

Mr Laurent Eso, Minister of Justice

Secrétariat Général

Quartier ministériel

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Your Excellency,

I am deeply concerned about the wellbeing of political activist Serge Branco Nana.

Serge Branco Nana is a member of opposition party MRC. He was arrested in January 2019 in Bagangté, western Cameroon, during peaceful demonstrations. He was then held in pre-trial detention in Kondengui Prison in Yaounde. In July, he was accused of inciting a riot that happened in the prison and was subsequently sentenced to two-years in prison for “mutiny”.

Following the riot, Serge Branco Nana was taken to the State Secretariat for Defense (SED) where he was allegedly tortured for hours, severely beaten and his genitals were electrocuted. He was then transferred to Mfou Prison, 30km from Yaounde and more than 300km from Bagangté, with wounds and in a very deteriorated physical condition. He has since been complaining about pain in his abdomen, back and feet. Despite his complaints he has received no medical care.

On 1 February 2020, Serge Branco Nana’s brother was denied access to him. He is reportedly chained in his cell.

Cameroon is a party to three international treaties that prohibit torture, as well as cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Moreover, Cameroon’s Constitution, Penal Code, and Criminal Procedure Code forbid the use of torture and other treatment that violates human dignity and integrity. The treatment undergone by Serge Branco Nana amounts to torture or ill-treatment that is prohibited by those texts.

As a principle, no human being should be submitted to torture and other ill-treatment. In light of the above, I urge you to order the penitentiary administration to immediately do the following:

- Unchain Serge Branco Nana, if those allegations are verified;
- Grant him urgent medical care;
- Allow his family and lawyers to visit him;
- Ensure that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment.

Yours sincerely,