

URGENT ACTION

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE ON HUNGER STRIKE

Pro-democracy activist and mobilisation coordinator for National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC), Oumar Sylla (alias Foniké Mengué) has been on hunger strike since 25 December 2020, in protest of his detention and demanding that his trial be speedily organised. On 4 December 2020, his charges were changed to " participation in a gathering likely to disturb public order". He is a prisoner of conscience who must be immediately and unconditionally released.

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

Maitre Mory Doumbaya
Minister of Justice
BP: 564 Conakry
Email: maitredoumbouya@yahoo.com

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you concerning **Oumar Sylla (alias Foniké Mengué)**, a pro-democracy activist and mobilisation coordinator for National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC), who started hunger strike on 25 December 2020. He sent a letter the day before to the Prosecutor of Mafanco Tribunal to explain the reason for his hunger strike, saying that he was not immediately tried as is usually the case for those arrested while committing a criminal act of the sort and was instead intentionally left to languish in prison. His hunger strike is also in protest of his case not having been scheduled for trial even though the investigation was completed two months ago. Oumar Sylla has not yet been seen by a doctor since he started his hunger strike.

Oumar Sylla was initially charged with "unauthorised gathering, disturbance of public order, destruction of public property and endangering state security" when he was arrested on 29 September 2020 while mobilizing people to engage in a protest against President Condé's candidacy for the 18 October 2020 presidential elections. The investigation into his case concluded on 4 December 2020, the charges were changed to "participation in a gathering likely to disturb public order". Oumar Sylla remains held in Conakry prison, in the Guinean capital.

This is the second time the authorities have arbitrarily arrested and detained Oumar Sylla in an attempt to silence him, in violation of his rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.

In light of the above, I urge you to:

- **Immediately and unconditionally release Oumar Sylla and ensure that the charge against him is dropped;**
- **Ensure Oumar Sylla has access to adequate health care, in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent;**
- **End the harassment, intimidation and arbitrary arrests of members of civil society and individuals for simply exercising their right to freedom of expression.**

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Oumar Sylla was arrested on 29 September 2020, during the campaign period prior to the presidential elections of 18 October 2020. Following the election, protests -some of which were violent- erupted to contest the results. The defense and security forces responded to the protests by using excessive force when carrying out operations in some neighborhoods which resulted in deaths.

At least 16 people were shot dead between 18 and 24 October 2020, according to a count made by Amnesty International. Between 19 and 28 October 2020 alone, one clinic in the capital received 37 wounded people, including 15 with firearms injuries and nine with stab wounds.

The authorities have carried out at least 400 arbitrary arrests, targeting opponents and civil society members, after the election. On 31 October 2020, the General prosecutor of Conakry's Court of Appeal announced that 325 people had been arrested during the post-election protests where violence ensued. On 10 November 2020, the Dixinn district prosecutor announced that 78 people had been brought before a judge and several others were wanted. On the following day, *Ibrahima Chérif Bah*, vice-president of the opposition UFDG party, Ousmane "Gaoual" Diallo, MP and coordinator of the UFDG, Abdoulaye Bah, former mayor of Kindia, Etienne Soropogui, president of the movement, "*Our common values*", and Mamadou Cellou Baldé, coordinator of the UFDG Committees were arrested. (For more information see the press release [here](#).)

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: FRENCH

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 4 MARCH 2021

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Oumar Sylla (his/he)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr29/3198/2020/en/>