

# URGENT ACTION

## ACTIVISTS JAILED FOR ANTI-PRESIDENT T-SHIRTS

Activists Larry Emmanuel, Anene Victor Udoka, Samuel Gabriel, Henry Nwodo, and Ben Mannaseh are being arbitrarily detained in connection to their peaceful activism. On 4 July, they attended a church service at the Dunamis International Gospel Center in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, when they were arrested and beaten by the Center's security unit for wearing #BuhariMustGo T-shirts. In detention, they have been denied access to their lawyers and family and are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. Nigerian authorities must immediately and unconditionally release them, in accordance with a court order.

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

**Attorney General and Minister for Justice**

Abubakar Malami (SAN)  
Federal Secretariat Complex  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Shehu Shagari Way  
PMB 192, Abuja, Nigeria  
Email: info@justice.gov.ng

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing in concern for **Larry Emmanuel, Anene Victor Udoka, Samuel Gabriel, Henry Nwodo, and Ben Mannaseh**, five young activists arbitrarily detained at the facility of the Department for State Services (DSS) in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, in connection to their peaceful activism.

On 4 July, the five activists were attending a Sunday church service when the security guards at Dunamis International Gospel Center, Abuja, arrested them for wearing #BuhariMustGo branded T-shirts. The shirts were in reference to President Buhari and were worn by the activists in protest against bad governance in Nigeria. The security unit handed them over to officials of the DSS who have since held them in custody. They have been denied any access to their family and lawyers and have not been charged with any offence. On 26 July, the Federal High Court ordered their release after their lawyer filed a suit in court to demand that their fundamental rights be respected.

Earlier this year, in April 2021, [Larry Emmanuel and Anene Victor Udoka](#) were beaten and jailed in Kogi state for peacefully protesting, holding placards and distributing posters. They were released on 18 June, after spending 72 days in prison. They are facing trial on trumped-up charges of "disturbance of public peace" for their April protests. Their trial resumes on 3 August.

I have serious concerns about the arbitrary detention and ongoing trial of these five activists, who are being held simply for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Freedom of expression is a human right and no one should ever be detained solely for expressing dissenting opinions.

**I therefore urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Larry Emmanuel, Anene Victor Udoka, Samuel Gabriel, Henry Nwodo, and Ben Mannaseh as ordered by the court and drop the baseless charges against Emmanuel Larry and Anene Victor Udoka.**

Yours sincerely,

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The right to freedom of expression has come under severe attack in Nigeria. Young people have activated the power of peaceful protests to demand justice for police abuses, extortion and extra-judicial executions while the authorities continue to repress them. Human rights defenders, lawyers and civil society organizations are now left with few alternative channels to demand accountability from the government. Those who attempt to exercise their right to peacefully protest on the streets are being repressed, and many have faced arbitrary detention, torture and trumped-up charges.

The right to peaceful assembly is protected under both the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 (as amended), and human rights treaties to which Nigeria is a state party to, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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

You can also write in your own language.

### **PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 22 SEPTEMBER 2021**

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

**NAME AND PRONOUN: Larry Emmanuel, Anene Victor Udoka, Samuel Gabriel, Henry Nwodo, and Ben Mannaseh (All he/his/him)**