

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 62/26/98

UA 201/98

Torture/Fear of torture

15 July 1998

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Kanefu, 70 years old
Arony, 66 years old
Rugota, 73 years old

The above named men were arrested by members of the *Agence Nationale de Renseignements*, National Intelligence Agency (ANR) on 7 July 1998 in Uvira, South Kivu province. They are reportedly being beaten twice a day, and held in conditions which amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. They have been denied access to a doctor, a lawyer or their families, and have not yet been formally charged with any offence. They are currently held at the ANR detention centre in Uvira.

The three men are well-known businessmen and community leaders from Uvira. In June 1998, the three men led a delegation to meet the governor of South Kivu province to discuss the political situation in the region. Their arrest is thought to be related to this activity.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hundreds of people have been arrested in various parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since the *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL), Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo, seized power on 17 May 1997. Among those arrested are leading members of non-governmental organizations, political opposition groups, community leaders, journalists and human rights activists. Many of them have been arrested solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

Torture is widespread in DRC. Many people are beaten at the time of their arrest and tortured in custody, particularly in private detention centres and those belonging to the security forces.

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

- expressing concern about the arrest of the three community leaders Kanefu, Arony, and Rugata, on 7 July 1998 in Uvira, South Kivu;
- expressing deep concern about reports that they are being subjected to systematic beatings and denied access to their families, a doctor and a lawyer;
- calling on the authorities to immediately release the three men, unless they are charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought to trial according to international standards for fairness;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that the three men are not subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and to allow them access to their families, a doctor and a lawyer;
- calling on the authorities to fully investigate reports that they were tortured, and bring those responsible to justice.

APPEALS TO: (Please note that fax tones can be very difficult to obtain.)

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

Faxes: + 243 88 02120

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République / Dear President

Governor of South-Kivu
Monsieur Charles MAGABE
Gouverneur
Province du Sud-Kivu
Hôtel de ville
Bukavu
République Démocratique du Congo
Telegrams: Gouverneur Magabe, Kinshasa, DR Congo
Salutation: Monsieur le Gouverneur

Minister of Human Rights
M. Leonard OKITUNDU
Ministre des Droits de l'Homme
Ministère des Droits de l'Homme
Kinshasa-Gombe
République Démocratique du Congo
Telegrams: Minstre Okitundu, Kinshasa, DR Congo
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/ Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Le Phare (independent newspaper)

Faxes: + 1 212 3769270 (Note: this is a number in the United States from where faxes are 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 27 August 1998.