

PUBLIC

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Prisoner of conscience/ill-treatment/detention without charge

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
CONGO (DRC)

Donatien Kisangani Mukatamwina (known as Kisangani) (m),
human rights defender

Human rights defender Donatien Kisangani Mukatamwina, known as Kisangani, is being held without charge by the armed political group, the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD-Goma), Congolese Rally for Democracy. He has allegedly been ill-treated in detention. Amnesty International believes he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely on account of his human rights activities.

Kisangani Mukatamwina is a member of the non-governmental human rights organization *Solidarité-Echange pour le Développement Intégral* (SEDI), Solidarity-Exchange for Integral Development, in the city of Uvira, eastern DRC. He was arrested by officials of the RCD-Goma at the Kavumvira border crossing between the DRC and Burundi on 27 June, and was taken to the office of the *Direction de la Sécurité et Renseignements* (DSR), Security and Intelligence Directorate in Uvira. While detained at the DSR office, he was allegedly beaten and threatened with death by officials of the RCD-Goma, and was also reportedly accused of links to Congolese *mayi-mayi* militia groups opposed to the RCD-Goma. On 8 July, Kisangani Mukatamwina was transferred to the Central Prison of Uvira, where he remains in detention. According to local sources, he has not been charged with any offence.

The offices of SEDI were raided on 24 June by RCD-Goma officials, who questioned SEDI's coordinator, Rémi Ngabo, about the organization's finances, in what seems to have been an attempt to extort money from the organization. Amnesty International believes that this incident may be linked to the arrest of Kisangani Mukatamwina, and that he was detained solely because of his work with SEDI.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The situation in Uvira, the second city of South-Kivu Province, has been volatile since the withdrawal of Rwandese forces in autumn 2002. In the wake of the withdrawal, the forces of the Rwandese-backed RCD-Goma lost control of important parts of South Kivu to *mayi-mayi* forces, including Uvira in October 2002 and again in January 2003. RCD-Goma forces subsequently retook the city, and since February 2003 have been engaged in a major offensive against the *mayi-mayi*, an offensive that has created massive waves of displacement, abuses against civilians and an upsurge in sexual violence.

Human rights activists and journalists throughout the region have been routinely harassed and menaced by the authorities. A number of people have been detained in Uvira, accused of having criticized the RCD-Goma, or of collaboration with enemy forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the arrest and detention without charge of Donatien Kisangani Mukatamwina, a member of the non-governmental organization *Solidarité-Echange pour le Développement Intégral* (SEDI), Solidarity-Exchange for Integral Development, in Uvira, DRC on 27 June;
- expressing your view that Donatien Kisangani Mukatamwina is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely on account of his peaceful human rights activities, and urging that he be immediately and unconditionally released if he is not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;

- calling for an investigation into reports that he was ill-treated while in detention, and for the suspected perpetrators to be brought to justice;
- calling for an end to the persistent harassment of human rights defenders throughout the DRC.

In addition, when sending appeals to the Rwandese President, please also:

- call on the Rwandese authorities to use their influence with the RCD-Goma to ensure that the above measures are carried out.

APPEALS TO: (Please note that fax numbers may be difficult to reach. Please keep trying)

In Rwanda:

President of Rwanda

President Paul KAGAME

Office of the President

PO Box 15, Kigali, Rwanda

Fax: + 250 84390

E-mail: presirep@rwanda1.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

In DRC:

RCD-Goma Head of Justice and Human Rights

Maître Moise NYARUGABO

Chef du Département de Justice, Droits Humains et Règlement de Conflits

Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie - (RCD-Goma)

RCD-Goma Headquarters/Etat-major

Goma

Democratic Republic of Congo/ République démocratique du Congo

E-mail: deskinfordc@yahoo.fr

Salutation: Dear Chef du Département

RCD-Goma Head of Interior

Dr Bizima KARAHA

Chef du Département de l'Intérieur

Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie - (RCD-Goma)

RCD-Goma Headquarters/Etat-major

Goma

Democratic Republic of Congo/ République démocratique du Congo

E-mail: deskinfordc@yahoo.fr

Salutation: Dear Chef du Département

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 August 2003.