

January 2018

## **MAURITANIA: Free two people who work against slavery**

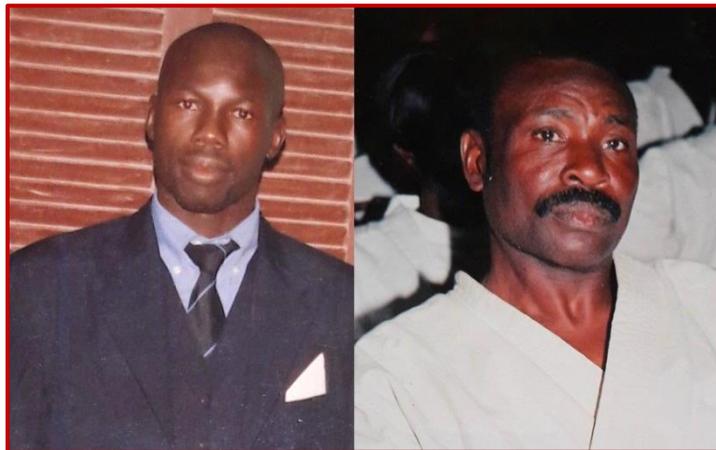
Slavery used to happen in many countries. It took many years for people to realize how wrong it is to own other people, just like you would own a coat, or a sled, or a dog.

Sadly, slavery still happens in the African country of Mauritania even though it is against the law. Whole families still belong to their masters and are forced to serve their owners all their lives.

Two of the people in Mauritania who think that is wrong are in prison for campaigning against slavery. Their names are Abdallahi Matalaa Seck and Moussa Biram. Both were born free but their ancestors were slaves.

Abdallahi and Moussa always used peaceful activities to tell others how wrong slavery is and how everyone should be treated equally. Amnesty International thinks it is wrong to put anyone in prison who acts in a peaceful way.

Please help Amnesty International's efforts to free them by taking action in January. Your letter could be a lifesaver!



Abdallahi Matalaa Seck on the left and Moussa Ould Bilal Biram on the right have been in prison for more than 555 days. The government plans to keep them there for another 555 days.

But first, here is part of a letter that Moussa sent to Amnesty International.

“My friend Abdallahi and I are in this prison in the middle of the Bir Moghreïn desert, 1100km from our families and friends. We miss the special

moments with them and the smiles of our children. But we don't want them to visit because they would have to cross a dangerous area without even a rough road to guide them.

“Our days are so hot, with no contact even with other prisoners. This is the first time we have been in prison but it is probably not the last. As Abdallahi likes to say, ‘Our days in prison have tripled our determination to fight slavery’.

“We are paying a high price for our peaceful struggle against slavery and discrimination in Mauritania. But we are both more dedicated than ever to our dream of living in a Mauritania free from slavery, racism and discrimination. A just and fair Mauritania. Support us in our struggle!”

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Please write to the president of Mauritania.

- Start with Your Excellency.
- Describe something about yourself, such as what town you live in, how old you are, or what family you have. This makes your message different from all the others he will get.
- Tell him you have heard from Amnesty International that Abdallahi Maatalla Seck and Moussa Ould Bilal Biram are in prison only for their peaceful work to protect human rights.
- Ask the president to free them today.



If you wish, you could also ask him to give them all they need to stay well until they leave prison.

## WHERE DO I SEND MY MESSAGE?

Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz  
Office of the president  
BP 184  
Nouakchott  
Mauritania

Postage: \$2.50



Look for Bir Moghreïn on this map.  
That is where Abdallahi and Moussa  
are today.

## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Send a greeting to Abdallahi and Moussa. Use French, Arabic or English. You could choose a postcard of your community, a photo, a drawing you create for them, or a sentence on a non-religious card or piece of paper. Your own message is best but if you need ideas, you could choose one of these:

We admire your courage / I hope that you will be released soon / I have written to the president to ask for your release / Thank you for standing up for freedom of expression and fighting slavery / You are not alone.

Mail your greeting with \$2.50 postage to:

Abdallahi Maatalla Seck and Moussa Ould Bilal Biram  
Prison de Bir Moghreïn  
B.P. 350  
Nouakchott, Mauritanie

Think what it will be like for them to have your message on their prison wall with support all the way from Canada!

If you have not received this Lifesaver directly from Amnesty International's Toronto office and would like future actions, reach us at the contact information in the header. There is no cost.