

# URGENT ACTION

## ACTIVIST RELEASED ON BAIL, STILL FACING CHARGES

Senegalese activist Guy Marius Sagna was released on bail on 16 August, one month after he was first detained for posting comments on Facebook. Charged with ‘false alert of terrorism’ under the Senegalese Criminal Code, if he is found guilty he faces a maximum of five years in prison. Amnesty International continues to call on the authorities to immediately drop all charges against Guy Marius Sagna as they relate solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom expression.

**TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER**

**Minister of Justice**

**Mr Malick Sall**

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Your Excellency

While I welcome the news that **Guy Marius Sagna** was released on 16 August, I am concerned to hear that the charges against him are still pending.

As prominent activist in Senegal, he has regularly been detained simply for exercising his rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression. Most recently, on 30 August, Guy Marius Sagna was arrested, along with five others, after taking part in a peaceful protest on labour rights. He was released without charge a couple of hours later.

Guy Marius Sagna was arbitrarily arrested on 16 July in Dakar by the Gendarmerie's Brigade Research section. He was first questioned about two of his Facebook posts on the lack of adequate medical facilities in Senegal, 59 years after independence, and the fact that many political leaders in Senegal have had to seek better medical care in Europe. Three days after being detained, Guy Marius Sagna was further questioned about a Facebook post on the FRAPP-France Degage page, an organisation that he is a member of, regarding the presence of the French army in Africa and a terror attack in the Sahel region.

On 19 July, he was charged with ‘spreading false news’ and detained at the Central Prison of Rebeuss in Dakar. The prosecutor later changed the charge against Guy to ‘false alert of terrorism’ on 5 August.

**I urge you to ensure that:**

- **All charges against Guy Marius Sagna are immediately dropped, as they stem solely from his peaceful exercise of his right to freedom expression;**
- **The right to freedom of expression is fully respected, protected, promoted and fulfilled in Senegal.**

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 16 August, the investigating judge ordered the release on bail of activist Guy Marius Sagna.

After his release, Guy Marius Sagna said in a letter addressed to Amnesty International activists "If I was released of this illegal, arbitrary detention it is thanks to the tremendous mobilisation in Senegal, in Africa and elsewhere of thousands of women and men. Amnesty members mobilisation was key, notable and weighed enormously. It is true that the struggle continues because I am only released on bail. But an important battle has been won. Thank you to all members of Amnesty everywhere in the World."

Guy Marius Sagna is a prominent activist in Senegal. He was the Coordinator of the National Coalition "No to Economic Partnership Agreements" in Senegal. The partnership agreements are between Senegal and the European Union.

He is a member of the movement "Le Front pour une Révolution Anti-impérialiste Populaire et Panafricaine" (Front for a popular anti-imperialist revolution and pan African, FRAAP- France Degage) and campaigns against what he calls "the neo-colonialist deals". He has regularly been arrested simply for exercising his rights to peaceful assembly and expression but released later without any charges.

In October 2016, the Senegalese National Assembly adopted amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, which could be used to stifle peaceful dissent, arguing that it was a necessary measure to combat terrorism and cyber-criminality. The amendments to the Criminal Code provide vague and overly broad definitions of terrorism-related offences, exposing activists to severe criminal sanctions.

Several artists and journalists have been arbitrarily arrested and detained over several days solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

### **PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: FRENCH**

You can also write in your own language.

### **PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 18 October 2019**

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

### **NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: [Guy Marius Sagna] (he/him/his)**

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr49/0847/2019/en/>