

UA 372/94

Fear of Extrajudicial Execution

10 October 1994

SOUTH AFRICAPrince Sifiso Zulu, member of the Zulu Royal House

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Prince Sifiso Zulu, who is named in an anonymous and threatening pamphlet circulating in the Nongoma area of Northern Natal. Since early 1994 he has been in hiding in fear for his life. There have been at least three attempts on his life this year.

The threats against Prince Sifiso's life have occurred in the context of a recent rift between Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who is President of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and Home Affairs Minister in the Government of National Unity, and King Goodwill Zwelithini, during which Prince Sifiso gained prominence as a spokesperson for the Royal House Interim Committee. On 3 June members of the still undisbanded KwaZulu ("homeland") Police came to his family's home in Nkandla looking for him. They reportedly told his family that they would "get him in the end". That night, when Prince Sifiso was driving to Nkandla, he stopped to speak to a person on the road, whom he recognized as a relation. Alerted by the man's odd movements, Prince Sifiso managed to disarm him of a pistol he had been carrying behind his back.

On 25 September, Prince Sifiso Zulu took part in a live television debate with Themba Khoza, an IFP official and provincial parliamentarian. During filming, Chief Buthelezi entered the studio with his entourage. Prince Sifiso fled the studio after a fracas erupted. Chief Buthelezi was quoted after the incident as saying: "I had never seen this man before; he does not speak on behalf of the king. When I confronted him about this, he pulled a gun and tried to shoot me."

In a statement on 27 September, the Group Chief Executive of the South African Broadcasting Commission (SABC), Zwelakhe Sisulu, objected strongly to the actions of Chief Buthelezi and his entourage. According to his statement, "SABC personnel in the studio at the time have testified that several members of Chief Buthelezi's entourage were armed". An SABC cameraperson is quoted as saying that "Chief Buthelezi stormed towards Prince Sifiso and shouted words to the effect: 'Who are you...' Prince (Sifiso) then jumped out of his seat and Minister Buthelezi's bodyguards pounced on him. At no stage did I see a firearm being drawn by Prince Zulu". During the filmed section of the incident, "a member of Chief Buthelezi's entourage emerged from the melee with a firearm - and with a second visible under his cardigan". Prince Sifiso suffered some injuries during the incident, including a severely sprained right wrist which required medical treatment.

According to the SABC statement and to press reports, soon after the confrontation had erupted, armed individuals, including one with an automatic weapon, attempted to force their way past SABC security personnel at the studios. The report in the *Johannesburg Star* named and quoted one man, who was brandishing a gun in the crowd, as saying "If I had been in the studio when the guy [Prince Sifiso] pulled a gun on the Chief Minister, I would have shot him." According to this report, this man was carrying a KwaZulu Police identity card.

In early October anonymous pamphlets were found in the Nongoma area, where King Zwelithini and other members of the Royal house reside. The pamphlet, written in the Zulu language, accuses Sifiso Zulu of being "*desirous of destroying our Royal House*" and of defaming the cause of "*our brothers who*

died at Shell House [the ANC's Headquarters]". It then asks, "Do you accept that your Prime Minister, Prince of Phindangene [Chief Buthelezi], who is also Prime Minister to the King, be killed by this puppy Sifiso and others of the Royal Family. You have seen what happened in TV. This puppy lowered the dignity of the Prince of Phindangene. You must resist and unite, you people of Nongoma."

On 5 October Prince Sifiso Zulu appeared in the Durban Magistrate's Court where he was warned that he is being investigated in connection with offences relating to the possession of an unlicensed firearm and ammunition. That evening Prince Sifiso was informed that the South African Police Service (SAPS) VIP Protection Unit, which has been providing him with protection, would be withdrawn, on the orders of senior police officials in Pretoria. However, following the intervention of the national Minister of Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi, police protection was resumed. On 9 October his police guard was increased after the police noticed that several suspicious looking vehicles were moving up and down outside the house where he was staying.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Prince Sifiso Zulu, in view of the threats made against his life allegedly by members of the KwaZulu Police in June 1994, the distribution of anonymous pamphlets in the Nongoma area in October 1994 in which he is singled out for attack, and the SABC studio incident on 25 September 1994 in which he was injured as a result of an alleged assault by the bodyguards of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi;
- expressing concern that SAPS VIP Unit protection was withdrawn from Prince Sifiso Zulu after 5 October;
- welcoming the renewal of that protection apparently following the intervention of the national Minister of Safety and Security, and calling for protection for Prince Sifiso Zulu and his family to be sustained for as long as necessary; and
- urging that those found to be responsible for threats against his life be promptly arrested and brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President Nelson Mandela
Office of the President
Private Bag X83
Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Telegrams: President Mandela, Pretoria, South Africa

Faxes: +27 12 326 2719

Salutation: Dear President

Mr FS Mufamadi
Minister of Safety and Security
Private Bag X463
Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Telegrams: Safety/Security Minister, Pretoria, South Africa

Faxes: +27 12 320 5065

Telegrams: Safety/Security Minister, Pretoria, South Africa

Salutation: Dear Minister

Dr F Mdlalose
Premier of KwaZulu/Natal Province
Private Bag X23, Ulundi 3838, South Africa

Telegrams: KwaZulu/Natal Premier, Ulundi, South Africa

Faxes: +27 358 202 470

Salutation: Dear Premier

COPIES TO:

- Lt-Gen W H Steyn, KwaZulu/Natal Regional Police Commissioner, PO Box 391, Durban 4000, South Africa
- Natal Monitor, c/o CSDS University of Natal, King George V Ave, Durban 4001, South Africa
- Khanyisani Development Forum (Development and Human Rights NGO), PO Box 983, Ladysmith 3370, South Africa

and to diplomatic representatives of South Africa accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 November 1994.