



## English

### **ABOUDOU RASMANE ZINABA AND BASSIROU BADJO: ONE YEAR OF SEQUESTRATION!**

On February 20 and 21, 2024 respectively, Aboudou Rasmane ZINABA, in charge of organizing the Balai Citoyen movement, and Bassirou BADJO, Balai Citoyen activist and social affairs administrator, were kidnapped in Ouagadougou and taken to an unknown destination.

Five months after their abduction, in June 2024, the two comrades, dressed in military uniform, appeared on Burkina Faso's national television in the “Parole de combattant” section.

All court decisions ordering the suspension of their illegal requisitions have been ignored by the National Theater Operations Command (COTN). For example, the Ouagadougou Administrative Court's order for interim relief (ordonnance n°047-1 du 06/12/2023) stated :

“Let us grant the request;

- Declare that the requisition orders at issue, in view of their connection with the opinions expressed by the applicants, are not aimed at securing the territory or maintaining law and order;
- Let us say that they are manifestly illegal and constitute an infringement of freedom of expression and freedom of movement;

Consequently,

- Order the suspension of decisions n°00300/MDAC/EMGA/COTN, n°00301/MDAC/EMGA/COTN, n°00305/MDAC/EMGA/COTN of 02/11/2023 respectively ordering the requisition of LINGANE Issaka, BADJO Bassirou and Zinaba Rasmane;
- Order the State of Burkina Faso (the COTN commander) to immediately renounce the deployment of the above-mentioned to the theater of operations to secure the territory”.

Despite this unambiguous court ruling on the illegality of the punitive requisitions, comrades Bassirou BADJO and Aboudou Rasmane ZINABA were abducted and forcibly conscripted, along with several other citizens. They include leaders of civil society organizations, politicians, journalists, animators, media columnists, social network activists, magistrates, etc., all arbitrarily deprived of their rights and freedoms.

So it's been a year since our comrades Aboudou Rasmane ZINABA and Bassirou BADJO were torn from their families, friends and communities, in a flagrant violation of their basic rights. One year that their voices, bearers of hope and an ideal of social justice, have been silenced. And a year is an eternity when you're deprived of your freedom. It's a terrible ordeal that sorely tests the resilience of the individual and those close to him.

Such a situation of manifest injustice is distressing for any justice-loving person. This prolonged, arbitrary and illegal confinement of citizens is certainly a serious affront to human dignity. The formal prohibition imposed on them to communicate with their families and receive news of their loved ones is an intolerable measure.



This is why Balai Citoyen, while reaffirming its commitment to the rule of law and to the Patrie, calls for :

- The immediate and unconditional release of Aboudou Rasmane ZINABA, Bassirou BADJO and all other citizens in the same situation;
- An end to punitive and illegal requisitions, kidnappings, arbitrary arrests and detentions;
- scrupulous respect for the principles of the rule of law and human rights, in accordance with the constitution and laws in force.

Our strength lies in our numbers!

Together, we are never alone!

For Balai Citoyen, the National Coordination