



Human Rights Implementation Centre

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Dear Commissioner Maiga,

URGENT APPEAL: ARBITRARY DETENTION OF ANGLOPHONES IN CAMEROON

On behalf of the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA) and the Human Rights Implementation Centre (HRIC) we are writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Commission) to respectfully request the African Commission to intervene urgently in respect of 18 individuals who have been arbitrarily arrested and detained in Cameroon in the recent crackdown by the Government in the Anglophone regions, and in respect of whom we have received reports of their torture and ill-treatment whilst in detention.

The names of the individuals concerned are as follows:

1. Tati Eric Ngu
2. Harris Boseme
3. Nkwetato Robert
4. Ikoe Clinton
5. Acha Ivo Aben
6. John Marinus Ndenge
7. Oben Frankline Tabot
8. Eyond Charles
9. Effia Gideon
10. Ordema Francis
11. Agbor Taku Joseph
12. Awu Gregory Ashu
13. Tanyi Robert Tatw
14. Jong Orlandus
15. Njeya Jukius Bawe
16. Kum Nestor
17. Ayukem Franklin
18. Fonjong Armstrong

We understand that fifteen of these individuals were arrested between December 2017 and June 2018 during the Government's recent brutal crackdown in South West region of Cameroon including the deployment of the military in the Anglophone regions and the disproportionate use of force in relation to protests against the marginalisation of Anglophones in the country. Since their arrest they have been held in detention without charge. In relation to three of the individuals namely: Ordema Francis, Agbor Taku Joseph, and Kum Nestor they were already serving sentences for reasons unconnected with the 'Anglophone crisis' but are alleged to have been communicating with groups connected with that protest.

The arrests and detention are part of a worsening human rights situation in Cameroon, as noted by the African Commission in its Press Release issued on 29 January 2018. Fourteen of these individuals were being held in Buea Central Prison in South West Region Cameroon and a further four were being held in Secretariat d'Etat a la defense (SED) the gendarmerie headquarters in Yaoundé, but we have received reports that on or around 2 July 2018 they were all transferred to Maximum Prison in Kondengui in Yaoundé. It is reported that they are currently being detained in 'Kosovo' a section of the Kondengui maximum security prison. The transfer of the fourteen individuals from Buea Prison to Kondengui Prison in Yaoundé is, inter alia, contrary to the African Commission's decision in relation to *Communication no. 266/03 Kevin Mgwanga Gunme et al*, adopted in May 2009, wherein the African Commission called on the Government of Cameroon to "stop the transfer of accused persons from the Anglophone provinces for trial in the Francophone provinces".

We have also received reports that the individuals have been kept in tight chains and have been subjected to torture by prison guards.

Consequently we are concerned that the arrest, detention and transfer of these individuals is arbitrary and violates a range of human rights including in particular the rights to liberty and security of the person, freedom from discrimination, freedom of association, freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom peaceful assembly, and freedom of expression as set out under Articles 2, 6, 9, 10 and 11 of the African Charter, Articles 3, 19, 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and Articles 9, 18, 19, 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil And Political Rights.

We are also gravely concerned for their safety and well-being and that their treatment whilst in detention is in violation of Article 5 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as other international instruments prohibiting torture and other ill-treatment.

Therefore we would respectfully request you to call on the Cameroonian authorities to ensure that Ordema Francis, Agbor Taku Joseph, and Kum Nestor are treated strictly in accordance with their rights under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and Cameroon's obligations under international human rights law, and in relation to the other fifteen individuals to immediately and unconditionally release these individuals and seek immediate assurances from the Cameroonian authorities that they too will be treated strictly in accordance with the African Charter and international law.

Yours sincerely,

Barrister Nkongho Felix Agbor-Balla
Chairman, Centre for Human Rights and
Democracy In Africa (CHRDA)

Professor Rachel Murray
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c.c. Commissioner Lumbu; The Committee for the Prevention of Torture in Africa