

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 468/90 (AFR 55/05/90, 16 November, and follow-ups AFR 55/06/90, 23 November, AFR 55/07/90, 11 December 1990, AFR 55/01/91, 18 January, and AFR 55/02/91, 20 February 1991) - Legal/Health Concern

Renewed Health Concern

SWAZILAND: Sabelo DLAMINI
Boy MAGAGULA
Dominic MNGOMEZULU
Ray RUSSON
Mphandlana SHONGWE

The Swaziland authorities have again renewed the 60-day administrative detention orders originally imposed in November 1990 on the five men named above. Their detention orders were renewed on 12 March 1991 for a third consecutive period of 60 days under the King's Decree No. 1 (1978). This legislation permits detention for an indefinite period, incommunicado and outside the jurisdiction of the courts, and is thus in conflict with internationally accepted human rights standards. The detention orders were renewed in spite of the fact that the Prime Minister had given personal assurances to relatives of the detainees that their orders would not be renewed.

All five men are again refusing to take food, in protest against their continuing detention. Dominic Mngomezulu and Boy Magagula renewed their hunger-strike on about 1 March, and on about 7 March were admitted to Mbabane Government Hospital where they are held under guard. Sabelo Dlamini, Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe resumed their hunger-strike on 12 March following renewal of their detention orders, and are currently still in prison. For all five men this is their second hunger-strike in recent weeks, and for Sabelo Dlamini and Ray Russon it is their third hunger-strike since their detention in November 1990. Both Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe in particular became seriously ill when on hunger-strike in January. Amnesty International is concerned about the likely longer-term effects of repeated and prolonged hunger-strikes on the physical health of these five men.

Amnesty International considers all five men to be prisoners of conscience, detained on account of their non-violent political activities, and is calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sabelo Dlamini, Dominic Mngomezulu, Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe were convicted in October 1990 of contravening a 1973 decree which prohibits people from organizing or attending any meetings of a political nature. Boy Magagula was also previously detained and was charged in connection with the same trial, but was not brought to trial with the other accused. There is an appeal pending against the convictions of Dominic Mngomezulu, Ray Russon, Sabelo Dlamini, Mphandlana Shongwe and two other accused. (Please see UA 308/90, AFR 55/01/90, 24 July, and follow-ups AFR 55/03/90, 31 October and AFR 55/04/90, 6 November, for further information.)

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail

letters:

- expressing concern that the detention orders imposed in November 1990 upon Sabelo Dlamini, Boy Magagula, Dominic Mngomezulu, Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe were again renewed on 12 March 1991;
- expressing concern that all five prisoners have again renewed their hunger-strike in protest against their continuing detention;
- expressing particular concern about the health of Dominic Mngomezulu and Boy Magagula, who have been on hunger-strike since 1 March and have been admitted to hospital, and about the health of the other three men;
- seeking assurances that they are being given immediate and regular access to their lawyers, relatives, and independent medical advice;
- urging the authorities not to continue to detain these prisoners under provisions which permit their indefinite imprisonment, incommunicado and without charge or trial;
- stressing that Amnesty International considers them to be prisoners of conscience, imprisoned on account of their non-violent political activities, and calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

APPEALS TO:

H.M. King Mswati III
PO Box 1
Lobamba, Swaziland

Telegrams: HM King Mswati, Swaziland
Telexes: 2276 WD (via Prime Minister's Office)

The Right Hon. Obed Dlamini
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
P O Box 395
Mbabane, Swaziland

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Mbabane, Swaziland
Telexes: 2276 WD
Faxes: + 268 43943

Mr Zonke Khumalo
Minister of Justice
P O Box 924
Mbabane, Swaziland

Telegrams: Justice Minister Khumalo, Mbabane, Swaziland
Telexes: 2017 COMPOL WD
Faxes: + 268 42092

COPIES TO:

- Mr Sandile Mdziniso, Commissioner of Police, c/o Office of the Prime Minister, PO Box 395, Mbabane, Swaziland
- Attorney General, Attorney General's Chambers, PO Box 578, Mbabane, Swaziland
- The President, The Swaziland Law Society, Box No. 24, Mbabane, Swaziland
- The Times of Swaziland, PO Box 156, Lansdown House, Post St, Mbabane, Swaziland

and to diplomatic representatives of Swaziland in your country.

Please organize some appeals from lawyers, academics or students.

Please also encourage your local member of parliament to send appeals on behalf of these prisoners of conscience.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 April 1991.