

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 48/93 Extrajudicial executions

25 February 1993

ZAIRE: At least 15 civilians in Kinshasa

Amnesty International is concerned at reports that at least 15 civilians, including a Red Cross worker, an 11-year-old child and a pregnant woman, were extrajudicially killed by Zairian troops in the capital, Kinshasa, in a series of incidents on 22 February 1993. The troops responsible are believed to be members of President Mobutu's elite Division Spéciale Présidentielle (DSP), Special Presidential Division.

The killings are said to have taken place in incidents that followed the killing of a civilian called Ekofo on 20 February 1993, reportedly following a dispute.

The soldiers responsible are thought to have been paratroopers from a division of the armed forces from the Centre d'Entraînement des Troupes Aéroportée (CETA), a central airforce training camp. The following day a reprisal attack by other civilians resulted in the death of a DSP soldier who apparently had nothing to do with the previous killing. On 23 February, members of the DSP, enraged by the killing of the soldier, went on a punitive raid. They shot into a crowd of civilians in Kingasini, an outlying district of Kinshasa, before realising that Ekofo was being buried in Gombe, another district of Kinshasa.

They then set out for Gombe, killing 13 people and injuring a dozen others on the way, and finally killed two more who were burying Ekofo at Gombe cemetery.

These incidents intensify Amnesty International's concern that members of the elite DSP are carrying out extrajudicial executions with impunity following the recent breakdown in the political situation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

These killings follow recent disturbances in January 1993 in Kinshasa when over 300 people were killed during riots, including civilians and foreign nationals. The violence started when soldiers, angry at being paid in controversial new banknotes which had been boycotted by opposition supporters, went on the rampage. The five-million-zaire notes, which had been declared illegal tender by the Prime Minister, Etienne Tshisekedi, long time opponent of President Mobutu, were refused by market traders and businesses. The riots were eventually violently suppressed by the DSP. The unrest was the worst since September 1991 when troops rioted because they had not been paid; as a result 20,000 foreigners were evacuated from the country.

Members of the DSP are reported to have been responsible for the extrajudicial execution of 37 protesters during a demonstration in Kinshasa in February 1992.

No investigation is known to have been carried out into these killings and so no-one has been found to be responsible nor brought to justice.

President Mobutu is locked in a bitter power struggle with Prime Minister Tshisekedi who was elected by a pro-democracy conference in August 1992. President Mobutu previously named Tshisekedi as premier in late 1991 but dismissed him within a week because he refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the President.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters either in French, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that on 23 February 1993 members of the Division Spéciale Présidentielle (DSP) reportedly extrajudicially executed at least 15 unarmed civilians in Kinshasa;

- expressing concern that members of the DSP are also reported to have been responsible for the extrajudicial execution of 37 protesters during a demonstration in Kinshasa in February 1992;

- expressing concern that the relevant authorities have apparently failed to take any action in response to the reported extrajudicial execution of unarmed civilians, including women and children, despite the fact the reports of these killings have been widely publicised;

- calling on the government to urgently initiate an independent and impartial inquiry into all extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations which are reported to have occurred in Kinshasa and to ensure that those found to be responsible are brought to justice;

- urging the relevant authorities to curb the activities of the DSP and make them accountable for their actions;

- requesting the authorities to establish strict guidelines for the use of lethal force in accordance with international standards and to issue public instructions to all members of the security forces that human rights violations, including the killing of unarmed civilians, are criminal offences and that those responsible should be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO

1) President:
Son Excellence Monsieur Maréchal
MOBUTU Sese Seko
Président de la République
Kinshasa-Ngaliema
République du Zaïre
Telegrams: Président Maréchal
Mobutu, Kinshasa, Zaïre
Telexes: 21368

2) Chief of Staff of the Armed forces:
Monsieur le Général ELUKI Monga
Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Forces
armées zaïroises (FAZ)
Ministère de la Défense nationale
Kinshasa-Ngaliema
République du Zaïre
Telegrams: Chef d'Etat-Major Eluki,
Kinshasa, Zaïre

Salutation: Monsieur le Président /
Dear President

Salutation: Monsieur le Chef
d'Etat-Major /
Dear General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Prime Minister and Head of Government:

Monsieur TSHISEKEDI Etienne
Premier Ministre
Hôtel du Conseil exécutif
Kinshasa-Gombe
République du Zaïre

and the following newspapers:

Le Potentiel

2 Avenue Msi-Manimba
BP 11338
Kinshasa
Zaïre

2) Human Rights Organization:

Ligue Zaïroise des droits de l'homme
20 rue Draily
6000 Charleroi
Belgium

Elima

BP 10017
Kinshasa-Limete
Zaïre

and to diplomatic representatives of Zaïre accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 April 1993.