



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
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REFERENCE: ILEM/KK/031123

3 November 2023

Subject: Mr. Momodou Malcom Jallow

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as the United Nations International Independent Expert Mechanism mandated to advance racial justice and equality in the context of law enforcement, established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 47/21.<sup>1</sup>

We write in the spirit of dialogue, to initiate contact with your Excellency's Government regarding the case of Mr. Momodou Malcom Jallow.

Mr. Momodou is a human rights defender, and politician of African Descent in Sweden, who shared a distressing account of threats and inadequate police protection which may be based on racial and religious stereotypes. He alleges that over the past two decades, he has faced escalating threats, some of which have explicitly targeted his life and family. In 2018, the Swedish Security Service (SAPO) acknowledged the severity of these threats and implemented security measures, including a home alarm and a personal alarm. However, after a few years, they decided to remove the home alarm, leaving Mr. Momodou with the personal alarm only.

According to the information received, on the night of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023, Mr. Momodou received a call from his daughter who mentioned that she had received a call from a man on an unknown number, who asked whether she was Mr. Momodou's daughter. The caller then asked the daughter to come out of the house, failure to which he would "blow up" the whole building. Mr. Momodou then called the police who immediately went to his home, spoke to his daughter who reported the incident to them, patrolled the neighbourhood and reported that everything was fine, and they left.

Mr. Momodou alleges that after this visit, he has unsuccessfully tried to reach out to the police investigation officer, and the Swedish Security Service to find out more

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<sup>1</sup> The international independent expert mechanism to advance racial justice and equality in the context of law enforcement was established in July 2021 by the Human Rights Council to make recommendations, inter alia, on the concrete steps needed to ensure access to justice, accountability, and redress for excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officials against Africans and people of African descent. **Justice Yvonne Mokgoro** (South Africa, Chairperson); **Dr. Tracie Keese** (United States of America) and **Professor Juan Méndez** (Argentina) were appointed in December 2021 by the President of the Human Rights Council to serve as independent experts on the mechanism.

details on their investigations of the matter. He further alleges that the lack of meaningful protection and the subsequent inaction of the authorities have left him in a state of fear and vulnerability, to the point where he is considering changing his home address and even quitting his human rights activism and political post, to ensure his family's safety.

This case holds significant importance as it revolves around a prominent human rights defender and activist of African descent in Sweden. The actions taken by the authorities in this case should serve as a precedent for addressing similar instances of attacks against human rights defenders of African descent in Sweden. Further, this case can be viewed within the context of systemic racial discrimination against Africans and people of African descent in Sweden and inaction by law enforcement when incidents alleging racism are reported.<sup>2</sup>

We take this opportunity to recall that Sweden is bound by various International human rights law provisions, notably those contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Human Rights Committee calls for protection of individuals by States not just against violations of Covenant rights by its agents, but also against acts committed by private persons or entities that would impair the enjoyment of Covenant rights. Further, States have an obligation to take appropriate measures or to exercise due diligence to prevent, punish, investigate, or redress the harm caused by such acts by private persons or entities.<sup>3</sup>

Considering these international human rights obligations, and to make further findings and recommendations regarding concrete steps to ensure racial justice and equality for Africans and people of African descent in the context of law enforcement, the Mechanism would welcome the following information from the government of Sweden:

- Details and circumstances of the incident concerning Mr. Momodou.
- Details of ongoing investigations to the alleged threats against Mr. Momodou and his family including how these investigations consider the possible racial and religious motives of the incidents and the ethnicity and religion of the victim.
- Details of steps taken by the State to assess the risks and provide effective protection to Mr. Momodou and his family considering the possible racial and religious motives, arising from the details described above.
- Details on other guarantees of non-repetition.
- Measures being taken by Sweden to address systemic racism faced by Africans and people of African descent in the country.
- Measures being taken by Sweden to effectively address incidents of racism reported promptly and effectively.
- Other relevant information deemed necessary for purposes of the mandate of the Mechanism.

Given the seriousness of the matter, we would appreciate a response to these points at your earliest convenience and no later than 60 days after receipt of this letter. Please

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<sup>2</sup> See Sweden Country Visit Report 2023 of the International Independent Expert Mechanism to advance Racial Justice and Equality in the Context of Law Enforcement  
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc54crp1-international-independent-expert-mechanism-advance-racial>

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Committee General Comment No. 31



note that this letter and any responses received will be published in the webpage after 60 days. Please note that we may decide to make our views and concerns public in the coming days, and that such public statement will reflect that we have raised our concerns with your Excellency's Government.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Tracie Keese and Prof. Juan Méndez

Members of the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice  
in the context of Law Enforcement