

PUBLIC

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UA 69/03 **Abduction/"disappearance"/fear for safety**

11 March 2003

ZIMBABWE **Mthulisi Mloyi (m), member Movement of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC),
aged approximately 23**

Mthulisi Mloyi, a youth activist for the opposition political group Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), "disappeared" at Nkabayinde business centre in Nkayi district, north Matebeleland on 8 March. His current whereabouts are unknown. Amnesty International fears he may have been abducted by a gang of war veterans, supporters of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front), ZANU (PF). There are concerns for his safety.

Mthulisi Mloyi was with a colleague putting up posters in the Nkayi area for an MDC rally on 9 March, when a truck with no number plates drew up. A group of 20 men got out of the truck and after a struggle the men dragged Mthulisi Mloyi into the truck. His colleague, who managed to escape from the men, recognized a local "war veteran" leading the group that abducted Mthulisi Mloyi. When the colleague returned to the scene an hour later, he found Mthulisi Mloyi's shirt, trousers, underpants and shoes.

A report of the incident was made at Nkayi police station. To Amnesty International's knowledge, the police have still not indicated if they will investigate the abduction.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Politically-motivated violence has intensified in the run-up to parliamentary by-elections scheduled for 29 and 30 March in Kuwadzana and Highfield, two suburbs outside the capital Harare. MDC supporters and officials and members of parliament for the MDC, together with human rights activists, have been subjected to intimidation, arrest and detention without charge and torture by government authorities and militia, among them the war veterans.

This follows a similar pattern of human rights violations which intensified in the run-up to the presidential elections in March 2002. Since then local elections have been marred by political violence.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Mthulisi Mloyi, who has not been seen since he was abducted on 8 March;
- calling for the immediate release of Mthulisi Mloyi;
- calling for an immediate and impartial investigation into the abduction, for the results to be made public, and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing serious concern over the escalating levels of human rights violations around Kuwadzana and Highfield in the run-up to the by-elections on 29 and 30 March, and the involvement of government authorities and militia, including war veterans, in these human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

Police Commissioner
Mr. Augustine Chihuri

Police Headquarters
P.O Box 8807
Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe

Fax: + 263 4 726 084/ 235 212 / 728 768

Telegrams: Augustine Chihuri, Police Headquarters, Harare, Zimbabwe

Salutation: Dear Mr Commissioner

The Officer Commanding
Zimbabwe Republic Police Force
Provincial Headquarters
Matebeleland North
P.O Box 701
Bulawayo
Zimbabwe

Telegrams: The Officer Commanding, Zimbabwe Republic Police Force

Salutation: Dear Sir

The Officer Commanding
Zimbabwe Republic Police Force
Provincial Headquarters
Matebeleland South
P.O Box 18
Gwanda
Zimbabwe

Telegrams: The Officer Commanding, Zimbabwe Republic Police Force

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Zimbabwe accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 April 2003.