

URGENT ACTION

FOUR ACTIVISTS ARBITRARILY DETAINED

Youth activists **Grâce Tshiuza, Mino Bompomi, Cedric Kalonji and Carbone Beni** remain in arbitrary detention and have yet to be brought to court since their arrest on 30 December 2017 while mobilizing the public to participate in a peaceful protest. The authorities have been reluctant to share information on what they are accused of. They are being held by the National Intelligence Agency (ANR).

Four youth activists, **Grâce Tshiuza, Mino Bompomi, Cedric Kalonji and Carbone Beni**, were arrested on 30 December 2017 in Kinshasa, but have yet to be brought to court nor notified of the charges against them. Congolese law does not allow detention beyond 48 hours without being presented in court. The four were arrested while they were mobilizing the public to participate in a peaceful demonstration to demand the full implementation of the 31 December 2016 Agreement aimed at ensuring an “inclusive, peaceful and credible” election. The peaceful protest organized by the Lay Coordination Committee (CLC) of the Catholic Church took place the day after the activists were arrested.

Upon their arrest, the four were taken to the provincial police inspection station known as IPKIN. Three of the youth activists were then transferred to the ANR detention facility in Kinshasa, while Carbone Beni was taken to Camp Tshatshi, a military intelligence detention facility in Kinshasa. Carbone Beni was later transferred to the same ANR detention facility as the other three activists. On 12 January, they were all transferred to another ANR detention centre known as 3 Zulu, near the Prime Minister’s Office in Kinshasa. Amnesty International has learned that on 1 March, Mino Bompomi and Cedric Kalonji were taken back to the ANR detention facility where they were first held following their arrest.

For more than two months, the Congolese authorities denied the detained youth activists’ access to their families and lawyers. They are now allowed visits from their families and lawyers but this still depends on the goodwill of the guards, which is not always forthcoming.

The four youth activists are members of Filimbi, a citizen’s movement campaigning for President Joseph Kabila to step down after his constitutionally-allowed two-term mandate expired in December 2016.

1) TAKE ACTION

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

- Urging the Congolese authorities to release Grâce Tshiuza, Mino Bompomi, Cedric Kalonji and Carbone Beni unless they are charged with internationally recognizable criminal offenses if there are legitimate reasons for doing so;
- Urging them to ensure that the four youth activists are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention;
- Urging them to ensure that the prison guards allow the four men full access to their families and lawyers.

Contact these two officials by 25 April, 2018:

Minister of Justice

Monsieur Alexis Tambwe Mwamba
Ministère de la Justice
228 Av de Lemera
Kinshasa-Gombe
BP 3137
DRC
Email: minjustdh@gmail.com
Salutation: Honourable Minister

Ambassador François Nkuna 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
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 38.18*

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) President Joseph Kabila has been in office since 2001 and was declared winner of the 2006 and 2011 elections. The Congolese Constitution limits presidential mandates to two consecutive terms of five years each. President Kabila's second and last mandate ended on 19 December 2016, but he remains in power after failing to organize elections.

The Conference of Catholic Bishops (CENCO) led an inclusive national dialogue which resulted in an agreement signed on 31 December 2016. The Agreement included provisions aimed at building trust and improving the political situation in the country by releasing prisoners, upholding the freedom of the press and allowing the return of opposition leaders from exile to participate in "inclusive, peaceful and credible elections."

President Kabila's failure to honour the 31 December Agreement has been seen by many as his unwillingness to leave power. This has led to several peaceful demonstrations led by the Lay Coordination Committee of the Catholic Church since December 2017. These protests have been held to call on President Kabila to fully implement the 31 December Agreement. These protests, so far conducted on 31 December 2017, 21 January and 25 February 2018, have been supported by the opposition groups and citizen's movements including Filimbi. The brutal response of the security forces to these protests have resulted in the death of at least 13 people and left dozens of protesters injured, as well as several arbitrary arrests and detentions.

Over the past three years, the DRC government has resorted to illegal detentions to prevent human rights defenders and activists from organizing against its perceived tactics to delay the elections. On 15 March 2015, pro-democracy activists, Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala were arrested and held incommunicado for more than a month in Kinshasa. In August the same year, their colleague Bienvenu Matumo went missing for three days before being released without any explanation on the reasons for his arrest and detention. In December 2016, Gloria Senga and Musasa Tshibanda went missing for several days as they were preparing protest against what they considered to be attempts to delay of the elections. It was later revealed that they had been detained by the authorities.

Name: Grâce Tshiunza (m), Mino Bompomi (m), Cedric Kalonji (m) and Carbone Beni (m)
Gender m/f: m

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