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Niger: Disappearance of woman human rights defender Samira Sabou

On 30 September 2023, woman human rights defender **Samira Sabou** was abducted from her mother's house at around 5h30 PM by three unidentified man. The disappearance was reported to the judicial police the following day. Her whereabouts are unknown to date.

[Samira Sabou](#) is a woman human rights defender, journalist and blogger from Niger. She is the president of Association des Blogueurs pour une Citoyenneté Active (Association of Bloggers for Active Citizenship – ABCA), which organises awareness-raising campaigns, alongside other organisations, to promote the role of women in the public arena and guarantee their right to freedom of expression in the media. She is also the administrator of the information website Magazine d'Information sur le Développement Economique et Social (Economic and Social Development Information Magazine – MIDES).

On 30 September 2023, at around 5h30 PM, the woman human rights defender Samira Sabou was abducted from her mother's house by three unidentified man. The disappearance was reported the following day to the judicial police. The judicial police informed to the family and colleagues that Samira Sabou was not taken to the police and therefore, have not proceeded to conduct an investigation. Since the incident, no official communication has been issued by the authorities. Samira Sabou's whereabouts are unknown to date and no contact was made regarding her current location or condition.

Samira Sabou has been consistently targeted as reprisal for her human rights work. Since 2020, the woman human rights defender Samira Sabou was subjected to intimidation, arbitrary detention and judicial harassment for defending and exercising the right to freedom of expression. On 3 January 2022, [Samira Sabou was sentenced](#) to one month suspended imprisonment and a fine. Back then, she was found guilty of “defamation” and “diffusing information to disrupt public order” under the 2019 Niger Cyber Crime law.

Front Line Defenders expresses its deep concern at the disappearance of Samira Sabou and believes it could be linked to her peaceful and legitimate activity in the defence of human rights. Front Line Defenders reiterates its concern regarding the impunity and the lack of protection of human rights defenders in Niger.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities of Niger to:

1. Initiate an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the disappearance of woman human rights defender and journalist Samira Sabou, in order to guarantee her protection and physical integrity, publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;

2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the protection of the family members of Samira Sabou ensuring their safety and physical and psychological integrity;
3. Guarantee that all human rights defenders in Niger, in the development of their legitimate activities in defence of human rights, can operate freely without fear of restrictions or reprisals.