

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 32/14/96

6 August 1996

Further information on EXTRA 113/96 (AFR 32/11/96, 23 July 1996) - Prisoners of Conscience / Health concern

KENYA

Tirop KITUR, Chairperson
Munga GATHOGO, Assistant Secretary
Kanene KARARI, Coordinator (note name change)
Ndungi GITHUKU, Assistant Coordinator (note name change)
Josephine Nyawira NGENGI (f)
Virginia WANJIRU (f)
Wanjiru KAHIGA (f)
Wahinya BOORE
Munyua NJENGA
Munyua NJUKI
Mungai MBUTHI
Maina WAITITU
Wafula BUKE
Johi BRITAI
Kibuku KAHURA
Muriithi KANOTHO
Mwangi KIRAGU
Ditau WANGUTHI
Njaroge WANGUTHI
Muriu KATIUKI
Muriithi NDUTHU

On 6 August 1996 the 21 members of the human rights organization Release Political Prisoners (RPP) were finally given bail after having been imprisoned for 19 days in harsh conditions. They should be released shortly.

All 21 were arrested in Nairobi on 19 July on charges of sedition and holding an illegal meeting. They were initially refused bail despite the fact that both charges are bailable. Human rights activists in Kenya believe the RPP is being targeted for its human rights activities. In the past few months the RPP have continued to express concern at the murder of their Secretary General, Karimi Nduthu, on 24 March 1996, and have raised questions about the apparent lack of progress in the police investigation.

The bail application was not opposed by the prosecution when the case came to court on the morning of 6 August. Bail has been set at 20,000 Kenyan shillings each (approximately £240). The detainees were represented in court by senior Kenyan lawyers and supported by lawyers from a number of legal and human rights organizations including the Kenya branch of the International Commission of Jurists, the Federation of Independent Women Lawyers (FIDA)-Kenya, the Kenya Human Rights Commission and Kituo Cha Sheria, a legal aid centre. The trial is set to begin on 19 August.

Amnesty International remains concerned about these 21 human rights activists and believes that the Kenyan authorities are using the laws on sedition to restrict freedom of expression and association. The organization considers them to be prisoners of conscience.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- urging that the charges against the 21 members of the Release Political Prisoners group, who are prisoners of conscience, be dropped;
- urging that they be given access to any medical treatment they may require.

APPEALS TO:

President Daniel arap Moi
Office of the President
PO Box 30501, Nairobi, Kenya
Telegrams: President Moi, Nairobi, Kenya
Telexes: 22003 FOREIGN ROB / 22796 FOREIGN RB
Faxes: + 254 2 337340 (if no tone, please try later)
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Amos Wako
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
PO Box 40112, Nairobi, Kenya
Telegrams: Attorney General Wako, Sheria, Kenya
Faxes: + 254 2 211 082
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Mr Justice Abdul Majid Cocker
Chief Justice
Law Courts
PO Box 30041, Nairobi, Kenya
Telegrams: Chief Justice Cocker, Nairobi, Kenya
Salutation: Dear Chief Justice

COPIES TO:

Kenya Human Rights Commission
PO Box 55235
Nairobi
Kenya

Release Political Prisoners
PO Box 50613
Nairobi
Kenya

and to diplomatic representatives of KENYA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 August 1996.