URGENT ACTION

**JOURNALIST DETAINED FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POST**

**Journalist Mamane Kaka Touda is currently being detained at Niamey Civil Prison, Niamey, Niger, having published a post on social media regarding a suspected case of COVID-19 infection in the Emergency Department of the Niamey Reference Hospital on 5 March. He was arrested at home on the same day and charged with “disseminating data tending to disturb public order”.**

**TAKE ACTION:**

1. Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
2. [Click here](https://www.amnestyusa.org/report-urgent-actions/) to let us know the actions you took on ***Urgent Action 32.20****.* It’s important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

**M. Issoufou Mahamadou**

President of the Republic of Niger

Palais Présidentiel

Boulevard de la République,

Niamey, Niger

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**Ambassador Hassana Alidou**Embassy of the Republic of Niger
2204 R St. NW Washington, DC 20008
Phone: 202 483 4224 I Fax: 202 483 3169
Email: communication@embassyofniger.org
Twitter: [@HassanaAlidou](https://twitter.com/hassanaalidou?lang=en)
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

Dear Excellency,

I am writing to express my concern that journalist Mamane Kaka Touda has been detained since 5 March at Niamey Civil Prison, after he published a post on social media regarding a suspected case of COVID-19 infection in Niamey Reference Hospital. He was arrested at home on the same day and charged with “disseminating data tending to disturb public order”.

Since 9 March, prison guards have refused to take the food delivered by Mamane Kaka Touda’s aunt and give it to him because his aunt does not have a communication permit. The permit is only given to close relatives, including spouses, parents and siblings.

I am deeply concerned that Mamane Kaka Touda’s rights have been violated. The authorities must protect journalists, whistle-blowers, activists and human rights defenders, in accordance with the country's international obligations to protect human rights.

I urge you to ensure that charges against Mamane Kaka Touda are dropped and that he is immediately and unconditionally released; pending his release, he has prompt, regular and unrestricted access to a lawyer of his choice and access to his family without delay; and the right to freedom of expression is fully respected, protected and promoted.

Yours sincerely,

**Additional information**

Mamane Kaka Touda, journalist and human rights defender, and member of the NGO "Alternative Espaces Citoyens", is detained in the Civil Prison of Niamey, the capital of Niger.

He published posts on social media alerting on a suspected case of COVID-19 infection on 5 March. In a statement released the same day, the hospital said there were no cases of COVID-19 in its departments. A spokesperson for the Ministry of Health subsequently confirmed the suspected case mentioned by Mamane Kaka Touda, explaining that an Italian national had indeed been admitted there "as a precaution" before leaving the hospital, the tests being negative.

Niger has not yet identified any case of the COVID-19 infection in the country.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** [French]

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** [24 April 2020]

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN: [Mamane Kaka Touda]** (he/his)

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UA:** N/A