

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

QUOTE

25 January 2018

CHAD: THREE ACTIVISTS ARRESTED DURING VIOLENT SUPPRESSION OF A DEMONSTRATION BY THE SECURITY FORCES

REACTING TO THE VIOLENT DISPERSAL THIS MORNING OF A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION BY CIVIL SOCIETY, AT LEAST THREE MEMBERS OF WHOM WERE ARRESTED IN THE CAPITAL, N'DJAMENA, ALIOUNE TINE, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR SAID: \_

"The violent dispersal of a peaceful demonstration this morning, the arrest of civil society leaders and the attack on a journalist are strong indications that the Chadian authorities are not yet ready to end their repression and censorship.

"Access to some internet sites were restricted and mobile phone operators were ordered to send messages saying the demonstration was banned in flagrant violation of the right to freedom of expression, which includes access to information.

"People should never have been arrested for exercising their right to participate in a peaceful and non-violent protest. They must be immediately and unconditionally released."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S PRESS OFFICE IN DAKAR, SENEGAL: \_\_+221 77 658 62 27\_ [5]\_ OR \_\_+221 33 869 82 31\_ [6]\_; EMAIL: \_\_SADIBOU.MARONG@AMNESTY.ORG\_ ; \_TWITTER: @AMNESTYWARO\_.

BACKGROUND

A peaceful demonstration planned by a number of civil society organizations for this morning in N'Djamena, the Chadian capital, was prevented from taking place by security forces deployed very early in the day. They dispersed protestors with tear gas and water cannon.

Some protestors were wounded and a number of them, including Dingamnayal Nelly Versinis, spokesperson for the *Collectif tchadien contre la vie chère (Chadian Collective against the Cost of Living/CTCV)* were arrested. Versinis was taken away in a police car at around 07.30 in the morning but released some three hours later. The others, however, including Garba Ahmat Dogo, Abdelbassit Mahamat Ali Acyl and Ahmat Hassaballah from the *Convention Tchadienne pour la défense des droits humains (Chadian Convention for Human Rights/CTDDH)* are still being held in custody.

According to information received by Amnesty International, the Public Prosecutor is accusing them of public order offences and failure to respect a prohibition order.