

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 53/37/93

Distr: UA/SC

24 August 1993

Further information on UA 275/93 (AFR 53/33/93, 13 August 1993) - Fear of torture / Legal concern

SOUTH AFRICA (Bophuthatswana):

Thabo Sejanamane, human rights monitor

Themba Gwabeni, chairperson, Mafikeng branch of the African National Congress (ANC)

Nomvula Hlongwane (female)) all Mafikeng ANC
Ephraim Motoko) branch executive
Gordon Kgamanyane) members
Johannes "Jones" Molefe)

Thabo Sejanamane, Themba Gwabeni, Nomvula Hlongwane, Ephraim Motoko, Gordon Kgamanyane and Johannes "Jones" Molefe were released uncharged by the Bophuthatswana police at about 5 pm on 18 August 1993. They had been on hunger-strike for two days in protest at their detention, but their health is reported to be satisfactory. They were not tortured or assaulted in custody.

Over the weekend of 14 and 15 August lawyers acting for the detainees tried repeatedly to gain access to their clients, but the police refused to say where the detainees were being held or to allow access to them. On 17 August the lawyers were granted access for consultations with their clients, and prepared a court application for their release. Before the application was heard in court, all six were released on 18 August. The police had confirmed that Thabo Sejanamane was detained under the terms of Bophuthatswana's Internal Security Act, and it appears the other five were detained under the same provisions, but no official reasons have been given for these detentions. The detentions appear to have been an effort to obstruct the human rights work of the Mafikeng Anti-Repression Forum (MAREF), in which Ephraim Motoko as well as Thabo Sejanamane is involved, as well as the work of the ANC branch in Mafikeng.

On 14 August 1993, during the course of ANC efforts to present a petition to the South African government's representative in Mafikeng, the Bophuthatswana police arrested about 23 people and held them from about midday to 6.30 pm when they were released uncharged. Representatives from the ANC branch in Kimberley, northern Cape Province, were removed from the Mafikeng area under police escort.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send a final round of express and airmail letters in English or your own language:

- welcoming the unconditional release on 18 August 1993 of the six detainees named above; requesting to know the reasons why they were detained;

- expressing concern that some 23 people at an ANC march in Mafikeng on 14 August 1993 were held in police custody for about six hours before being released uncharged. Requesting to be informed of the reason and legal basis for their detention;

- urging the Bophuthatswana authorities to repeal the provisions of the Bophuthatswana Internal Security Act which effectively provide for the imprisonment of people solely for the non-violent exercise of their fundamental human rights;

- urging the South African authorities to use all possible influence to bring about the repeal of these same provisions.

APPEALS TO:

Bophuthatswana authorities:

1) Chief L M Mangope
President
Government Offices
Mmabatho

Salutation: Dear Chief Mangope

Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telegrams: President Mangope, Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telexes: 937 3008 BOP

Faxes: + 27 140 842626

2) Major-General P J Seleke
Commissioner of Police
Private Bag X2006
Mmabatho 8681

Salutation: Dear Major-General

Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telegrams: Police Commissioner, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, South Africa

3) Mr Rowan Cronje
Minister of Defence
Department of Defence
Private Bag X2003
Mmabatho 8681

Salutation: Dear Minister

Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telegrams: Defence Minister, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, South Africa

South African authorities:

4) Mr R F Botha
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Department of Foreign Affairs
Private Bag X152
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

Salutation: Dear Minister

Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Pretoria, South Africa

Telexes: 0959 350060 EXTERN TTX SA

Faxes: + 27 12 325 8669

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

the following newspapers:

1) Sowetan
POB 6663, Johannesburg 2000
South Africa

2) The Mail
Mafikeng 8670, Bophuthatswana
South Africa

and human rights organizations:

3) Lawyers for Human Rights
Mafikeng Regional Office
POB 945, Mafikeng 8670
South Africa

4) Mafikeng Anti-Repression Forum
PO Box 158, Ratshidi 8681
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 5 October 1993.