

***Paris, France, December 2 (Infosplusgabon) - Four civil society organisations on Monday called on the Guinean government to "immediately release" Oumar Sylla, also known as Foniké Menguè, a member of the National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC) and deputy coordinator of Tournons La Page (TLP-Guinea), who has been in custody for two months at Conakry's central prison.***

Sylla, accused of "unlawful assembly, disturbing public order, undermining state security, and destruction of public property", was arrested on September 29 by men in civilian clothes in the streets of Conakry's Matoto commune as he prepared to take part in a demonstration organised by the FNDC to protest President Alpha Condé's candidacy for a third term.

He was then taken to the Directorate of the Judicial Police (DPJ), interrogated without his lawyers being present, before the prosecutor of Mafanco court decided to place him under a committal order and have him incarcerated in Conakry's central prison.

The four NGOs seeking Sylla's release are Tournons La Page Guinée (TLP-Guinea), Agir ensemble pour les droits humains, Observatoire pour la protection des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme (FIDH-OMCT) and Front Line Defenders.

"If the rule of law is functioning in Guinea, it is attacked by the political power that abuses its ability to arrest civil society activists. This harassment must stop. The place of human rights defenders is not in prison. We strongly condemn the new arbitrary detention of Oumar Sylla, which is just one more illustration of the widespread repression against all dissident voices in Guinea," the four organisations said in a joint statement.

The organisations called on the Guinean authorities to release Sylla "immediately and unconditionally", to end the persecution of those who peacefully express their opposition to the ruling authorities, and to guarantee the fundamental rights recognised by the Guinean constitution.

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