

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 49/002/2002
Distrib: PG/SC

To: Health professionals
From: Medical office / West Africa team
Date: 18 February 2002

Further information on
MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION
Release of Michel Pereira
Senegal

[Also see AFR 49/004/2001, 11 October 2001]

Key words: lack of medical care / ill-health / prison conditions

Michel Pereira was released from prison on 10 January 2002 following campaigning by Amnesty International and other groups. The authorities dropped all charges against him.

Michel Pereira was arrested on 29 August 1997 near the Dial Diop military camp in Dakar and imprisoned on 5 September 1997 on charges of threatening state security. When Amnesty International delegates interviewed him in prison in Senegal in June 2001, they were concerned at his mental health and the lack of medical care. He apparently had been seen by a psychiatrist at the Hospital of Fann in Dakar, but no regular mental health services were available in the prison. Conditions in the prison of Dakar (also known as "Rebeuss" or "100 square metres") are generally poor.

Amnesty International raised the case with the Minister of Justice, the Human Rights Adviser in the office of the President and with the President of Senegal Committee for Human Rights. Appeals called for the immediate and unconditional release of Michel Pereira unless he was charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

Many thanks to all those who have written appeals on Michel Pereira's behalf. No further action is required.