

EXTERNAL

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Fear for safety

27 January 1998

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Léonard Kamalebo, priest

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Father Léonard Kamalebo, a Roman Catholic priest in the diocese of Uvira, South-Kivu province. He is being actively sought by members of the security forces who he fears may kill him. He has gone into hiding.

Since the *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL), Alliance of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo captured Uvira in October 1996 from former government forces, Léonard Kamalebo has been targeted by the authorities for his criticism of the AFDL-led government. He is an editor of a journal, *Munanira*, which has criticized the new government, and has expressed disagreement with the *Bureau diocésain de développement* (BDD), Diocesan Development Bureau in Uvira, which he reportedly accused of supporting the government.

Two other priests, Monseigneur Koko and Monseigneur Mbombole, were reportedly killed by AFDL combatants in September 1996 in Lemera, South Kivu. They were apparently killed because they were critical of Roman Catholic church officials who supported the AFDL at the time.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since it came to power in May 1996, the AFDL government has committed numerous human rights abuses against critics of the government and representatives of civil society, including church leaders. Hundreds of people are reported to have been arrested. Dozens of people have "disappeared" or have been extrajudicially executed.

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

- expressing concern about threats against Léonard Kamalebo, and about his safety;
- urging the authorities to issue public instructions to members of the security forces not to subject Léonard Kamalebo to any threats or human rights violations, and to ensure a strict chain of command in the security forces;
- asking the authorities to offer adequate protection to Léonard Kamalebo;
- asking the authorities to immediately remove those seeking Léonard Kamalebo from positions in which they may be able to subject him to further human rights violations;
- calling upon the authorities to identify and to bring to justice those threatening Léonard Kamalebo's life, as well as those responsible for the extrajudicial executions of Mgr Koko and Mgr Mbombole.

#### 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**

**Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République**

**Fax: + 243 88 02120 (the fax may be temporarily out of service - you might have to try several times)**

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**

Deputy Gouverneur of South-Kivu Province

Benjamin SERUKIZA

Vice-Gouverneur

Province du Sud-Kivu

Hôtel de ville

Bukavu

Democratic Republic of Congo

**Salutation: Monsieur le Vice-Gouverneur**

**COPIES TO:**

Bishop of Uvira

Mgr Jérôme Gapangwa Nteziryayo

c/o Centre Interdiocésain

BP 3258

Kinshasa-Gombe

Democratic Republic of Congo

and to diplomatic representatives of 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 10 March 1998.