



PAN AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS NETWORK

Press Release

Cameroon: Cameroun should investigate the Killing of Eric Ohena Lembembe

22th July, 2013

The Pan African Human Rights Defenders Network (PAHRDN) condemns the torture and killing of **Mr Eric Ohena Lembembe**, executive director of the Cameroon AIDS Foundation (CAMFAIDS) and extends its condolences to Mr. Lembembe's family and friends.

On 15th July 2013, Mr Eric Ohena Lembembe was found dead at his home in Yaoundé by his friends after several attempts to reach him by telephone proved futile. According to information received, Mr Lembembe's neck appeared to have been broken and his feet and neck burned by an iron.

Mr Lembembe was well known for his commitment to the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. His death highlights the grave dangers faced by human rights defenders working on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity in Cameroon and the climate of intolerance and mistrust fuelled by virulent media campaigns.

The principle of non discrimination is inalienable and is enshrined and guaranteed by the Constitution of Cameroon and international legal instruments which Cameroon has ratified. Cameroon has the duty to guarantee its citizens safety in all circumstances without any discrimination.

Deeply concerned by Mr Lembembe's death, the Pan African Human Rights Defenders Network calls on the Republic of Cameroon to:

PAHRD Network comprising the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders network, the Central Africa Human Rights Defenders Network, the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies; the Southern Human Rights Defenders Network (hosted by the International Commission of Jurist) and the West Africa Human Rights Defenders Network

- Ensure a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into Mr. Lembembe's death and hold the perpetrators to account in accordance with the law;
- Ensure the physical and psychological integrity of human rights defenders in all circumstances;
- Put an immediate end to all forms of harassment against all human rights defenders in Cameroon especially those working on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Comply with the provisions of the UN Declaration on human rights defenders, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1998, especially its Article 1, which states that "everyone has the right, individually or in association with others, to promote the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels ", Article 6 (b) above, and Article 12.2, which provide that "*the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the competent authorities protect everyone, individually or in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration*".

For more information, please contact:

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