

30 November 2020

Chad: Human rights defender Alain Kemba Didah detained and charged

On 30 November 2020, human rights defender **Alain Kemba Didah** was charged with “act of rebellion and disturbance of public order” by the Ndjamen Court, following his arbitrary arrest on 27 November by police officers at the office of Radio FM-Liberté. The defender is currently detained at Amsinene central prison in Ndjamen. His next hearing is scheduled for 11 December 2020.

[Alain Kemba Didah](#) is a human rights defender and coordinator of Mouvement Citoyen le Temps (Citizen Movement the Time), a movement promoting democracy, human rights and citizen participation. The citizen movement aims to engage all levels of civil society in the democratic process by advocating for freedom of expression and assembly. It mainly conducts its advocacy through campaigns and public debates.

On 26 November 2020, Chadian authorities banned the Forum Citoyen (Citizen Forum) from taking place. Forum Citoyen was supposed to be a citizen's forum organised by civil society organisations with the aim of giving a voice to all Chadians wishing to express themselves on subjects of public interest. In an effort to denounce this ban, some members of the Forum Citoyen, as well as members from other organisations such as Mouvement Citoyen le Temps, planned to hold a press conference on 27 November at the office of Radio Vison-FM. However, on 27 November, at 5 a.m., police surrounded the premises of several private radio stations, including Radio Vison-FM, and access to these places was forbidden. Police officers reportedly threw tear gas grenades towards the office of Radio FM-Liberté, which impacted several employees and journalists in training.

On 27 November, during the police intervention, human rights defender Alain Kemba Didah was arrested by police officers at the office of Radio FM-Liberté and brought to Ndjamen central police station before being transferred to Amsinene central prison. On 30 November 2020, the defender was charged with “act of rebellion and disturbance of public order” due to his participation in planning the press conference on 27 November. His next hearing is scheduled for 11 December.

Alain Kemba Didah believes that this arbitrary arrest is in reprisal for his legitimate and peaceful human rights activities. The human rights defender has previously been targeted and subjected to arbitrary arrests. On 19 February 2018, Alain Didah Kemba was [arrested](#) for allegedly being about to set fire to a tyre with gasoline. However, the defender denied having been in possession of gasoline at the time of his arrest and stated that he happened to be running passed a tyre when the police stopped him. Three days after his detention, his lawyer reported that he had difficulty standing and because the police had kicked him on the joints of his legs and the soles of his feet during an interrogation. The human rights defender was released unconditionally on 26 February 2018.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned by the detention and the charges brought against Alain Kemba Didah as it strongly believes that it is directly linked to his peaceful and legitimate work in defence of human rights.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Chad to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Alain Kemba Didah and drop all charges against him, as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being held and charged solely as a result of his peaceful and legitimate human rights work;

2. Ensure that the treatment of Alain Kemba Didah, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Chad are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.