



# ASSOCIATION OF DEFENCE COUNSEL PRACTISING BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **URGENT APPEAL FOR INTERVENTION BY STATES: FORMER ICTR RELEASED AND ACQUITTED PERSONS FACE ESCALATING DANGER AFTER MILITARY COUP IN NIGER**

The ADC-ICT urgently calls upon the international community to intervene and ensure the safety and security of seven individuals who were transferred to Niger nearly two years ago after being acquitted or released by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The situation in Niger has become increasingly unstable after the military coup on 26 July 2023, placing them in a heightened state of stress, danger and uncertainty.

The individuals were initially transferred to Niger by the United Nations, under an agreement signed with the former government of Niger, which granted them protections and support to rebuild their lives. Since December 2021, they have been held under house arrest without access to basic protections.

The military coup in Niger has created a volatile environment where their safety is further compromised, and their wellbeing is at risk. The aftermath of the coup has led to an escalation of violence, political instability, and a breakdown of law and order in the country.

These individuals have already endured a lengthy legal process, many years in Tanzania before their transfer to Niger, and now face renewed danger due to circumstances beyond their control. The solution is clear. What is needed is a state or states to fulfill their obligation to protect these individuals and welcome them into their territory, and out of danger. This is not only a moral obligation, but would also be a reaffirmation of the commitment to justice and human rights principles that underpinned the creation of the ICTR, and other international courts and tribunals.

“We urge governments to extend a lifeline to these vulnerable detainees who deserve a chance to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity” said Kate Gibson, ADC-ICT President. “These seven men are living each day in unimaginable stress, with no ability to remove themselves from a situation of increasing danger. States’ commitment to international justice must extend to supporting those acquitted or released by international courts. Where acquittals result in detention, the system has failed.”

For media enquires please contact the ADC-ICT at: [info@adc-ict.org](mailto:info@adc-ict.org)

The ADC-ICT is an independent professional association which represents all defence counsel practicing the IRMCT, and formerly before the ICTY. The ADC-ICT works to promote and protect the interests of defence counsel and their clients and ensure the proper function of defence is respected in proceedings before international courts and tribunals. Further information is available at: [www.adc-ict.org](http://www.adc-ict.org)