

UA 91/95 Legal/Medical Concern/Fear of Torture

13 April 1995

TOGO

Alexandre ADECAMBI, hotel manager
Claude AMOUZOU
Tchao Kodjo Ange MABOUDOU, businessman
Wilson ADJE, restaurant manager
Lambert KOFFI, hotel manager
Epiphane KAVEGUE, radio engineer
Pierre BAKELA, soldier
and up to five others

Up to 12 people, including the seven men named above, were arrested on 30 March 1995 and remain in detention without charge or trial. At least six of the detainees are reportedly being held incommunicado at a military barracks in the capital, Lomé, and one, Claude Amouzou, is held under armed guard in the military wing of a Lomé hospital. There has been no official acknowledgement of these arrests. There is concern for the safety of those held in incommunicado detention, who may be at risk of torture and reports that those guarding Claude Amouzou in hospital have threatened to withhold necessary medicine and food.

Arrests began early on 30 March 1995 following a search of the home of one of the detainees in Nyekonakpou, a suburb of Lomé, close to the border with Ghana, during which arms were allegedly discovered. Up to 16 people, including the seven named above, were arrested in and around Lomé during the course of the same day, apparently in connection with the discovery of arms. At least four people were released within 24 hours. One, a colleague of Tchao Kodjo Ange Maboudou, was reportedly beaten at the time of his arrest and lost consciousness when a cord was passed around his neck. He was released after a few hours.

One of the detainees, Claude Amouzou, was seriously ill with pneumonia at the time of his arrest and was taken to the military wing of a hospital in Tokoin, Lomé, where he is still held. Family visits are restricted and he has not been allowed to see his own doctor. Members of the security forces guarding him have reportedly threatened to withhold food and medicine in an attempt to extract information.

The other detainees were initially taken to the headquarters of the *Gendarmerie nationale* in Lomé but were reportedly transferred on 6 April 1995 to a military barracks -- the headquarters of the *Régiment interarmes togolaises* (RIT), Togolese Combined Regiment -- in Lomé, where they are now held incommunicado. No charges are known to have been brought against any of the detainees, and they have not had access to their families since they were transferred.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following multi-party elections in Togo in February 1994, the new government has pledged its commitment to improve human rights safeguards and to re-establish a state of law. Amnesty International is, therefore, deeply concerned at the incommunicado detention in military custody of these detainees, who have now been held without charge beyond the limits

provided by Togolese law. Amnesty International is appealing to the Togolese authorities to ensure that these detainees are released forthwith if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence, and brought to trial in accordance with international standards of fair trial.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in French, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern about the detention without charge of Alexandre Adécambi, Claude Amouzou, Tchao Kodjo Ange Maboudou, Wilson Adje, Lambert Koffi, Epiphane Kavegue, Pierre Bakela, and up to five others, all arrested on 30 March 1995;
- noting with concern that all but one of the detainees are reportedly being held at the headquarters of the *Régiment interarmes togolaises* (RIT), in Lomé, where they are denied access to their families or legal representatives;
- also noting with concern that Claude Amouzou, who is seriously ill with pneumonia is being detained in hospital, where guards have reportedly threatened to withhold necessary medical supplies and food;
- urging the Togolese government to ensure that those detained are protected from any form of torture or ill-treatment, including the withholding of food and medical supplies;
- reminding the Togolese government that the detainees have now been held without charge beyond the legal limit provided by Togolese law and asking that they be released forthwith if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought to court promptly and in accordance with international standards of fair trial.

APPEALS TO

President:

Son Excellence Monsieur le Général Gnassingbé Eyadéma
Président de la République
Avenue de la Marina, Lomé, Togo

Telegrams: Président de la République, Lomé, Togo

Faxes: + 228 21 18 97; + 228 21 32 04

Telexes: 5319, 5419, 5201 TMS THG

Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President

Prime Minister

Monsieur Edem Kodjo
Premier ministre

La Primature, Lomé, Togo

Telegrams: Premier ministre, Lomé, Togo

Faxes: + 228 21 74 68

Salutation: Monsieur le Premier ministre / Dear Prime Minister

Minister of Justice

Monsieur Kagni Gabriel AKAKPOVIE
Ministère de la Justice

ave de la Marina

rue Colonel de Roux

Lomé

Telegrams: Ministre de la justice, Lomé, Togo

Salutation: Monsieur le ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Minister for Human Rights

Maître Djovi GALLY
Ministre des droits de l'homme,
Ministère des droits de l'homme
Lomé, Togo

President of the Board of Medical Practitioners
Professeur Nakbana NAFFAM
Président du conseil de l'ordre des médecins
s/c Hôpital de Tokoin
Lomé, Togo

and to diplomatic representatives of Togo accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 May 1995.