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First UA: 103/24 Index: AFR 43/8836/2024 Niger of December 16, 2024

## **NIGER**

### **HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER MOUSSA TCHANGARI ARRESTED IN NIGER**

On December 3, 2024, Moussa Tchangari, a respected human rights defender and secretary general of the civil society group Citizens' Alternative Spaces, was arrested at his home in Niamey, Niger. At least three plainclothes gunmen, claiming to be police officers, carried out the arrest.

For nearly two days, his location was unknown. On December 5, authorities confirmed that Moussa was being held at the Central Service for Combating Terrorism and Organized Transnational Crime in Niamey. He now faces charges of advocating terrorism and criminal association related to terrorism.

Moussa Tchangari is being unjustly detained for his peaceful human rights work. Niger's authorities must drop all charges and release him immediately.

#### **Write to the President of the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland urging him to:**

- Ensure all charges against Moussa Tchangari, who is being arbitrarily detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his human rights, are dropped and that he is released immediately.

#### **Write to:**

General Abdourahamane Tiani  
President of the National Council for the  
Safeguard of the Homeland  
Boulevard de la République, Niamey,  
BP: 622, Niger  
Emails: [communication@presidence.ne](mailto:communication@presidence.ne)  
[pneniger@gmail.com](mailto:pneniger@gmail.com)  
Salutation: Dear General Abdourahamane Tiani,

#### **And copy:**

Embassy of the Republic of Niger  
2204 R Street, NW  
Washington, D.C., DC 20008  
United States of America  
Tel: (202) 483-4224 Fax: (202) 483-3169  
Email: [communication@embassyofniger-usa.org](mailto:communication@embassyofniger-usa.org)

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

On December 3, 2024, Moussa Tchangari, a prominent human rights defender and secretary general of Citizens' Alternative Spaces (AEC), was arrested at his home in Niamey, Niger. At least three gunmen in plain clothes, claiming to be police, broke into his home, seized his phone, laptop, and suitcase, hooded him, and took him away. When asked about a warrant, they stated one was not required.

For nearly two days, his location was unknown. On December 5, 2024, his lawyers located him at the Central Service for Combating Terrorism and Organized Transnational Crime in Niamey. He faces charges of “advocating terrorism, undermining state security, and criminal association in connection with terrorism.” If convicted, he could face 5 to 10 years in prison and lose his Nigerien citizenship.

Moussa Tchangari’s arrest appears linked to his criticism of government actions. On November 12, 2024, he publicly opposed the interior minister’s decision to revoke the licenses of two humanitarian organizations and criticized the creation of a terrorism database. Days before his arrest, on November 28, 2024, AEC convened a meeting to discuss the government’s decision to strip nine individuals linked to former President Mohamed Bazoum of their citizenship.

Since the military coup in July 2023, Niger’s authorities have intensified their crackdown on dissent. The military-led government, under Abdourahamane Tiani, has systematically targeted political opposition, civil society, and independent media. Freedom of expression has been severely restricted, and human rights defenders like Tchangari have faced threats, harassment, and arbitrary detention.

Moussa Tchangari has been a committed advocate for human rights and the rule of law in Niger since the 1990s. Despite facing detention in 2015 and 2018, he has continued his work, even as the risks increased. Days before his arrest, Tchangari expressed concern about the growing threat of arbitrary detention for those who criticize the military authorities.

The charges against him, including advocating terrorism, fall under vague laws that allow the government to strip citizenship even before conviction. His detention reflects broader efforts by the authorities to silence dissent and consolidate power. Amnesty International calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Moussa Tchangari and an end to the repression of human rights in Niger.

***Please take action as soon as possible until June 16, 2025! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***