

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**UA 206/91 Medical Concern**

**13 June 1991**

**KENYA: Raila Odinga, businessman and former academic**

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Amnesty International is concerned about the ill-health and medical treatment of Raila Odinga, a prisoner of conscience detained since July 1990. He is diabetic but is not allowed a special diet in Naivasha prison or facilities to monitor and control his diabetic condition. Regular blood sugar and urine tests were recommended in May 1991 in view of his deteriorating health and loss of weight, but blood and urine samples were only taken three weeks later by prison staff and not at the correct testing time of day. In the past few days Raila Odinga has reportedly had stomach, chest and back pains, palpitations and vomiting. Repeated requests had to be made before a prison doctor saw him and it then took three days before medicines prescribed by the doctor were given to him.

Concern is heightened because three other prisoners of conscience in Kenya have recently fallen seriously ill in prison, principally because of harsh conditions of imprisonment and denial of adequate medical treatment. Charles Rubia, Kenneth Matiba and Gitobu Imanyara have all, however, been released after being hospitalised in emergency conditions.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Raila Odinga, a 48-year-old businessman, former deputy director of the Kenya Bureau of Standards and university lecturer in mechanical engineering, was arrested in Nairobi on 4 July 1990 at the same time as leading supporters of multi-party democracy in Kenya with whom he had held private meetings to discuss joint political campaigning. He was detained, as they were, on an administrative detention order under the Public Security Regulations which permit detention without charge or trial for an indefinite period, of anyone held to be endangering the security of the state. The others - Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia, both former government ministers - have recently been released on medical grounds.

Raila Odinga is the only remaining untried political detainee in Kenya. He is the son of Oginga Odinga, former Vice-President of Kenya (1964-1966) and leader of a new opposition party, the National Democratic Party (NDP), which the government has refused to register. Raila Odinga had spent most of the previous six years in detention without trial in an apparent attempt by the government to stop his father's political activities.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern about Raila Odinga's worsening ill-health and inadequate medical care in detention;
- urging that he be given all necessary medical tests and treatment without delay, including testing and dietary facilities to allow regular monitoring and control of his diabetes;
- appealing for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience imprisoned for his non-violent opinions.

**APPEALS TO:**

President Daniel arap Moi  
President of the Republic of Kenya  
Office of the President  
P O Box 30510  
Nairobi, Kenya

**Telegrams:** President arap Moi, Kenya  
**Telexes:** 22003 FOREIGNRB or 22696 FOREIGNRB  
(via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)  
**Faxes:** + 254 2 33 7340 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

**COPIES TO:**

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Mr James Mareka  
Commissioner of Prisons  
Kenya Prison Service HQ  
PO Box 30175  
Nairobi, Kenya

Assistant Commissioner Geoffrey Kinoti  
Kenya Police HQ  
PO Box 30083  
Nairobi, Kenya

Mr Mwai Kibaki  
Minister of Health  
Ministry of Health  
PO Box 30016  
Nairobi, Kenya

Mr Paul Muite  
Chairman, Law Society of Kenya  
PO Box 72219  
Nairobi, Kenya

and to diplomatic representatives of Kenya in your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 July 1991.