

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 43/02/97

29 January 1997

Further information on UA 19/97 (AFR 43/01/97, 17 January 1997)

Legal Concern/fear of ill-treatment/probable prisoners of conscience

NIGER At least 100 members and supporters of the *Front pour la restauration et la défense de la démocratie* (FRDD), Front for the Restoration and Defence of Democracy, a coalition of eight opposition parties including:

- Mahamane Ousmane, former president, leader of the *Convention démocratique et sociale* (CDS)
- Mahamadou Issoufou, former president of the National Assembly, leader of the *Parti nigérien pour la démocratie et le socialisme* (PNDS)
- Mamadou Tandja, leader of the *Mouvement national pour la société et le développement* (MNSD), the former single party

new names: - Mahamadou Lamine Yamien, member of the CDS
 - Sala Habi, former member of parliament and member of the MNSD

Amnesty International has learned that all but one of the detainees arrested on or around 11 February 1997 were released without charge on 23 January 1997. There were no reports of ill-treatment. One member of the CDS, Mahamadou Lamine Yamien, remains in detention at the headquarters of the *Renseignements généraux* (General Intelligence) in the capital, Niamey. He has not been charged or brought before a court, but has reportedly been allowed visits by members of his family and the CDS.

One other political leader, Sala Habi, a former member of parliament, whose arrest was announced on 25 January 1997, also remains in detention without charge or trial. He was arrested in Tahoua (400 kilometres north-east of Niamey) and transferred to the premises of the *Police judiciaire* (Criminal Investigation Department) in the capital, where he has been allowed visits.

A rally organized by the opposition on 25 January 1997 passed off peacefully and there were no reports of political unrest on 27 January 1997, the first anniversary of the coup which brought President Mainassara to power.

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

- welcoming the release of most of those arrested on or around 11 January 1997;
- expressing concern at the continued detention without charge or trial of Mahamadou Lamine Yamien and Sala Habi, beyond the legal limits of *garde à vue* detention;
- seeking clarification of the detainees' legal status and urging that they be released forthwith if they are not to be brought before a court and charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

President
Son Excellence

Monsieur le général Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara
Président de la République
La Présidence, Niamey, Niger
Telegrams: President, Niamey, Niger
Fax: + 227 733430
Salutation: Excellence / Dear President

Prime Minister

Monsieur Amadou Boubakar Cissé
Premier Ministre
La Primature, Niamey, Niger
Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Niamey, Niger
Fax: c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs +227 735231
Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Ministre / Dear Prime Minister

Minister for the Interior

Monsieur Idi Ango Omar
Ministre de l'Intérieur
Ministère de l'intérieur, Niamey, Niger
Telegrams: Ministre Intérieur, Niamey, Niger
Telex: 5214
Fax: +227 722176
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister for Justice

Monsieur Boubé Oumarou
Ministre de la Justice et des Droits de l'Homme, Garde des Sceaux
Ministère de la Justice, Niamey, Niger
Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Niamey, Niger
Fax: +227 735231
Telex: 5214
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Monsieur Ibrahim Hassane Mayaki,
Ministre d'Etat, chargé des Relations Extérieures,
Ministère des Affaires étrangères,
Niamey, Niger
Fax: 227 735231

and to diplomatic representatives of Niger accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 March 1997.