

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 24/010/2003

19 August 2003

Further Information on UA 164/03 (AFR 24/006/2003, 11 June 2003) and follow-up (AFR 24/008/2003, 23 June 2003) - Prisoner of conscience New concern: Torture/health concern

**EQUATORIAL
GUINEA**

Felipe Ondo Obiang (m), aged over 60, leader of *Fuerza Demócrata Republicana* (FDR), Democratic Republican Force

Amnesty International has received information that Felipe Ondo Obiang is being held in Evinayong Prison in conditions which amount to torture. He is kept in solitary confinement and his physical and mental health has reportedly deteriorated. He has not been given a reason for this punishment.

According to reports, since 28 or 29 July, Felipe Ondo Obiang has been kept chained to the wall in his cell by his left leg which has become very swollen and painful as a result. He has to perform his bodily functions in a bucket in his cell. Since his confinement, he has only been allowed two short visits of approximately 15 minutes each from his wife, even though she has travelled to see him from the capital Malabo.

Felipe Ondo Obiang has requested to be chained by the hands in order to relieve the pain in his leg, but the prison authorities have refused. His right leg is also painful as a result of the fracture he sustained as a result of torture in pre-trial detention, for which he has not received medical treatment. In addition, he suffers from frequent severe head pain, and ear ache in both ears. His hearing has reportedly deteriorated and he is said to suffer from bouts of depression. He has not received any treatment for his ailments.

Previously, Felipe Ondo Obiang was removed from his cell in Black Beach prison in Malabo at 2am on 9 June, and taken to Evinayong prison, on the mainland. His whereabouts were unknown for over 30 hours following his removal from Black Beach prison. On 12 June, the authorities in Equatorial Guinea issued a press statement to "categorically deny rumours of the disappearance of Felipe Ondo Obiang" and to say that he was being held at Evinayong, an open prison, where he had access to his relatives. However, neither his relatives nor his lawyer live in the Evinayong area. The statement said that the authorities transferred him from Black Beach Prison because he was advocating violence and because of his "perverse attitude, which endangered the social climate... and the lives of other prisoners". The statement did not provide any further explanation and other prisoners at Black Beach Prison refuted the authorities' claims.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prisoner of conscience, Felipe Ondo Obiang was arrested in March 2002. Subsequently, about 150 people, including several of his relatives, friends and members of the FDR were arrested. Most, including Felipe Ondo Obiang, were severely tortured in pre-trial detention. They were all charged with attempting to overthrow the government and rebellion and were unfairly tried between May and June 2002. Felipe Ondo Obiang was convicted as charged and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment. Amnesty International adopted him and another 55 co-defendants as POCs. Two POCs died in July and August 2002 as a result of poor prison conditions and lack of medical treatment for the injuries they had sustained as a result of torture. (See UA 84/02, AFR 24/001/2002, 19 March 2002 and follow-ups AFR 24/002/2002, 28 March 2002; AFR 24/008/2002, 7 June 2002; AFR 24/011/2002, 13 June 2002; and AFR 24/013/2002, 4 July 2002).

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

- expressing grave concern at the conditions in which Felipe Ondo Obiang is being held, pointing out that they constitute torture and thus violate the United Nations Convention against Torture which Equatorial Guinea acceded to in October 2002;
- calling for an immediate end to Felipe Ondo Obiang's solitary confinement and the removal of the chains;
- urging that he be transferred to Black Beach prison in Malabo where he should have access to family, friends and other prisoners;
- asking that he be provided with appropriate medical care as a matter of urgency;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic

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

Telegrams: Presidente de la República, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Fax: + 240 9 3313/3334

Salutation: Excelencia/ Your Excellency

Ministre of Justice

Rubén Mayé Nsue Mangué
Ministerio de Justicia y Culto
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Ministro de Justicia y Culto, Malabo, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Fax: + 240 9 2115

Salutation: Sr. Ministro/ Dear Justice Minister

Chief of Evinayong Prison

(Name not known)

A la atención de:

Jefe de la Cárcel Pública de Evinayong
Evinayong
Provincia Centro-Sur
República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Telegrams: Jefe de la Cárcel de Evinayong, Evinayong, República de Guinea Ecuatorial

Salutation: Sr. Jefe de la Cárcel

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Pastor Micha Ondo Bile
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores
Malabo
República de Guinea Ecuatorial
Fax: + 240 9 3132/2320

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 30 September 2003.