

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Ill-treatment/Legal Concern

12 November 1991

HAITI

Raymond TOUSSAINT

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the health and safety of Raymond Toussaint, a member of the Comité National des Congrès des Mouvements Démocratiques (KONAKOM), National Committee of Congress of Democratic Movements, and a rural development group known as CODEP. He was arrested on 25 October 1991 and was reportedly ill-treated.

According to information received by Amnesty International, Raymond Toussaint was arrested without a warrant by uniformed soldiers. They reportedly came to his home in Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite, in Haiti's Artibonite Department, and accused him of "spreading propaganda in favour of President Aristide". Raymond Toussaint was taken to the army barracks in Petite Rivière where he was reportedly severely beaten. He was subsequently transferred to Saint Marc prison, where he is said to be in poor health because of ill-treatment. He is allegedly being denied access to his lawyer or visits by his family.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Troops overthrew the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who took office in Haiti on 7 February 1991, in a coup d'Etat on Monday 30 September. Since then Amnesty International has learned of widespread human rights violations committed by the security forces, including a large number of extrajudicial executions, beatings and mass arrests without warrant. Many of the victims included supporters of President Aristide and members and leaders of grassroots organizations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the reported ill-treatment in custody of Raymond Toussaint;
- asking that he be provided with immediate and adequate medical treatment while in custody;
- asking for an investigation into allegations of ill-treatment, that the results of the investigation be made public and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- asking for clarification of his legal situation and if detained for the exercise of his freedom of expression, not involving the advocacy of violence, urge that he be immediately and unconditionally released.

APPEALS TO:

1) Prime Minister:

Maître Jean-Jacques HONORAT
Premier Ministre, Ministre
des Affaires Etrangères

Présidence de la République de Haïti
Palais National, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Premier Ministre Honorat, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Faxes: + 509 22 1147

Monsieur le Premier Ministre

Dear Prime Minister

Page 2 of UA 391/91

2) Minister of Interior and Defence:

M. le Colonel Gracia JEAN
Ministre de l'Intérieur
et de la Défense Nationale

Palais des Ministères
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur Jean, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telephone: + 509 22 9198 or 22 1090

Telexes: 20515 Dptindn

Monsieur le Ministre

Dear Minister

3) Commander of the Centre Military Department:

Monsieur le Général Raoul CEDRAS
Commandant-en-Chef des Forces
Armées d'Haïti

Grand Quartier Général des Forces Armées d'Haïti
Rue Geffrard

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Comandant-en-Chef des Forces Armees Cedras, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telephone: + 509 22 3935

Telexes: 20391 GQFADH

Faxes: + 509 23 9007 or + 509 23 9407

Monsieur le Général

Dear General

4) Minister of Justice:

Monsieur Antoine LECONTE
Ministère de la Justice
Cité de l'Exposition
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice Leconte, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telephone: + 509 45 0474 or 45 1626

Telexes: 20166 Justice

Monsieur le Ministre

Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Minister of Public Health:

Monsieur Greger JEAN-LOUIS
Ministre de la Santé
Publique et de la Population
Ministère de la Santé Publique et
de la Population
Palais des Ministères
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Haiti en Marche (newspaper)

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Chamber of Deputies:
Monsieur le Président
Chambre des Députés
Assemblée National
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

President of the Senate:
Maître Eudrice RAYMOND
Président du Sénat
Assemblée Nationale
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

and to diplomatic representatives of Haïti in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section if sending appeals after 24 December 1991.