

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 87/99

Health concern

15 July 1999

UGANDA / DRC

Jean-François David, Congolese citizen

Amnesty International is gravely concerned for Jean-Francois David, who is seriously ill while in the detention of the Ugandan armed forces, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF), in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

He reportedly has diarrhea and is passing blood. Amnesty International fears his life may be at risk unless he receives urgent medical attention which is apparently being denied to him at present.

Jean-Francois David, a Congolese citizen thought to be of Haitian origin, was reportedly arrested by the UPDF in June 1999 in the northern DRC town of Kisangani. He is now being held in the town of Lisala, Equateur province, where he was transferred at the end of June.

He is a member of the faction of the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD), Congolese Rally for Democracy, led by Professor Wamba dia Wamba. This faction is allied to the UPDF which is involved in a civil war against DRC government forces and their foreign allies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since August 1998 the UPDF have been fighting alongside DRC armed opposition groups and Rwandese and Burundian government forces against DRC government forces and their allies from the Zimbabwean, Angolan and Namibian governments. The UPDF in the DRC is commanded by Ugandan army Chief of Staff, Brigadier James Kazini. Some of the forces involved have been responsible for grave human rights abuses since fighting began and during the previous war of 1996 - 1997.

A number of individuals and groups opposed to the involvement of foreign forces in the conflict have reportedly been detained by the UPDF and its allies. At least nine RCD assembly members are believed to be in custody since reportedly being arrested by the UPDF on 7 and 8 June, after they had declared that they no longer supported the RCD. Their conditions of detention are not known. It appears they were arrested for their opposition to the peace accord signed on 10 July 1999 by governments taking part in the armed conflict.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Jean-François David, who is detained by the UPDF, is gravely ill;
- urging the Ugandan authorities to order Brigadier James Kazini to arrange immediate medical care for Jean-François David and ensure he is treated humanely;
- asking to be informed of the reasons for his arrest;
- calling for his release and that of other political detainees who have not committed any recognizable criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

President Yoweri K MUSEVENI
President of the Republic and Minister of Defence
Office of the President
Parliament Buildings
PO Box 7168
Kampala
Uganda

Telegrams: President Museveni, Kampala, Uganda

E-mails: museveni@starcom.co.ug

Faxes: + 256 41 235462 / 257986

Salutation: Dear President Museveni

Major-General Jeje ODONGO
Army Commander
Armed Forces Headquarters
PO Box 3798
Kampala
Uganda
Faxes:

Telegrams: Major-General Odongo, Kampala, Uganda
Salutation: Dear Major-General Odongo

Brigadier James KAZINI
Army Chief of Staff
Armed Forces Headquarters
PO Box 3798
Kampala
Uganda

Telegrams: Army Chief of Staff, Kampala, Uganda
Salutation: Dear Brigadier

COPIES TO:

Brigadier Eriya KATEGAYA
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Box 7084
Kampala
Uganda

Faxes: + 256 41 25 87 22

and to diplomatic representatives of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.