



2024

Cameroon - Abdul Karim Ali

Abdul Karim Ali is a Cameroonian human rights defender and former director of the Center for Peace Research (CRP). He is being arbitrarily detained in Yaoundé's Kondengui central prison for denouncing the use of torture by a Cameroonian military officer in the southwest region of the country.

Abdul Karim Ali was arrested by gendarmes, without a warrant, on August 11, 2022, in the Ntamulung district of Bamenda, in the North-West region, then detained at the local gendarmerie. In violation of the law, he remained in custody for 84 days - several of them incommunicado - in a six-square-meter cell with no windows, toilet or mattress and in the company of 12 other detainees. For several days, he was deprived of food and water. Although no official reason was given for his detention, he was questioned about a video recorded on July 9, 2022 and published on social media, in which he accused a Cameroonian military officer - Ewome John Eko, nicknamed "Moja Moja", also a traditional chief and leader of a pro-government militia - of torturing civilians.

In early November 2022, Abdul Karim Ali was transferred to the Central Service of Judicial Research (SCRJ) of the Secretariat of State for Defense (SED) in Yaoundé, a place infamous for the torture of detainees during interrogation. On November 7, 2022, he was brought for the first time before the Yaoundé military tribunal, a non-independent judicial body that under international law, should not try civilians, but only military personnel. At the end of January 2023, Abdul Karim Ali was transferred to the Kondengui central prison, also in Yaoundé.



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In March 2023, after spending more than 200 days in detention without charge, in violation of Cameroonian law and international human rights standards, Abdul Karim Ali was officially charged with "hostilities against the homeland, secession, failure to declare and rebellion". Since then, he has appeared several times before the examining magistrate of the military court, but his trial has stalled as there is no evidence to support the charges against him. It is neither a crime nor an offence to possess videos of military personnel committing human rights violations, nor is it a crime to publicly denounce such acts and call for justice to be done.

His current trial before the Yaoundé military court is therefore an aberration and is designed solely to punish his activities as a human rights defender.

For ACAT-France, Karim Abdul Ali's detention is arbitrary. The current trial before a military court is contrary to international law. The charges against him should be dropped and Karim Abdul Ali released immediately.

ACAT-France is advocating in favor of Karim Abdul Ali's release and, via its members, addressed its concerns to the Cameroonian authorities at the beginning of June 2023.

What can you do?

Pray for him! Support him by writing to him!

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