

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST AND LAWYER HELD AT MILITARY FACILITY

Jean-Marie Kalonji, an activist with the youth movement *Quatrieme voie/ il est temps*, was arrested by military security forces on Friday 23 June in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). His colleague and lawyer **Sylva Mbikayi** was arrested a few hours later when he attempted to visit Jean-Marie Kalonji where he was detained.

Jean-Marie Kalonji was stopped by soldiers at an exit check-point of a military camp in Salongo neighbourhood of Lemba municipality at around 1630 hours on Friday 23 June as he left his brother's house. When he explained that he could not show his passport as it was with an embassy where he had applied for a visa, the soldiers started questioning his nationality and searched his bag which contained flyers for a Lumumba scholarship programme set up by the youth movement *Quatrieme Voie/ il est temps* (the fourth way/ it is time). Jean-Marie Kalonji is the coordinator of this youth movement which aims to defend the rights of the Congolese youth and has campaigned for peace and democracy in the DRC.

At the time of his arrest, Jean-Marie Kalonji was on the phone with a colleague, who overheard part of the conversation with the soldiers. She alerted **Sylva Mbikayi**, a lawyer who supports the youth movement *Quatrieme voie/ il est temps*. When Sylva Mbikayi arrived at the military camp where Jean-Marie Kalonji was detained, he was also arrested.

Jean-Marie Kalonji and Sylva Mbikayi were transferred to the headquarters of the military intelligence at around 2300 hours. According to Jean-Marie Kalonji's family, the two were ill-treated by the soldiers before being transferred. They have been detained there to date, without access to their family members or lawyers. They have not yet been charged.

1) TAKE ACTION

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

- Calling on the Congolese authorities to release Jean-Marie Kalonji and Sylva Mbikayi immediately and unconditionally;
- Calling on them to ensure that Jean-Marie Kalonji and Sylva Mbikayi have full and immediate access to a lawyer of their choosing, family members and medical assistance;
- Urging the Congolese authorities to guarantee that Jean-Marie Kalonji and Sylva Mbikayi are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Contact these two officials by 14 August, 2017:

Minister of Human Rights
Mrs. Marie-Ange Mushobekwa
Ministère des droits humain
Place Royal
Kinshasa-Gombe
Democratic Republic of Congo
Email: mushobekwa.likulia@gmail.com
Salutation: Dear Minister

Ambassador François Balumuene, Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Congo
1100 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 725,
Washington, D.C. 20036
Tel: 202 234 7690
Fax: 202 234 2609 -OR- 202 223 3377
Email: ambassade@ambardcusa.org
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

[Click here](#) to let us know if you took action on this case! *This is Urgent Action 162.17*

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Jean-Marie Kalonji is a Congolese citizen. DRC has not issued its citizens with identification cards in the past twenty years and therefore citizens use either their voter's card and/or passport as a form of identification.

Jean-Marie Kalonji was previously arrested in December 2015. He was detained in incommunicado detention for four and a half months by the National Intelligence Service (ANR). Following months of campaigning by civil society, he was finally transferred to Makala prison where he remained in detention until 27 August 2016. He was released after his name was included in a list of political prisoners who would be released in the context of confidence building measures taken ahead of the national dialogue about the political future of DRC led by the African Union.

Since his release from prison, Jean-Marie Kalonji has been an active member of *Quatrieme voie/ il est temps*. The movement defends the rights of the youth in DRC, promotes civic education and engages the youth in social projects for change. Together with *Congo love*, an organisation that aims to empower and educate communities in the DRC through cultural activities, they have organised activities like football tournaments in Kinshasa and workshops on gender equality. Their most recent initiative, the Lumumba scholarship, will select and finance 10 students to pursue their studies at one of the 10 selected universities or institutions in Kinshasa while contributing to one of the social projects of *Quatrieme voie/ il est temps*.

Name: Jean-Marie Kalonji, Sylva Mbikayi
Gender: Male

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