

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/fear of torture/medical concern

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Marcelino Nguema Esono (m), age 40-45, teacher
Jerónimo Mbá Obama (m)
José Antonio Nguema (m)
Leoncio (m)

The four men named above were arrested on 27 June, in the city of Bata. At least two are former members of a banned opposition party whose leader is alleged to have plotted to overthrow the government: they are detained incommunicado, and all are at risk of torture. One of them was shot during the arrest, and Amnesty International fears that he could die unless he receives urgent medical treatment.

Security Police officers in civilian clothes burst into Jerónimo Mbá Obama's house at around 9pm, and fired at Marcelino Nguema Esono, hitting him in the stomach. The police then arrested the four men, who were not armed, and took them to Bata's main police station. The four were reportedly transferred to Black Beach prison in the capital, Malabo, in the morning of 29 June, where they are now held. Marcelino Nguema Esono has reportedly received no medical treatment. Torture is routine in places of detention in Equatorial Guinea. The men do not appear to have been charged with any offence.

Marcelino Nguema Esono is a former local leader of the banned *Partido del Progreso de Guinea Ecuatorial* (PPGE), Progress Party of Equatorial Guinea. The police had been looking for him since March 2004, when he went into hiding after former PPGE members were arrested. His wife was reportedly arrested in mid-June in order to force him to give himself up to the police.

José Antonio Nguema is also a member of the PPGE. Police had been looking for him since March 2004.

Jerónimo Mbá Obama is a member of the opposition political party *Convergencia para la Democracia Social* (CPDS), Convergence for Social Democracy. He is Marcelino Nguema Esono's brother-in-law.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In March 2004 the Equatorial Guinean authorities arrested a group of about 15 alleged mercenaries, who they claimed were plotting to overthrow the government of President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. The authorities claimed that former PPGE president Severo Moto, exiled in Spain, was behind the plot. Several former PPGE members were arrested, although most were released after a few days.

However, the arrests of PPGE members and other opponents of the government intensified in June after the authorities announced they had foiled an attack on Corisco Island on 29 May by Equatorial Guinean mercenaries from Gabon. During the operation the security forces are reported to have extrajudicially executed at least five people, and arrested another five.

All those arrested since March 2004 are believed to be held incommunicado in either Malabo or Bata, and none has been charged.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- expressing concern that the Security Police used excessive force in arresting Marcelino Nguema Esono, Jerónimo Mbá Obama, José Antonio Nguema and Leoncio on 27 June;

- expressing concern that they shot and wounded Marcelino Nguema Esono, although he and the others were unarmed, and calling for him to be given immediate medical attention;
- calling for an investigation into the arrest and shooting, and for those found to have used excessive force to be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the detainees are humanely treated, and not tortured in any way, and for them to be given access to their families and lawyers, and any medical attention they may need;
- urging the authorities to release all the men immediately and unconditionally, unless they are to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

President

General Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
Presidente de la República
Gabinete del Presidente de la República
Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 3313
+240 09 3334

Salutation: Excelência /Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Sr Don Angel Masié Mibuy
Ministro de Justicia y Culto
Ministerio de justicia y Culto
Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 2115

Salutation: Sr Ministro/Dear Minister

Minister of National Security

Coronel Manuel Nguema Mbá
Ministro de la Seguridad Nacional
Ministerio de la Seguridad Nacional
Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Salutation: Sr Ministro/Dear Minister

Fax: via any of the other fax numbers given

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Pastor Micha Ondo Bile
Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores
Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

Fax: +240 09 3132
+240 09 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 13 August 2004.