

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 468/90 (AFR 55/05/90, 16 November, and follow-ups AFR 55/06/90, 23 November, and AFR 55/07/90, 11 December 1990) - Legal Concern

- New Health Concern -

SWAZILAND: Sabelo DLAMINI
Boy MAGAGULU
Dominic MNGOMEZULU
Ray RUSSON
Mphandlana SHONGWE

On 11 January 1991 the Swaziland authorities renewed the administrative detention orders imposed in November 1990 on the five men named above. Their detention orders have been renewed for a further 60 days under the King's Decree No. 1 (1978). However, the period of detention can be renewed repeatedly at the Prime Minister's discretion.

All five went on hunger-strike on 11 January 1991 in protest against the renewal of their detention orders. Ray Russon and Sabelo Dlamini had only recently suspended a previous hunger-strike. They went on hunger-strike on 23 November for over two weeks when they were detained after seeking refuge in South Africa and being handed back to Swaziland police by the South African authorities.

Amnesty International considers all five men to be prisoners of conscience, and is concerned for their health in view of the fact that they have gone on hunger-strike in protest against their detention. Amnesty International is concerned particularly for the health of Ray Russon and Sabelo Dlamini, now in their second hunger-strike in recent weeks. Ray Russon especially is reported to be suffering from stomach problems. Amnesty International is calling for the immediate release of all five, because it considers them to be prisoners of conscience, and in order to prevent further risk to their health.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sabelo Dlamini, Dominic Mngomezulu, Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe were convicted in October 1990 of contravening a 1973 decree which prohibits people from organizing or attending any meetings of a political nature. Boy Magagulu was also previously detained and was charged in connection with the same trial, but finally was not brought to trial. An appeal against the convictions of Dominic Mngomezulu and Ray Russon is still pending. (Please see UA 308/90, AFR 55/01/90, 24 July, and follow-ups AFR 55/03/90, 31 October and AFR 55/04/90, 6 November, for further information.)

After the trial, students boycotted classes in protest against the expulsion of Sabelo Dlamini and Mphandlana Shongwe from their courses of study. On 14 November the police forcibly cleared students from the campus of the University of Swaziland and more than 80 students received hospital treatment after they were severely beaten by police, with at least three students reportedly dying as a result.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern that the detention orders imposed in November 1990 upon Sabelo Dlamini, Boy Magagulu, Dominic Mngomezulu, Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe have been renewed, and that they are therefore still detained under provisions which permit their indefinite imprisonment, incommunicado and without charge or trial;

- expressing concern that their basic human rights are being violated, particularly their right to a fair trial;

- expressing concern that their health is at risk because they have gone on hunger-strike in protest against their detention;
- urging that they be given immediate and regular access to their lawyers, relatives, and independent medical advice;
- expressing concern that they are prisoners of conscience, imprisoned on account of their non-violent political activities, and calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

APPEALS TO:

H.M. King Mswati III
 PO Box 1
 Lobamba, Swaziland

Telegrams: HM King Mswati, Swaziland

The Right Hon. Obed Dlamini
 Acting Prime Minister
 Office of the Prime Minister
 PO Box 395
 Mbabane, Swaziland

Telegrams: Prime, Mbabane, Swaziland

Telexes: 2276 WD

Faxes: + 268 43943

Mr R Dhladhla
 Minister of Justice
 PO Box 924
 Mbabane, Swaziland

Telegrams: Bulungisa, Mbabane, Swaziland

Telexes: 2017 COMPOL WD

Faxes: + 268 42092

Mr Sandile Mdziniso
 Commissioner of Police
 c/o Office of the Prime Minister
 PO Box 395
 Mbabane, Swaziland

Telegrams: Compol, Mbabane, Swaziland

Faxes: + 268 44545

COPIES TO:

- Attorney General, Attorney General's Chambers, PO Box 578, Mbabane, Swaziland
- President, Swaziland Law Society, Box No. 24, Mbabane, Swaziland
- The Times of Swaziland, PO Box 156, Lansdown House, Post St, Mbabane, Swaziland

and to diplomatic representatives of Swaziland in your country.

Please organize some appeals from lawyers, academics or students.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 March 1991.