

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST'S WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN AFTER ARREST

Chadian activist Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam is being held incommunicado in an unknown location after he was arrested by four armed men in plainclothes in Moundou, in the south of Chad on 5 May. He may have been subjected to enforced disappearance.

Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam, spokesperson of the civil society platform “ça doit changer” (‘things must change’) was arrested by four armed men in plainclothes at the bus station of Moundou while he was with a friend on 5 May at around 9pm. The four men, believed to be agents of the Agence Nationale de la Sécurité (ANS), took him to the ANS office, which is near the bus station. No one has heard from him since then and his whereabouts remain unknown. He may have been subjected to enforced disappearance. He suffers from a herniated disc of his spinal column that requires him to take medication daily. His family and lawyer are worried about his health.

His lawyer brought the case to the attention of the Public Prosecutor's office and his family members looked for him at the judicial police services and at several prisons. All the officials they met have denied having any knowledge of Decladore's whereabouts. A few weeks prior to his arrest, Decladore fled to a neighboring country as he believed he was being sought by security agents. According to his family and lawyer, this was linked to statements Decladore made in the media about the security situation in Chad and reports on human rights violations he shared with diplomatic missions in N'Djamena. Decladore had alleged that security forces had killed six people and wounded a dozen others in Goré, near the Central African Republic border, on 26 February. In addition, on 15 April he called for a national day of mourning and asked people to stay home to denounce the high rate of youth unemployment in Chad and the arrest of two leaders of the citizen movement, IYINA. Decladore returned to Chad on 26 April as he thought the situation had calmed down and it was safe for him to return home.

Decladore's friend who was with him when he was arrested is also being sought by the ANS and has had to move from the house he used to live, fearing for his safety.

Amnesty International fears that Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam may have been subjected to enforced disappearance solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

1) TAKE ACTION

Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:

- Calling upon Chadian authorities to immediately disclose Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam's whereabouts;
- Urging them to immediately release Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam if he is in state custody, unless he is to be charged promptly with a recognizable criminal offence, in line with international law and standards;
- Urging them to ensure that pending his release, he is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and is allowed regular access to his lawyers, to family visits and to adequate medical attention;
- Urging the authorities to end all forms of intimidation and harassment, in particular by the ANS, against all other human rights activists and defenders in Chad.

Contact these two officials by 12 June, 2017:

Minister of Justice

Ahmat Mahamat Hassan

Ministry of Justice

P.O. Box 2100

N'Djamena, Chad

Email: ahmatconseiller@yahoo.fr or angarboa@gmail.com

Salutation: Dear Minister

His Excellency Mr Ambassador Mahamat Nasser Hassane

Embassy of the Republic of Chad

2401 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008

Phone: (202) 652-1312 | Email: info@chadembassy.us

Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam is spokesperson of the civil society platform "ça doit changer", which aims to contribute to good governance, advocates for greater transparency and respect for fundamental rights by Chadian authorities. Decladore publicly denounced the arrest of civil society leaders Nadjo Kaina Palmer, Bertrand Sollo and Dingamnayal Nely Versinis in April 2017.

Nadjo Kaina Palmer was arrested on 6 April after he showed up to see the ANS Director who had summoned him regarding a peaceful demonstration that had been set for 10 April to protest against corruption and impunity. On 3 April, during a press conference, Nadjo Kaina Palmer called on Chadians to observe an "IYINA day" on 10 April, marking the anniversary of the 2016 presidential election. They were encouraged to dress in red or wear a red scarf on their heads to express their discontent with the government's mismanagement and "say no to bad governance, impunity and humiliation". Bertrand Sollo was arrested on 15 April while on his way to attend a media interview. Dingamnayal Nely Versinis was arrested on 12 April at the N'Djamena city hall, after being summoned to the venue by city hall officials. His arrest occurred after he called on the traders of the N'Djamena Millet Market to take part in a strike to protest against an increase in the market booth prices. The three Chadian activists appeared before a judge of the High court of Ndjamenana on 27 April. Dingamnayal Nely Versinis was acquitted and released on the grounds that there was no sufficient evidence that he committed the offense he was accused of. The public prosecutor had requested that he be imprisoned for six months for the charges of fraud and usage of a false title. Nadjo Kaina Palmer and Bertrand Sollo were charged with attempted conspiracy and calling an unauthorized gathering on 26 April. They were given a six months suspended sentence for incitement to revolt on 4 May.

Decladore has documented some killings in Gore, near the border of Chad with Central African Republic. Decladore claimed that on Sunday 26 February 2017 security forces fired at a crowd when trying to intervene in a conflict between two families. Six people were killed and a dozen others wounded during the incident.

Name: Maoundoe Decladore Djikoldingam
Gender m/f: Male

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