

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Legal Concern

18 September 1990

TANZANIA:

Hemed Abdullah Hemed
Omari Ali Omari
Ali Nassour Mohamed
Masoud Hamadi
Hussein Mbarouk
Khamis Rashid
Abdullah Hamadi
Suleiman Nassour
Masoud Abdullah
Omar Msellem
And 28 others whose names are unknown

Amnesty International is concerned about the detention of the 10 alleged opponents of the government named above on or around 15 September 1990. Those named were arrested on the island of Zanzibar. The 28 whose names are unknown were arrested on the island of Pemba. The organization is concerned that they may be prisoners of conscience, detained for the non-violent expression of their political views.

It is not clear under what legislation these people are being held, if any, although other government opponents arrested in late-June 1990 are being held under the Preventive Detention Decree, 1964. This gives the President of Zanzibar sweeping powers to order the administrative detention without charge or trial of those deemed to be a threat to the state. The decree contains no safeguards protecting the rights of detainees, such as the right to a review before an independent tribunal at which they are legally represented, or the right to visits by relatives.

In 1964 Zanzibar entered a political union with mainland Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania. In 1977 the Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the Party of the Revolution, became the only political party in Tanzania, with no independent political activity or organization allowed.

Anti-union activism, drawing in part on the importance of Islam to many Zanzibaris, has been growing since 1988. There has been repeated harassment of anti-Union activists with many being detained for brief periods before being released uncharged.

Since June 1990, however, over 200 alleged government opponents have been detained as the authorities seek to counter an opposition boycott of preparations for general elections scheduled for late-October 1990 (see UA 277/90, AFR 56/05/90, 3 July; UA 343/90, AFR 56/12/90, 28 August (and correction); and further information on UA 277/90, AFR 56/11/90, 28 August). At least 80 of those detained since June remain under arrest.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/ telegrams/ express letters and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the arrests of the 10 named men on the island of Zanzibar and at reports of the arrest of a further 28 people on the island of Pemba;

- stating that Amnesty International is concerned that those detained may be prisoners of conscience held for the non-violent expression of their political beliefs;

- requesting information about the reasons for the arrests, the legal basis of imprisonment and the nature of any charges that are being prepared against them;

- asking where each detainee is being held and seeking assurances that they are being humanely treated and that they have access to visits from their lawyers and families;

- urging that the detainees be released if they are not to be charged with an offence of a recognizably criminal nature and brought promptly to trial.

APPEALS TO:

The Hon. Ndugu Idris Wakil
President of Zanzibar
Office of the President of Zanzibar
PO Box 776
Zanzibar, Tanzania

The Hon. Ndugu Omar Ali Juma
Chief Minister of Zanzibar
Office of the Chief Minister
PO Box 437
Zanzibar, Tanzania

Telexes: 57311, 57367
Telegrams: President, Zanzibar,
Tanzania

Telexes: 57017
Telegrams: Chief Minister,
Zanzibar, Tanzania

COPIES TO:

His Excellency Ndugu Ali Hassan
Mwinyi
President of the United Republic
of Tanzania
Office of the President
State House
PO Box 9120
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

The Hon. Ndugu Idi Pandu Hassan
Attorney-General of Zanzibar
Office of the Attorney-General
PO Box 437
Zanzibar, Tanzania

and to diplomatic representatives of Tanzania in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 October 1990