

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 53/17/93

Distr: UA/SC

14 May 1993

Further information on EXTRA 35/93 (AFR 53/12/93, 5 April 1993) - Death Penalty

SOUTH AFRICA: Fear of resumption of executions

The South African Minister of Justice confirmed on 13 May 1993 that no executions will take place until the issue of the death penalty has been debated by parliament. He indicated that this debate will take place within the next few weeks, but did not announce a date. The present parliamentary session is scheduled to continue until late June.

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

- stating that Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases considering it to be a violation of the right to life and a form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment;
- expressing concern that Parliament is to vote the very crucial issue of the death penalty, while the process of constitutional negotiations is not yet completed and despite the fact that some of the government's key negotiating partners have openly expressed opposition to capital punishment;
- appealing to the authorities not to lift the moratorium on executions which would open the way to a resumption of hangings;
- referring to the fact that on 29 January 1993 South Africa signed the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; urging the authorities to strengthen that commitment by fully ratifying the Torture Convention; stressing that pending a final decision on ratification, South Africa is obliged to refrain from acts which would defeat the Convention's objective of eliminating all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- stressing that although studies have been made of the relation between the death penalty and rates of crime, none have produced conclusive evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments.

APPEALS TO

1) Mr F W de Klerk
President

State President's Office
Private Bag X83
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

Telegrams: President de Klerk, Pretoria, South Africa

Telexes: 321695 SPLIB SA, 321890 PRES SA

Faxes: + 27 12 323 3982

Salutation: Dear State President

Page 2 of FU EXTRA 35/93

2) H J Coetsee
Minister of Justice
Department of Justice
Private Bag X276
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Pretoria, South Africa

Faxes: + 27 12 320 2059

Salutation: Dear Minister

3) R P Meyer
Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning
Department of Constitutional Development and Planning
Private Bag X804
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

**Telegrams: Minister Constitutional Development and Planning, Pretoria,
South Africa**

Faxes: + 27 12 323 3304, + 27 12 323 3305

Salutation: Dear Minister

4) H J Kriel
Minister of Law and Order
Private Bag X463
Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Telegrams: Minister Law and Order, Pretoria, South Africa

Faxes: + 27 12 322 2559

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The following newspapers:

Natal Mercury, PO Box 950, Durban 4000, South Africa

The Star, PO Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa

The New Nation, PO Box 10674, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa

The Argus, POB 56, Cape Town 8000, South Africa

and the following human rights organizations:

Lawyers for Human Rights

713 Van Erkom Building

Pretorius St, Pretoria 0002

South Africa

Society for the Abolition of the Death Penalty (SADSPA)
c/o Centre for Applied Legal Studies
University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, PO Wits 2050, 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 25 June 1993.