

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 34/01/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 86/93 Fear of "disappearance"/Extrajudicial killing 25 March 1993

PAPUA NEW GUINEA/BOUGAINVILLE: Ken Savia
Mr Toromura
Gabriel Tameung

Amnesty International is gravely concerned for the safety of Ken Savia, Mr Toromura and Gabriel Tameung, all of whom were reportedly captured by the Papua New Guinea (PNG) security forces on 13 and 14 February 1993 in Arawa, the capital of Bougainville. Human rights activists and others in Bougainville have expressed fears that the three detainees may have been subjected to torture or killed by PNG troops while in detention.

On 16 February a government official acknowledged the arrest of Ken Savia and said that he was being held at the former Arawa Town Council complex, known as the "White House", by PNG forces. However, on 17 February press reports indicated that most of those held at the "White House" had been transferred to Wakunai and since then the whereabouts of the three detainees have remained unknown. The opposition Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) has expressed fears for the safety of the three detainees and in late February BRA radio reported that Ken Savia had been seen on 14 February being tied to a rope and dragged behind a truck in Arawa.

Amnesty International urges the government to act immediately to clarify the fate and whereabouts of Ken Savia, Mr Toromura and Gabriel Tameung. It calls upon the government to grant lawyers, relatives and doctors immediate access to the three if they are being held in military custody, and to release them immediately if they are not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Human rights violations on the island of Bougainville have occurred in the context of armed conflict between Papua New Guinea security forces and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). Longstanding resentment of PNG rule in Bougainville erupted in 1988 with the launch of a secessionist campaign. PNG troops were deployed to defeat the BRA from March 1989 until March 1990, when all government forces were withdrawn, leaving the BRA in *de facto* control of the island. During the same month the government imposed a blockade, still in force, which has deprived the local population of food, medication and communications. In April 1991 PNG forces again landed on Bougainville and over the last year have regained control of much of the island, although the BRA retain strongholds in central Bougainville.

Since April 1991 there have been persistent reports of human rights violations by government security forces, including extrajudicial execution, torture and "disappearance" of real and suspected BRA members. A number of those killed

have died after their boats or trucks were shelled or strafed from the air by PNG forces. Other killings have reportedly taken place in government controlled "care centres" ostensibly established by the PNG authorities to shelter Bougainvilleans fleeing the BRA. The BRA has also been responsible for serious human rights abuses, including the summary execution of those accused of betraying the secessionist movement.

The PNG Government has persistently denied allegations of human rights violations and has to date refused to permit international observers to visit the territory. In August 1992 and February 1993 the United Nations

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passed resolutions urging the government to permit human rights monitors to visit Bougainville.

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

- expressing serious concern at the "disappearance" of Ken Savia, Mr Toromura and Gabriel Tameung, after their capture on 13 and 14 February 1992 in Arawa;
- urging the government to act immediately to clarify their fate and whereabouts;
- calling upon the government to conduct a thorough investigation into this and all other reports of human rights violations on Bougainville;
- urging the government to permit international observers, including Amnesty International, to visit Bougainville to investigate the human rights situation.

APPEALS TO

1) Prime Minister Pias Wingti
Office of the Prime Minister
PO Box 6605
Boroko, NCD
Papua New Guinea
Telegrams: Prime Minister, Boroko, Papua New Guinea
Telexes: 22388

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister Wingti

2) Michael Ogio
Minister of State for Bougainville
Post Office
Wards Strip
Waigani
Papua New Guinea
Telegrams: Minister Ogio, Ministry for Bougainville, Waigani, Papua New Guinea

Salutation: Dear Minister Ogio

3) Paul Tohian
Minister for Defence
Free Mail Bag
Boroko NCD

Papua New Guinea

Telegrams: Minister Tohian, Defence Ministry, Boroko, Papua New Guinea

Telexes: 22170

Salutation: Dear Minister Tohian

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

John Kaputin
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Post Office
Wards Strip
Waigani
Papua New Guinea

and to diplomatic representatives of Papua New Guinea accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 May 1993.