

URGENT ACTION

FIVE ACTIVISTS ARRESTED FOR ORGANISING PROTESTS

Five activists, Ibrahim Diori, Maïkoul Zodi, Abdourahamane Idé Hassane, Sadat Illiya Dan Malam and Yahaya Badamassi, were arrested between 15 and 25 April in Niger.

Abdourahamane Idé Hassane has been released on bail while the other four activists are still in detention.

Ibrahim Diori, member of the Alternative Citizen Spaces, was arrested on 15 April at home, while **Maïkoul Zodi**, national coordinator of the movement Let's turn the Page, was arrested on the street on the same day.

Abdourahamane Idé Hassane, president of Youth for a New Mentality was summoned by the Judicial Police and then detained on 15 April after responding to the summon. They were charged with "organisation and participation in a prohibited demonstration" and "damage to public property" on 19 April. Maïkoul Zodi and Abdourahamane Idé Hassane, through their organisations, planned and organised a protest against a Finance Law that will see among other things an increase in taxes. The protest was banned by the chairman of the municipality of Niamey on 23 March for, according to him, "obvious security reasons... in view of the security context in Niger and in the sub-region, and, also, in view of recent terrorist attacks". Ibrahim Diori publicly read out a statement by civil society organisations calling for the peaceful protest. Ibrahim Diori and Maïkoul Zodi were transferred to Kollo and Say prisons respectively after being charged. Abdourahamane Idé Hassane was released on bail.

Sadat Illiya Dan Malam, Regional Coordinator of the Patriotic Movement for Responsible Citizenship, was arrested in Zinder (780 kms from the capital Niamey) on 18 April. He has been charged with "participation in an insurrectional movement" and "conspiracy against the security of the State". **Yahaya Badamassi**, Regional Coordinator of the Alternative Citizen Spaces, was arrested on 25 April. He was charged with "organisation and participation in a prohibited demonstration" and "damage to public property". They have been charged in relation to other protests against the Finance Law that had been organized in different parts of the country. Yahaya Badamassi and Sadat Illiya Dan Malam were transferred to Magaria (80 kms from Zinder) and Matameye (70 kms from Zinder) prisons respectively on 6 May.

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release the five activists detained solely in relation to their peaceful human rights work as well as any protestor detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and drop all charges against them including Abdourahamane Idé Hassane who has been released on bail;
- Urging them to guarantee that activists and human rights defenders in Niger are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and unlawful restrictions.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 JUNE 2018 TO:

President of the Republic of Niger

M. Issoufou Mahamadou
Palais Présidentiel
Boulevard de la République,
Niamey, Niger
Fax: + 227 20 73 34 30
Email: pneniger@gmail.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice, Human Rights and

Attorney General
M. Marou Amadou
Boulevard du Djermaganda BP 466
Niamey, Niger
Fax: +227 20 72 37 77

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of State for the Interior Public

Security, Decentralization, and
Customary and Religious Affairs
M. Mohamed Bazoum
BP 893
Niamey, Niger

Fax: +227 20 72 21 76

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR ABDERAHAMANE ASSANE MAYAKI
Embassy of the Republic of Niger, 154 Rue de Longchamp 75116 Paris France, (00) 331 45 04 80 60, Fax (00) 331 45 04 79 73

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since the 2018 Finance Bill -which provides for new taxes on housing, power, etc- was tabled in Parliament in November 2017, civil society organizations have campaigned against this law terming it as "anti-social" and calling for it to be repealed. Protests have been organized since November 2017.

The Bill was adopted into Law in January 2018. Civil society organisations have continued to protest against the 2018 Finance Law and calling for it to be amended arguing that it would drastically increase the cost of living and violate the right to an adequate standard of living for many already living in poverty. Five peaceful demonstrations have been organized against the Bill and Law since November 2017 and the sixth demonstration was banned. A public gathering in support of the Law in March 2018 was not banned.

In March, civil society organisations held a peaceful march organized to protest against the finance law, despite the ban against it. The police lobbed tear gas to break up the protest. Twenty three people were arrested in connection with the protest, some at the offices of civil society organizations and others during the protests.

On 25 March, four human rights defenders (HRDs), Moussa Tchangari, Ali Idrissa, Nouhou Arzika and Lirwana Abdourahmane were among a group of people arrested and detained by security forces in Niamey, Niger. They have been charged with 'organisation and participation in a prohibited demonstration', 'complicity in violence', 'assault' and 'destruction' in connection with a peaceful protest organised by their organisations, but which they did not attend.

Moussa Tchangari, Secretary General of the Alternative Citizen Spaces (Alternatives Espaces Citoyens, AEC), a human rights organisation working on economic and social rights and fighting against impunity, was arrested early on 25 March. A few hours later, Ali Idrissa, Coordinator of the Network of Organizations for Budgetary Transparency and Analysis (ROTAB), and Nouhou Arzika, President of the Movement for the Promotion of Responsible Citizenship (Mouvement Pour la Promotion de la Citoyenneté Responsable, MPCR), were also arrested. Lawyer and activist, Lirwana Abdourahmane was arrested on the same day while leaving the "Labari" TV station where he had been invited as a guest to discuss a protest organised by civil society organisations.

Name: Ibrahim Diori, Maïkoul Zodi, Abdourahamane Idé Hassane, Sadat Illiya Dan Malam and Yahaya Badamassi

Gender m/f: male

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