

# Statement by the International Coalition of Women's Human Rights Defenders

Gambia: more protests against arrests of defenders of women's rights

Tuesday 19 October 2010, by [WHRDIC](#) (Date first published: 18 October 2010).

The Women Human Rights Defenders' International Coalition (WHRD IC) is shocked to learn of the arrests of our colleagues Dr. Isatou Touray and Ms. Amie Bojang-Sissoho on Monday, October 11, 2010 in the Gambia. According to reports received, they had been threatened and harassed prior to their arrest, and were held in police custody until their transfer to the Mile Two Central Prison near Banjul on Tuesday. Their request for bail has been denied and they were ordered to spend eight days in prison before appearing before the court on Wednesday 20 October.

The WHRDIC is familiar with the work of both Dr. Isatou Touray and Ms. Amie Bojang-Sissoho as women human rights defenders who actively promote gender equality and women's human rights in the Gambia and globally, and campaign against female genital mutilation and other 'traditional' practices that condone violence and discrimination against women.

Dr. Touray is the Executive Director of the Gambia Committee for Traditional Practices (GAMCOTRAP) while Ms. Bojang-Sissoho is the Program Coordinator. Dr Touray is also Secretary General of the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC) and a member of the Board of the network of Women Living Under Muslim Laws.

The WHRDIC calls for the immediate and unconditional release on bail of Dr. Touray and Ms. Bojang-Sissoho, and urge they are guaranteed their rights to due process of law, including a free and fair trial, security and dignity of person, and freedom from arbitrary arrest and unlawful detention, as guaranteed in Articles 9 and 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 6 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and Article 19 of the Constitution of the Republic of Gambia. We also call for the government of the Gambia to affirm their commitment to the principles enshrined in the Declaration on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders which guarantee that human rights defenders must not be subject to threats, harassment or prosecution on the basis of their defense of the rights of others.

In solidarity,

The Women Human Rights Defenders' International Coalition (WHRD IC)

Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and development (APWLD)

Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID)

Baobab for Women's Human Rights, Nigeria

Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM)

Centre for Reproductive Rights (CRR)

Centre for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL)

Frontline

INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre, Sri Lanka

International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAW Asia Pacific)

The Observatory on Human Rights Defenders

Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights

Women Living under Muslim Laws (WLUML)