

# Madagascar: Detained journalist Fernand Cello needs proper medical care

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## MADAGASCAR: DETAINED JOURNALIST NEEDS PROPER MEDICAL CARE: FERNAND CELLO

15 May 2017, index number: AFR 356/232/2017

Fernand Cello, a Malagasy investigative journalist, is facing seven charges including 'defamation', 'endangering state security', and 'incitation to hatred' after he was arrested on Friday, 5 May. The arrest comes after he exposed an illegal sapphire mining site. The company was eventually ordered by the ministry of mining to suspend its operations for contravening the mining code. He was suffering from angina at the time of his arrest for which he needs immediate medical attention that he has not adequately received in detention.

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UK: 10817 Index: AFR 356/232/2017 Madagascar

Date: 15 May 2017

## URGENT ACTION

**DETAINED JOURNALIST NEEDS PROPER MEDICAL CARE**  
Fernand Cello, a Malagasy investigative journalist, is facing seven charges including 'defamation', 'endangering state security', and 'incitation to hatred' after he was arrested on Friday, 5 May. The arrest comes after he exposed an illegal sapphire mining site. The company was eventually ordered by the ministry of mining to suspend its operations for contravening the mining code. He was suffering from angina at the time of his arrest for which he needs immediate medical attention that he has not adequately received in detention.

Fernand Cello, an investigative journalist for Radio Jajaj, was arrested on Friday, 5 May. He was leaving a private clinic in Antananarivo where he had spent several days receiving treatment for angina. He has had limited access to medical treatment since his arrest, having been taken to hospital once where he was hospitalised for two days.

Fernand Cello is facing seven charges including 'defamation', 'endangering state security', and 'inciting hatred'. It is believed that his arrest, subsequent detention in prison and some of the charges against him may be in relation to his investigative work.

Fernand Cello, whose real name is Antsmanana Fernand, had been in hiding since December 2016, after having aimed a piece in which he accused a mining company and alleged government allies of running an illegal sapphire mine in Sakalava, South-West Madagascar. The company was eventually ordered by the ministry of mining to suspend its operations for contravening the mining code. A few days after Fernand Cello's broadcast, the radio station he works for, Radio Jajaj, was raided by military forces, who confiscated its transmitter. In August 2016, Radio Jajaj was targeted by unknown persons and a local power company turned off its power supply, after Fernand Cello accused them on air of carrying out unfair practices towards their clients.

Please write immediately in French, English or your own language.

• Urging authorities to ensure that pending his release, Fernand Cello is granted immediate access to adequate medical care.

• Calling on them to drop all charges stemming from his legitimate exercise of his right to freedom of expression.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JUNE 2017 TO:

Director of Human Rights  
43 Rue des Nations  
Paris 15  
France  
Email: [info@amnesty.org](mailto:info@amnesty.org)  
Tel: +33 (0)1 47 33 60 00

Also send copies to diplomatic representations accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Solution Solution

Please check with your sector office if sending appeals after the above date.

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In Madagascar, freedom of expression, particularly concerning the illegal trafficking of natural resources and the environment, remains only for those who speak out. Chris Rasmussen, an environmental activist, is currently in pre-trial detention, after having spoken about against the illegal trafficking of resources.

Name: Fernand Cello

Gender: m

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