

Jacqui Smith  
Secretary of State  
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London SW1 4DF  
Fax: 020 8760 3132

Dear Ms Smith,

Stephane Siewe, HO Ref: S1395946 a Cameroon national and resident of Middlesbrough, is currently detained in Colnbrook IRC and due to be forcibly removed from the UK on Monday 3rd November at 06:15 on British Airways flight BA 302 to Paris and then Air France flight AF940 to Yaoundé, Cameroon @ 10:25.

Stephane is an active member of the South Cameroon's National Council (SCNC) which is a political organisation trying to reinstate the independence of Southern Cameroon. He has been imprisoned several times in Cameroon due to his political activity. The first time, his mother paid a bribe for him to be released. The second time he was arrested, he was in prison for 6 months. During this time, he suffered severe ill-treatment at the hands of the prison officials. He escaped on the 25th December 2007 and managed to flee to the UK through an agent.

His Asylum claim was fast tracked and although the Home Office accepted that he was a member of the SCNC and accepted his active involvement with the SCNC. They did not find the evidence submitted regarding his torture to be credible, saying that not all his scars are consistent with his account of what happened. His claim was refused, as was his appeal.

Life in the UK: Stephane was given accommodation in Middlesbrough. He immediately joined his local church and played a full part in the community, attending services both on Sundays and during the week and taking part in the various voluntary jobs necessary to maintain a church. The priest has written in his support, as have other friends from Middlesbrough and also the Whitby area. Stephane was studying philosophy in his own country. He had already begun computer classes in Middlesbrough and was about to go to the University of Teesside for an interview to find out about other part time courses when he was detained. He is passionate about learning and about the cause of freedom for his country. He said that if he was returned to his country and had to die, he would not even mind that if it helped the cause of independence. He does not think his imprisonment or death would serve any good purpose and so is determined to stay here, study (possibly the Law) and do what he can for his country from a distance. The motto of the independence movement is 'The force of Argument, not the Argument of Force'.

His friends feel that with the help of a very good solicitor and more time in which to get documents authenticated, as well as good up to date country information and a fresh medical report, Stephane would have a chance to make a fresh asylum claim, if he is removed, this will not be possible.

The people of Middlesbrough and beyond have been angered by the apparent callous indifference to Stephane's plight.

I urge you to exercise compassion and save Stephane Siewee from certain torture should he be forced to return to Cameroon.

Yours sincerely

Name:

Address:

City: Postcode: Country:

Date: Email: Phone: