

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 32/04/94

Distrib: PG/SC

Date: 24 March 1994

FURTHER INFORMATION ON

Koigi wa Wamwere
Charles Kuria Wamwere (brother of Koigi wa Wamwere)
James Maigwa (brother-in-law of Koigi wa Wamwere)
Godfrey Ngengi Njuguna

(See AFR 32/02/94 - 4 February 1994)

KENYA

On 4 February 1994 Amnesty International issued information on the difficulty these four prisoners have faced in obtaining proper medical attention since their arrest in late 1993. They have been held in overcrowded conditions in Nakuru Prison without access to medication or adequate medical care.

There was particular concern for Godfrey Ngengi Njuguna who is diabetic and hypertensive and who is reported to have suffered a mild stroke in early 1993 while in the same prison. Earlier this year he was reported to have developed kidney problems and considerable swelling of the legs and was admitted to hospital for a brief period in January 1994. The courts have now ordered that he be returned to hospital and he is currently in Nakuru hospital where he is under constant guard. He is, however, said to be without adequate specialist attention and is reported to require further tests and referral to hospital in Nairobi where he could be attended by a specialist. There is also concern that he is permanently chained to his bed in Nakuru hospital.

Of the other three prisoners, James Maigwa and Charles Kuria Wamwere are still in Nakuru prison, while Koigi wa Wamwere was recently transferred to Kamiti Prison near Nairobi.

All four are charged with attempted robbery with violence, which carries a mandatory death sentence. Amnesty International believes the charges could have been fabricated. All four men are opposition activists. Koigi wa Wamwere is a former member of parliament and prominent opponent of President Daniel arap Moi's government, and has been arrested on a number of previous occasions.

Background

Amnesty International believes that the four men may be prisoners of conscience and that their arrest was part of a pattern of harassment and arrest of government critics who are investigating political violence in the Rift Valley and parts of Western Kenya. Since May 1991 more than 1,000 people have been killed and 300,000 displaced as a result of ethnically-based political violence where government involvement has been alleged.

The trial of the four men is continuing and a hearing date has now been set for 11 April. Amnesty International is monitoring the trial closely and is urging the authorities to ensure that,

while the prisoners remain in detention, they are properly treated and permitted access to any medical attention and treatment they may require.

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To: Medical professionals
From: Medical Officer / Research Department - Africa
Date: 24 March 1994

FURTHER INFORMATION ON MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

(See AFR 32/02/94 - 4 February 1994)

Koigi wa Wamwere
Charles Kuria Wamwere (brother of Koigi wa Wamwere)
James Maigwa (brother-in-law of Koigi wa Wamwere)
Godfrey Ngengi Njuguna

KENYA

Keywords

Theme: Possible POCs/ill-health/medical care

A medical action for these four men was issued on 4 February 1994. Please see the additional information attached.

Recommended Actions

Letters are requested from medical professionals to the addresses below:

- noting that Godfrey Ngengi Njuguna has been admitted to Nakuru hospital following a court order that he receive hospital treatment
- expressing concern that he is chained permanently to his bed, although guards are present in the hospital, and urging that this practice end
- noting reports that he requires further tests and specialist attention which could best be provided in Nairobi hospital
- seeking information on the diagnosis which has been made and the treatment he is receiving and urging that, if he does require transfer to another hospital, this be arranged without delay
- expressing concern that he and the others with whom he is being tried may be held as a result of their peaceful opposition activity and that they face charges which carry the death penalty

Addresses

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Daniel arap Moi
Office of the President
PO Box 30510
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Mr Joshua Angatia
Minister of Health
Ministry of Health
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Mr Amos Wako
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
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Copies to:

Mr Justice Fred Opaloo
Chief Justice, Law Courts
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Kenya

Law Society of Kenya
PO Box 72219
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and to diplomatic representatives of Kenya accredited to your country.