Monsieur Djimet Togou
Ministre de l'intérieur et de l'administration du territoire
Ministère de l'intérieur et de l'administration du territoire
N'Djamena, République du Tchad

Telegrams: Ministre interieur, N'Djamena, Chad

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 29 October 1990.