

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on EXTRA 29/93 (AFR 46/01/93, 15 March 1993 - and follow-up AFR 46/02/93, 16 March 1993 - Death Penalty)

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The four prisoners named above who were due to be executed in Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison in Harare on 16 March 1993 have in each case had the sentence of death commuted to life imprisonment.

This decision was taken on 24 June 1993 at the hearing of an appeal lodged in the Supreme Court by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace which urged that the sentences of death should be commuted on the grounds that the death penalty violated Zimbabwe's constitution forbidding inhuman punishment. It particularly expressed concern at the length of time which had elapsed since the sentences were passed and the conditions in which the prisoners were held.

After passing its unanimous decision, the Supreme Court also ruled that steps should be taken to improve the procedures relating to the death penalty, in terms of minimizing delays in the hearing of cases and in the appeals procedure.

This is an opportune moment for Amnesty International to call for the abolition of the death penalty in Zimbabwe.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes in English or your own language:

- welcoming the decision taken by the Supreme Court on 24 June 1993 to commute the death sentence in the case of the four prisoners above to life imprisonment;
- stating that the result of the ruling clearly shows that the death penalty is a violation of Zimbabwe's constitution which forbids inhuman punishment and as such should be abolished;
- urging that the Zimbabwe authorities take immediate steps towards reviewing the use of the death penalty in Zimbabwe with a view to implementing its abolition.

APPEALS TO:

1) President Robert Mugabe
President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
Office of the President

Private Bag 7700

Causeway

Harare

Zimbabwe

Telegrams: President Mugabe, Harare, Zimbabwe

Telexes: 24478 ZIMGOV ZW

Salutation: Your Excellency

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2) The Hon. Dumiso Dabengwa

Minister of Home Affairs

Ministry of Home Affairs

Mukwati Bldg

Private Bag 505D

Harare

Zimbabwe

Telegrams: Minister of Home Affairs, Harare, Zimbabwe

Telexes: 22141 ZIMGOV ZW (marked for the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Minister

3) The Hon. Emmerson D Mnangagwa

Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

Ministry of Justice

Mapondera Bldg

Private Bag 7704

Causeway

Harare

Zimbabwe

Telegrams: Minister of Justice, Harare, Zimbabwe

Telexes: 22141 ZIMGOV ZW (marked for the attention of the Minister of Justice)

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The Hon. Dr Nathan Shamuyarira

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Munhumutapa Bldg

PO Box 4240

Causeway

Harare

Zimbabwe

and to diplomatic representatives of Zimbabwe accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 July 1993.