

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Attempted Extrajudicial Execution

16 April 1993

ZAIRE:

At least six unidentified people

Amnesty International has received reports that six people were seriously hurt when troops of President Mobutu's elite Special Presidential Division (DSP) opened fire on a crowd outside the house of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi in the capital, Kinshasa, on 15 April 1993.

The DSP reportedly arrived at Tshisekedi's home, as a cabinet meeting was being held there in defiance of President Mobutu's self-nominated government. They are reported to have fired on the crowd without provocation, injuring many people, of whom six were said to have been seriously wounded. None have yet been identified although they are believed to have been members of Tshisekedi's political party, the Union pour la démocratie et le Progrès social (UDPS). The organization fears an escalation of violence and of further shootings leading to extrajudicial executions in view of the extremely tense political situation prevailing throughout the country.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

President Mobutu is locked in a bitter power struggle with Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, head of the UDPS, who was elected by a pro-democracy National Conference in August 1992. Following the riots in January by soldiers in January 1993, who were angry at being paid in controversial new banknotes which had been denounced as illegal tender by Prime Minister Tshisekedi and boycotted by supporters of his government, President Mobutu "sacked" Tshisekedi and named a new Prime Minister, Faustin Birindwa. An executive sovereign body, also nominated by the National Conference, the Haut conseil de la république (HCR), has rejected Faustin Birindwa as Prime Minister and is trying to reach a compromise with President Mobutu.

Zaire now effectively has two Prime Ministers, and two heads of state who are competing for power. However, the security forces and the mass media are still controlled by President Mobutu, who continues to defy foreign pressure to yield to democratic reforms. The DSP were responsible for the extrajudicial execution of 37 protestors during a demonstration in Kinshasa in 1992.

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

- expressing concern at reports that on 15 April 1993 members of the DSP reportedly opened fire on unarmed civilians, outside the house of the Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, seriously wounding at least six of them;
- urging the authorities to curb the activities of the DSP and make them accountable for their actions;

-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 and the reported extrajudicial execution of a further 15 unarmed civilians in February 1993;

-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 that reports of these killings have been widely publicised;

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-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 violation, including the killing and wounding 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

Salutation: Monsieur le Président/Dear President

2) Chief of Staff of the Armed forces

Monsieur le Général

ELUKI Monga

Chef d'Etat-Major Général des Forces

armées zairoises (FAZ)

Ministère de la Défense nationale

Kinshasa-Ngaliema

République du Zaïre

Telegrams: Chef d'Etat-Major Eluki, Kinshasa, Zaïre

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

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister and Head of Government:

Monsieur TSHIEKEDI Etienne

Premier Ministre

Hôtel du Conseil exécutif

Kinshasa-Gombe

République du Zaïre

Human Rights organization:

Ligue zairoise des droits de l'homme

20 rue Draily

6000 Charleroi

Belgium

and the following newspapers:

Le Potential

2 Avenue Msi-Manimba
BP 11338
Kinshasa 1
Zaire

Elima

BP 10017
Kinshasa-Limete
Zaire

and to diplomatic representatives of Zaire accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 May 1993.