

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST SENTENCED TO 3 YEAR IMPRISONMENT

On June 10, 2021, Oumar Sylla (alias Foniké Mengué), a pro-democracy activist and mobilization coordinator for National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC in French), was sentenced by Conakry's Court of Appeal to three year imprisonment for "communication and dissemination of false information, violence and threat of death". He must be immediately and unconditionally released as he is being punished for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

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](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 154.20**. 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.

Mr. Mory Doumbouya
Minister of Justice
BP: 564 Conakry
Email: maitredoumbouya@yahoo.com

Ambassador Kerfalla Yansane
Embassy of the Republic of Guinea
2112 Leroy Pl. NW, Washington DC 20008
Phone: 202 986 4300 / Contact form: <https://bit.ly/2CpLqLu>
Facebook: [@EmbassyofGuineainUS](#)
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you regarding the unlawful conviction of **Oumar Sylla (alias Foniké Mengué)**, a pro-democracy activist and mobilization coordinator for National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC), who has been sentenced to three years of imprisonment.

Oumar Sylla was re-arrested in Conakry, the Guinean capital, on September 29, 2020 while mobilizing people to engage in a protest against President Condé's candidacy for the October 2020 presidential elections. On January 28, 2021, after four months of arbitrary detention, the Mafanco Court in Conakry sentenced him to 11 months in prison for "criminal participation in a gathering likely to disturb public order". His lawyers appealed the decision.

In an unexpected turn of events, on June 10, Conakry's Court of Appeal sentenced Oumar Sylla to three year imprisonment for 'communication and dissemination of false information, violence and threat of death' - the same charges that were brought against Oumar Sylla during his first arrest in April 2020 but were dismissed by a judge on August 27, 2020, who subsequently ordered his release after 132 days of arbitrary detention.

I am concerned that Oumar Sylla has been convicted solely in connection to his pro-democracy activism with the FNDC. He has been targeted by the authorities and arbitrarily deprived of his liberty. He must be released immediately and unconditionally.

I am also deeply concerned about Oumar Sylla's health whilst in detention, which has severely deteriorated since his 14-day hunger strike in December 2020. He has had to be evacuated to hospital several times, the last time on May 28. And in March 2021 he contracted Covid-19.

In light of the above, I call on you to:

- Ensure that Oumar Sylla's conviction is overturned without delay, making sure it is in line with international law and standards and does not violate his right to freedom of expression; and he is released immediately and unconditionally;
- Ensure that, pending his release, Oumar Sylla's conditions of detention are in line with international standards, including access to adequate healthcare and regular access to his lawyers and family;
- End the harassment, intimidation and arrests of members of civil society and individuals solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Sincerely,

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On April 17, 2020, Oumar Sylla was arrested in front of his house in Conakry, Guinea's capital. Prior to his arrest, Oumar Sylla participated by phone in the show "Grande Gueule" on Espace FM radio station. During his interview, he called on members of the FNDC to prepare for the resumption of demonstrations against the government's plans for constitutional change, which would change presidential term limits and allow President Alpha Condé to run for a third term in office. He also denounced the killings, torture, arbitrary detention and harassment of FNDC members. During the first day of trial, on August 6, 2020, the Prosecutor warned of the "serious risk for public order to release Oumar Sylla". On August 27, 2020, he was released after the judge dismissed all charges against him.

Oumar Sylla was re-arrested on September 29, 2020 while mobilizing against President Alpha Condé's candidacy for the October 2020 presidential election. Following the presidential election, protests - some of which were violent - erupted to contest the results. Security forces responded to the protests by using excessive force when carrying out operations in some neighbourhoods which resulted in deaths. According to Amnesty International, at least 16 people were shot dead between October 18 and 24, 2020.

On October 31, 2020, the General prosecutor of Conakry's Court of Appeal announced that 325 people had been arrested during the post-election protests where violence ensued. On November 10, 2020, the Dixinn district prosecutor announced that 78 people had been brought before a judge and several others were wanted.

On December 25, 2020, Oumar Sylla started a hunger strike as protest of his case not having been scheduled for trial even though the investigation was completed two months before. He ended his strike on January 8, 2021, after his trial was scheduled.

Between December 2020 and January 2021, Amnesty International documented and reported on the deaths of four people while in pretrial detention in Conakry central prison.

On May 7, 2021, the government spokesperson announced the release of 40 detainees following the dismissal of all charges against them. 57 people are still detained and charged for "attacking the institutions of the republic", "disturbing the state through devastation and looting", "participation in an insurrectionary movement", "threat of violence or death through an information system", and "production, dissemination and other provision of data likely to disturb public order or public security". Among them, there are four leaders of the opposition party, Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea: Ousmane "Gaoual" Diallo, Mamadou Cellou Balde, Ibrahima Chérif Bah, Amadou Djoulé Diallo, and the leader of the political movement "Nos valeurs communes", Etienne Soropogui.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: August 26, 2021

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Oumar Sylla (he/him/his/)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr29/3488/2021/en/>