

URGENT ACTION

CARTOONIST RELEASED AFTER CHARGES DROPPED

Equatorial Guinean cartoonist and activist, Ramón Esono Ebalé was released from Malabo prison of Black Beach on 7 March. Eight days earlier on 27 February, the charge of ‘counterfeiting money’ against him was dropped after a court hearing in Malabo.

On 7 March, Equatorial Guinean cartoonist and activist, **Ramón Esono Ebalé** was released from Malabo Black Beach prison eight days after the charge against him had been dropped.

Ramón went on trial on 27 February in Malabo after he had spent more than five months in pre-trial detention. After the trial, the state dropped the charge of ‘counterfeiting money’ against Ramón. Ramón had formally been informed of the charge against him on 7 December 2017. The charge was dropped after the state’s main witness retracted his testimony against Ramón and admitted that he had been asked to accuse Ramón of counterfeiting activities.

Ramón was arrested and detained in the capital of the country, Malabo, on 16 September 2017, and questioned over his cartoons that criticised Equatorial Guinea’s President Teodoro Obiang and his government. The cartoons were shared on the internet.

Amnesty International considered Ramón Esono Ebalé to be a prisoner of conscience who was detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression through art.

On behalf of Ramón, his family and his friends thanks so much to all those of you who took action; without your support, Ramón’s release would have not been possible.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the fourth update of UA 219/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr24/7867/2018/en/>

Further information on UA: 219/17 Index: AFR 24/8000/2018 Issue Date: 9 March 2018

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