

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 31/06/95

6 December 1995

Further information on UA 251/95 (AFR 31/05/95, 7 November 1995) - Fear of ill-treatment / Health concern / Possible prisoners of conscience

COTE D'IVOIRE

Guillaume Soro Kibafori, secretary general of the *Fédération estudiantine et scolaire de Côte d'Ivoire* (FESCI), Ivorian Federation of Student and School Pupils and 8 other FESCI members -
Dominique Maya, Marius Bossina, Armand Gogoua,
Serge Bozon, Damana Adia, Charles Blégoudé,
Faustin Drigoné Gobi and Amani Allangba

The nine people named above were released unconditionally on 2 December 1995. They had been held incommunicado at the *Direction de la Sécurité du territoire* (DST), National Security headquarters, and the *Ecole de Police*, Police academy in Abidjan, the capital, since their arrest two months earlier. Guillaume Soro Kibafori was arrested on 27 September and the others in the days that followed.

On their release some of the detainees showed visible traces of torture. One of them had swollen feet suggesting he had been beaten on the soles of his feet. The released detainees also alleged that they had been deliberately deprived of food for days during their detention. On 29 December, one of the detainees, Charles Blégoudé, was admitted to hospital following his attempted suicide, which he said was the result of the strain of continued incommunicado detention.

No official reason had been given for the arrest of the FESCI leaders, who had not been charged. However, at a press conference given by the Minister of Security, General Gaston Ouassenan Koné, following their release, General Koné said that the reason for their arrest was their membership of FESCI - an organization which the government claims is banned - and their alleged involvement in pre-election demonstrations organized by opposition parties which became violent after intervention by the security forces.

General Koné is also reported to have said that from now on, all people claiming to be members of FESCI - an illegal organization - would be considered to be outlaws, clearly implying they would be at risk of arrest.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in French or in your own language:

- while welcoming the release of Guillaume Soro and eight other FESCI leaders, expressing serious concern that they appear to have been tortured and ill-treated during their incommunicado detention without charge;
- urging that the reports of torture at the *Direction de la Sécurité du Territoire* and the *Ecole de Police* be investigated by an independent and impartial body, and that the findings of such an investigation be made public, and that those found responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1) President

Son Excellence

Henri Konan Bedié

Président de la République

La Présidence, Boulevard Clozel, Abidjan
République de Côte d'Ivoire
Telegrams: Président Bedié, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Telexes: 23754 PRESID CI or 23169 PRELIT CI
Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President

2) Prime Minister

M. Daniel Kablan Duncan
Premier Ministre
Le Primature, Abidjan
République de Côte d'Ivoire
Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Abidjan, Côte
Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Ministre / Dear Prime Minister

3) Minister of Justice

M. Faustin Kouamé
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
Boulevard Angoulvant, BP V107, Abidjan
République de Côte d'Ivoire
Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Telexes: 23752 MINAFET CI (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

4) Minister of Security

Général Gaston Ouassenan Kone
Ministre de la Sécurité
Ministère de la Sécurité
Boulevard Angoulvant, Abidjan
République de Côte d'Ivoire
Telegrams: Ministre Sécurité, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

M. Saliou Touré
Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur
Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur
Abidjan, République de Côte d'Ivoire

Press: La Voie, 17 BP 656, Abidjan 17, République de Côte d'Ivoire

and to diplomatic representatives of Côte d'Ivoire accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 January 1996.