

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Please bring this action to the attention of the person in your section responsible for outreach work as it is felt that appeals from journalists' organizations, trade unions and teachers for the relevant cases may be particularly effective.

16 March 1992

Further information on UA 86/92 (AFR 36/05/92, 12 March 1992) - Legal concern

MALAWI: Simon MHONE, journalist
 Sydney KWELEPETA, employee of Export Promotion
 Council
 Sam CHIRWA, employee of Malawi Oil Company (Oilcom)
 Mr CHIRAMBO, employee of Blantyre Polytechnic
 Chakufwa CHIHANA, trade union official

and new name: Dennis NKWAZI, school teacher

The above-named are all reported to have been arrested in Malawi for urging the introduction of a multi-party political system. The first four named were reportedly arrested after they had been overheard criticizing the present political system and remain in detention, apparently without charge.

Chakufwa Chihana, an international trade union official, was detained for several hours on 1 March 1992 as he was leaving the country to attend a meeting in Zambia. Reports now indicate that a warrant has been issued for his arrest in Lilongwe. Chakufwa Chihana, who is currently attending another international meeting in Namibia, has stated that he intends returning to Malawi. Amnesty International considers that if he were to be imprisoned, this would be solely on account of his public criticism of the present single-party political system and that he would be a prisoner of conscience.

Dennis Nkwazi, a teacher at Pwezi secondary school in Rumphu District, northern Malawi, is reported to have been arrested during the week beginning 8 March 1992, apparently for advocating a multi-party system. The immediate reason for his arrest may have been alleged possession of a pastoral letter by the country's Roman Catholic bishops criticizing government human rights violations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the reported arrest and continuing detention of Simon Mhone, Sydney Kwelepeta, Sam Chirwa, Mr Chirambo and Dennis Nkwazi; seeking information about their place of detention and the legal basis for their imprisonment and calling for them to be released unless they are to be charged

with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly and fairly to trial;

- expressing concern at the arrest and brief detention of Chakufwa Chihana and at reports that a warrant has been issued for his arrest; stating that Amnesty International believes that if he were imprisoned solely for

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advocacy of a multi-party system and criticism of human rights violations he would be a prisoner of conscience; seeking assurances that he will not be arrested on his return to Malawi.

APPEALS TO

1) H E The Life-President Ngwazi Dr H. Kamuzu Banda
Office of the President and Cabinet
P/Bag 301
Lilongwe 3
Malawi
Telegrams: Life-President Banda, Lilongwe, Malawi
Telexes: 4389 PRES MI
Faxes: + 265 731878

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Hon. J Z U Tembo
Minister of State in the Office of the President
P/Bag 301
Lilongwe 3
Malawi
Telegrams: Minister of State Tembo, Lilongwe, Malawi

Salutation: Dear Minister

3) Mr MacWilliam Lunguzi
Inspector-General of Police
P/Bag 305
Lilongwe 3
Malawi
Telegrams: Inspector-General of Police Lunguzi, Lilongwe, Malawi

Salutation: Dear Sir

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Southern Africa Trade Union Co-ordination Council
PO Box 1271
Lilongwe
Malawi

and to diplomatic representatives of Malawi in your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 April 1992.