

**General Abdourahamane Tiani**

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Dear General Abdourahamane Tiani,

I am writing to bring to your attention the case of human rights defender **Moussa Tchangari**, secretary general of the civil society organization 'Citizens' Alternative Spaces' (Alternatives Espaces Citoyens, AEC) who was arrested on 3 December 2024 when at least three gunmen in plain clothes, who claimed to be policemen, broke into his home in Niamey, seized his phone, laptop and suitcase, hooded him and took him away. When asked them if they had a warrant, they replied that one was not compulsory.

For nearly two days, Moussa Tchangari's whereabouts remained unknown. On 5 December 2024, his lawyers finally located him at the Central Service for Combating Terrorism and Organized Transnational Crime in Niamey, where he had been transferred. He has been charged, amongst other things, with "advocacy of terrorism, undermining state security and criminal association in connection with terrorism". If found guilty, he could be jailed between five and 10 years and stripped of his Nigerien citizenship.

Just over three weeks before his arrest, on 12 November 2024, Moussa Tchangari criticized the decision by Niger's interior minister to withdraw the licenses of two humanitarian nongovernmental organizations, as well as the establishment by the authorities on 27 August 2024 of a terrorism database. On 28 November 2024, less than a week before his arrest, his organisation (the AEC) convened a meeting to discuss the 10th of October 2024 presidential decree provisionally removing Nigerien nationality from nine people linked to former President Bazoum. The arrest and detention of Moussa Tchangari appears to be linked to a pervasive crackdown on the political opposition, media, and peaceful dissent carried out by the Nigerien authorities since they took power by military coup in July 2023.

I am extremely concerned for Moussa Tchangari's life, his well-being, safety and health condition, as other human rights defenders who have been arrested and detained since the July 2023 coup have been denied of access to their lawyers and kept in inhumane prison conditions.

**I urge you, as President of the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland, 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.**

Yours sincerely,