

BRIEFING
December 6th, 2017

Extrajudicial killing by 'eco-guards' associated with the Nouabale-Ndoki National Park and the Mokabi-Dzanga logging concession, Republic of Congo, November 2017

A 32-year old man from the Central African Republic (CAR) died on 10 November in Impfondo, in Republic of Congo, after having been beaten and abused by eco-guards from Nouabale-Ndoki National Park and Mokabi-Dzanga, a logging concession owned by the French group Rougier.

"These people treated us like animals", the man told doctors shortly before dying.

Freddy Ndade was reportedly arrested by three eco-guards near the Yombo hunting camp, on the CAR side of the border with the Republic of Congo, with two other men from CAR, one of whom was a minor, for alleged poaching. According to testimonies, the eco-guards work for the anti-poaching unit (Unité de Surveillance et de Lutte Anti-Braconnage, USLAB), which is charged with patrolling Rougier's Mokabi logging concession, in Republic of Congo.

According to an eye-witness and acquaintances of the victim, Freddy and the minor were severely beaten with a wooden stick by the eco-guards. The three alleged poachers and two guards were then joined by two other eco-guards from Nouabale-Ndoki National Park. All three men were then forced to carry heavy loads, including two large elephant tusks, which the eco-guards claimed they had "found in the forest", through the forest for five days until they reached the town of Makao. The men were deprived of food while forced to watch the eco-guards eat the seized meat. They were then detained for two days in Makao, a base for the Nouabale-Ndoki National Park authorities, before being transferred to the anti-poaching base in Mokabi, where they spent a further five days in detention.

The minor was later released due to his young age, but no support was provided to help him get back to CAR or even reach his family; to date his whereabouts remain unknown. Freddy and his co-accused, who then hadn't eaten at all in three days, were transferred to the detention centre in Impfondo, where they were stripped naked and humiliated, and again deprived of food. Freddy's condition quickly deteriorated and he was brought to Impfondo's main hospital, and later to the Pioneer Christian Hospital. The detention centre refused to pay for medical care.

According to sources from the Pioneer Christian Hospital in Impfondo, Freddy arrived in a state of "severe hypoxia" (low oxygen), was spitting blood and "contorted in pain" when the doctors palpated his neck and ribcage. "The symptoms that the patient presented would

indicate a case of torture”, one of the doctors said. However, to ascertain this they would have needed an X-ray, which, again, the detention centre refused to pay for.

Freddy died on November 10th and was buried the next day. His family was not informed by the authorities.

For more information, please contact:

Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK)

E: info@rainforestuk.org T: +44 20 7485 0193

Observatoire Congolais des Droits de l’Homme (OCDH)

E: ocdh.brazza@ocdh-brazza.org T: +242 05 768 1099

Forum pour la Gouvernance et les Droits de l’Homme (FGDH)

E: fgdh.desk@gmail.com

Comptoir Juridique Junior (CJJ)

E: comptoirjuridique@gmail.com T: +242 06 662 2207