

# URGENT ACTION

## ACTIVISTS BEATEN AND JAILED FOR PROTESTING

Activists, Larry Emmanuel and Victor Anene Udoka have been unlawfully detained since 5 April. They were physically assaulted and tortured by unidentified men on 5 April while peacefully protesting against corruption, and the poor human rights situation in Nigeria, and distributing posters that were perceived to be critical of the President. A few days later, they were turned over to the police and were subsequently transferred to the Nigeria Correctional Centre, located in Kogi State, in north central Nigeria, where they are currently being held. The two activists are being detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to protest and expressing their views. They must be immediately and unconditionally released.

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

**Governor of Kogi State**

Alhaji Yahaya Bello  
c/of Ministry of Information & Communications,  
Room 311, New State  
Secretariat Lokoja  
Kogi State, Nigeria  
Email: [info@kogistate.gov.ng](mailto:info@kogistate.gov.ng)

Dear Governor Yahaya Bello,

I am writing to express concerns about the arbitrary detention of activists **Larry Emmanuel (26) and Victor Anene Udoka (33)**, at Nigeria Correctional Centre, in Kabba, Kogi State, Nigeria.

On 5 April, the two activists were beaten and tortured by unidentified men solely for protesting, holding placards and distributing posters said to be anti-President Muhammadu Buhari in Lokoja, the capital city of Kogi State, north central Nigeria. The incident was documented in a video which went viral on Twitter. Following the incident, the activists went missing. On 8 April, they were secretly arraigned at a Magistrate Court and subsequently transferred to the Nigeria Correctional Centre, where they are currently being arbitrarily detained. It is unclear what their charges were as judicial staff in Nigeria are on strike and information about their charges was not made public.

I have serious concerns about the arrest, torture and detention of Larry Emmanuel and Victor Anene Udoka solely for peacefully exercising their right to protest. The right to freedom of expression is a human right and no one should ever be arrested, physically assaulted or tortured for expressing dissenting opinions.

I therefore request that Your Excellency:

- **Immediately and unconditionally release Larry Emmanuel and Victor Anene Udoka; and**
- **Pending their release, ensure that they are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and have regular and unfettered access to their family and a lawyer of their choice.**

Yours sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In Nigeria, the right to freedom of expression has come under attack. The younger generation of Nigerians have activated the power of peaceful protests in demanding justice for police brutality, extortion and extra-judicial executions while authorities continue to respond with violence. Civil rights activists, human rights defenders, and civil society are now left with few alternative channels of expression to demand accountability from the government. Those who attempt to exercise their right to freely protest on the street face arrest, detention, torture and trumped-up charges.

The past few months have witnessed a crackdown on peaceful protesters across the country under the #EndSARS movement. In October 2020, at least 12 persons were killed and several others injured at Lekki toll gate and Alausa when security forces opened fire on the EndSARS protesters. Instead of bringing suspected perpetrators to justice and prioritizing genuine police reforms, the Nigerian authorities have been abusing their powers by subjecting those who supported the protests to intimidation, harassment and smear campaigns. The right to peaceful protest is guaranteed under the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 (as amended), and human rights treaties to which Nigeria is a state party including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 18 June 2021

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

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Larry Emmanuel (he/his) Victor Anene Udoka (he/him)