

EXTERNAL

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Arbitrary arrest/ Medical concern

7 January 1998

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Eugène Diomi Ndongala Nzomambu, 36 years,
politician

Eugène Diomi Ndongala Nzomambu, who is currently detained at the *camp Kokolo*, a military barracks in Kinshasa, is suffering from acute appendicitis, fever and heart problems. He requires urgent medical care.

Eugène Diomi Ndongala Nzomambu was arrested at his home without warrant by the military police on 10 December 1997. The soldiers reportedly raped his two sisters, aged 18 and 19 years. He was then taken to a private residence and later transferred to Loano military barracks in Kinshasa. He was then taken to *camp Kokolo*.

On 2 January 1998, Diomi Eugène Ndongala was taken to a farm at Mikonga, in the outskirts of Kinshasa. He was returned to *camp Kokolo* the following day. During his detention, he was reportedly severely beaten, which led to a serious deterioration of his health. On 6 January, Eugène Diomi Ndongala Nzomambu was reported to be in a very serious condition.

Eugène Diomi Ndongala Nzomambu has not been charged with any offence. His detention without charge exceeds the legal limit of 48 hours, which can be extended to five days. His arrest is apparently related to his political activities. Under the government of President Mobutu Sese Seko, Diomi Eugène Ndongala was a member of parliament and deputy minister of economy and finance. He is the president of a political organization known as the *Front pour la survie de la démocratie au Congo*, Front for the Survival of Democracy in Congo.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hundreds of people are reported to have been arrested in various parts of the DRC since the *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL) took power on 17 May 1997. The vast majority of these arrests are reported to be arbitrary, carried out without arrest warrants, by soldiers who do not have the legal power to make arrests under Congolese law. Detainees are often held incommunicado, sometimes in unofficial detention centres such as private residences. Reports of ill-treatment and torture are common.

Those arrested have included members of political opposition groups critical of the AFDL, journalists, human rights activists as well as members of the former government. The AFDL has officially banned political party activity outside of the AFDL and suspended the Zaïrian constitution which guaranteed freedom of association and the right to hold peaceful demonstrations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in French or your own language:

- urging that Diomi Eugène Ndongala be immediately transferred to a hospital which is appropriately equipped to provide the medical care he needs for his current poor state of health;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Eugène Diomi Ndongala Nzomambu, unless he has been charged with recognizably criminal offences;
- calling for immediate steps to end the current trend of arbitrary arrests in the DRC.

APPEALS TO:

President

Son Excellence Laurent-Désiré KABILA
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
Kinshasa-Ngaliema
Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: President Kabila, Kinshasa DR Congo

Fax: + 243 88 02120

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République

Minister of Justice

M. Mwenze KONGOLO
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
BP 3137, Kinshasa-Gombe
Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Kinshasa, DR Congo

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

Minister of State for Internal Affairs

Gatean KAKUDJI
Ministre d'Etat à l'Intérieur
Hôtel du Conseil exécutif
Kinshasa-Gombe
Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Kinshasa, DR Congo

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

COPIES TO:

Le Phare (independent newspaper), Faxes: +1 212 3769270 (this is a number in the United States but the fax will be transmitted to *Le Phare*)

and to diplomatic representatives of the Democratic Republic of Congo accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 February 1998.