

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALIST FACES INDEFINITE DETENTION

Sierra Leonean journalist, **David Tam Baryoh**, has been detained since 3 November following an executive order signed by President Ernest Bai Koroma. Under section 29 (17) (a) of the Constitution, he can remain in detention for an indefinite period of time under the state of emergency regulations. There have been no charges brought against him. Amnesty International believes he is a prisoner of conscience.

On Monday 3 November, **David Tam Baryoh** was arrested by police officers at his office in Freetown, the capital. He was presented with an executive detention order signed by President Ernest Bai Koroma, which accused him of incitement. On 1 November David Tam Baryoh interviewed an opposition party spokesman on the independent radio *Citizen FM*. The spokesman criticized the government's handling of the Ebola outbreak and raised concerns about the authorities' management of the Ebola crisis response fund. During the interview David Tam Baryoh criticized President Koroma's intention to run for a third term in office.

David Tam Baryoh is detained at the Pademba Road Prison, where a medical doctor examined him on 3 and 5 November. The doctor has indicated that David Tam Baryoh is suffering from high blood pressure and should be taken to hospital for immediate medical care. He has been admitted to the prison's hospital where he is being treated.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Calling on President Ernest Bai Koroma to immediately and unconditionally release David Tam Baryoh as he has been arrested solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging that he ensures that David Tam Baryo receives adequate and proper medical treatment, including access to medications that he may require;
- Calling on him to respect and protect the right to freedom of expression and ensure journalists are able to carry out their work freely and without any hindrance, including during the current state of emergency.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 DECEMBER 2014 TO:

President of the Republic

Ernest Bai Koroma

The President`

State House

Freetown, Sierra Leone

Email: jkawusu-konte@statehouse.gov.sl

and jaramenajara@yahoo.com

Salutation: **Your Excellency**

And copies to:

Minister of Justice

Frankly Bai Kargbo

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Ministry of Justice

3rd Floor, Guma Building

Lamina Sankoh Street

Freetown, Sierra Leone

Fax: +232 22 22 93 66 / 22 49 40

Salutation: **Dear Minister**

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

The arrest of David Tam Baryoh comes amidst an unprecedented health crisis in the country. On 25 May the government of Sierra Leone (via the Ministry of Health and Sanitation) declared an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) following the laboratory confirmation of a suspected case from Kailahun District. President Ernest Bai Koroma, in an initial broadcast to the nation on 30 July, proclaimed a state of Public Health Emergency. This was aimed at enabling the government and its partners to take a more robust approach to dealing with the Ebola outbreak. He established a Presidential task force to champion the implementation of various measures to fight the disease. This was followed by other regulations on 7 August. The government's response to the Ebola outbreak has led to unnecessary restrictions on freedom of expression and free speech via bylaws for the prevention of Ebola and other diseases and the public Emergency Regulations Act.

In January David Tam Baryoh was arrested for seditious libel and in May his radio program "Monologue" was banned for two months following a government directive.

Name: David Tam Baryoh

Gender m/f: M

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