

URGENT ACTION

DETAINED COMMUNITY LEADER WRONGFULLY CHARGED

Salomé T. Abalodo, a farmer and community leader, has been charged with 'rebellion' and 'participation in an unauthorised protest'. She was arrested in the district of Pagouda (Kara, northern region of Togo) on 13 April after taking pictures of wounded protesters and asking the local authorities to keep security forces from using excessive force on peaceful demonstrators. She is detained at a prison in Kara.

Salomé T. Abalodo, a farmer, community leader and mother of two children, was charged with 'rebellion' and 'participation in an unauthorised protest' on 13 April. She was arrested by gendarmes in Pagouda district on the same day after a meeting at the prefect's (a local official) office. Salomé T. Abalodo went to the prefect's office, where she met with his assistant, to ask that security forces cease using excessive force against demonstrators. During the meeting, she showed the prefect's assistant photos and videos she had taken with her phone at the hospital of those wounded after security forces used excessive force on a group of protesters. When the gendarmes arrested her, they took her phone.

Salomé T. Abalodo was first detained at Brigade of Pagouda where a gendarme took her Bible and rosary and forbade her to pray. She was made to sign a police statement without reading it despite the fact that she asked several times to read it before signing. She is currently being detained at a prison in Kara. She maintains that she did not participate in the protest.

On the day of Salomé T. Abalodo's arrest, local communities in Pagouda district held peaceful demonstrations calling on the local authorities to publish the results of the traditional chief elections that were held in 2015. The local authorities had notified the communities the day before that they would not be allowed to hold the demonstrations. Security forces used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the demonstrators. At least six of the demonstrators were wounded by the rubber bullets, while six others were arrested. The six that were arrested are also being detained at a prison in Kara and have been charged with "rebellion" and "participation in an unauthorised protest".

Please write immediately in French or your own language:

- Calling on the Togolese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Salomé T. Abalodo as she is being detained solely for exercising her right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to ensure that the six others detained are released if they are detained solely for exercising their right to peaceful assembly;
- Urging them to investigate the reports of excessive use of force and to bring those suspected of responsibility to justice in proceedings that meet international fair trial standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JUNE 2017 TO:

Président of the Republic of Togo

Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé
Boulevard du Mono,
Lomé, Togo
Email: dircomprtogo@gmail.com
Twitter: @FEGnassingbe
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Pius Kokouvi Agbetomey
Ministry of Justice
3 rue de l'OCAM,
BP 121, Lomé, Togo
Email: minjusticetogo@yahoo.fr
Twitter: @MinJusticeTG
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Robert Dussey
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
BP 900, Lomé, Togo
Email: maeirtgce@hotmail.fr
Twitter: @rdussey

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Security forces continue to use excessive force against demonstrators. Arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and other ill-treatment, and impunity for human rights violations continue in Togo.

Amnesty International has consistently raised concerns with the Togolese authorities that law enforcement officials use excessive force against peaceful demonstrators and use torture and other ill-treatment against arrested or detained persons. Togo was examined under the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process in October 2016. Concerns by UN member states included impunity and restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.

In March, hundreds of people took to the streets of Lomé to protest against a hike in fuel prices. A demonstrator was shot and several others were wounded.

On 4 April, Kombate Garimbité, a member of the opposition party Alliance des démocrates pour le développement intégral (ADDI) was arrested after taking part in a parent – student meeting in Yembour locality. During the meeting, the local authority asked parents to pay 1600 CFA francs (about 2.50 euros) per family to repair damage caused by several students during demonstrations in March 2016. The students were calling for an end to a teachers' strike so that lessons could resume. Kombate Garimbité refused this proposal. He was arrested and accused of "aggravated public disorder" for instigating the student demonstrations. He is detained at the Dapaong prison in the north of the country. He denies having been involved in the organization of the demonstrations and declares that at the time of the demonstrations he was in Lomé, 630 km from Yembour.

Name: Salomé T. Abalodo

Gender m/f: f

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