

David Lewis

Africa Special Correspondent

Thomson Reuters

7 March 2024

**Re: Expert opinion on the alleged image of recently deceased Mr Yaya Dillo
with wound to the right temporal side**

Dear Mr Lewis,

Following your request for an expert opinion on the cause and manner of death of Mr Yaya Dillo based on an alleged image of him, the **International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)** hereby provides our expert opinion.

Comprising of 161 torture rehabilitation centres in 76 countries, the IRCT is one of the world's leading experts on the forensic investigation of torture and ill-treatment and a key provider of technical assistance and expertise on it to civil society organisations and policy makers worldwide. To fulfil your request, we sought the support of the **Independent Forensic Expert Group (IFEG)** – an international body of forty-two distinguished experts from twenty-three countries who are recognised global leaders in forensic science.

Several experts of the IFEG examined the photo you shared with us allegedly showing the recently deceased Mr Yaya Dillo. The photo was of low resolution (81KB) and its origin, date and time were not disclosed. No other images nor

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information were provided, including if there were injuries on other parts of the body of the deceased.

We note that interpreting injuries from photographs, much less only a single low-resolution photograph, is a complicated task particularly in the absence of other information. Forensic image-evaluation should be performed after an autopsy consistent with international standards. In the case of death pursuant to security or law enforcement action, the investigation and post-mortem examination should be conducted following *The Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death* (United Nations 2016).

In this context, assuming the authenticity of the image provided, we can make the following observations:

- The available photographic evidence suggests gunshot trauma to the head. A close-range, near contact gunshot entrance wound is visible on the right temple of the deceased.
- Several dark spots on the skin adjacent to the edges of the wound might present gunpower residue on the skin or embedded in the epidermis that would be consistent with a finding that the muzzle of the gun was only a few centimetres from the skin when fired.
- Red discharge from the right ear possibly indicates otorrhagia consistent with a skull base fracture.
- These signs indicate death from cranial firearm injury, a non-natural cause of death.

Considering the media reports on the incident involving the death of Mr Yaya Dillo, including allegations of human rights violations and extrajudicial killing, we urge the Chadian officials to conduct a prompt, thorough, impartial and

independent investigation into the event and all deaths including that of Mr Yaya Dillo.

Yours truly,



James Lin

Istanbul Protocol Programme Coordinator

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