

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 384/90 Fear of Torture/death in Detention

21 September 1990

Comoros: Moussa ALI  
Ahamada CHIONI, postman  
Mohamed MACHANGAMA, elderly dignitary  
Ali Mohamed MASSANI  
Said MLINDE  
Hadji MOHAMED  
Ali SOIHILI, Journalist

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The seven people named above are reported to be among a group of more than a dozen people who were arrested in the Comoros in late August 1990. Amnesty International is concerned that they are detained incommunicado without charge or trial and that they are at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

One of those arrested, Said Mlindé, is reported to have died in detention on 15 September. The circumstances of his death are not yet clear, but some reports suggested that he may have died as a result of torture. There were also reports that Ali Soihili had been subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by members of the security service.

The arrests occurred following reports from government sources that a "destabilisation attempt" (temptative de déstabilisation) against the government had been foiled around 18 August and that some European mercenaries were allegedly involved in this attempt. No information is available from independent sources about the nature of any action taken against the government.

Those arrested are known to be supporters of Mohamed Taki, leader of the National Union for Democracy in the Comoros, who contested the outcome of the presidential elections in March 1990.

**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 still being held incommunicado without charge;
- requesting clarification of the reasons for their arrest;
- calling for assurances that the authorities will take steps to ensure that prisoners cannot be subjected to torture and urging that all prisoners be treated humanely in accordance with their basic human rights;
- 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 particular concern at the death of Said Mlindé in detention and calling the government to initiate an immediate and impartial investigation

into the circumstances of his death with a view to the prosecution of any security personnel found to be responsible;

- also expressing concern at reports that Ali Soihili was tortured while detained incommunicado;

- asking for information about his state of health, urging that he be given adequate medical treatment and access to legal counsel and other visitors.

**APPEALS TO:**

Son Excellence  
Monsieur Saïd Mohamed Djohar  
Président de la République  
B.P. 521  
Moroni, République Fédérale Islamique des Comores

Telegrams: President Said Mohamed Djohar, Moroni, Comoros  
Telexes : 233 presirep ko

Monsieur Ibrahim Halidi  
Ministre de l'Intérieur  
Ministère de l'Interieur  
Moroni, République Fédérale Islamique des Comores

Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur, Moroni, Comores  
Telexes : 233 presirep ko

Monsieur Saïd Attoumane  
Ministre de la Justice  
Ministère de la Justice  
B.P. 520  
Moroni, République Fédérale Islamique des Comores

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Moroni, Comoros  
Telexes : 219 MAERFIC KO (via Minister of Foreign Affairs)  
**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of the Comoros in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 October 1990.