

EXTERNAL

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"Disappearances" / Fear for safety

6 June 1997

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Jonas Mukamba Kadiata, diamond company director
Kumbu Kumbel, political activist

The whereabouts of two men reportedly arrested by members of the *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL), are unknown. They are believed to be in detention or under house arrest in Lubumbashi, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo's Shaba region. Concern for their safety has been heightened by the fact that the authorities have denied humanitarian organizations access to detainees or detention centres, amidst reports that some detainees have been tortured.

On 10 April 1997, Jonas Mukamba Kadiata, former director of the state diamond mining company *La société Minière de Bakwanga* (MIBA), based in Mbuji-Mayi the capital of the diamond mining region of Kasai-Oriental, was taken by the AFDL from Mbuji-Mayi to Goma. He was arrested in Goma the following day, where he was held in the main prison. The reasons for his arrest were not made public. On 12 April, he was suspended from his post at MIBA, which was subsequently filled by a member of the AFDL. Amnesty International has recently received reports that he was transferred from Goma to Lubumbashi some weeks ago, but has been unable to trace him in Goma or in Lubumbashi.

Kumbu Kumbel, a Zairian national residing in exile in Switzerland, is reported to have "disappeared" shortly after arriving in Lubumbashi on or around 15 May 1997. Kumbu Kumbel, who is vice-President of the *Alliance nationale des démocrates pour la reconstruction* (ANADER), a Kinshasa-based political party broadly allied to the objectives of the AFDL, was allegedly on a mission in Lubumbashi for ANADER to discuss future relations with the new government. He was due to hold talks with the governor of Lubumbashi, Gaetan Kadudji, during his visit. However sources in Lubumbashi have indicated that Kumbu Kumbel was arrested in his hotel and is currently being detained in Lubumbashi by the local authorities. However, there is no information about who is responsible for his arrest or where and why he is being held.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 17 May 1997, forces of the AFDL entered Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire and declared victory after a seven-month armed campaign against the Zairian army. The AFDL leader, Laurent Desire Kabila, has declared himself President, suspended the Zairian constitution, changed the name of the country to Democratic Republic of Congo and installed a new government.

Since the beginning of the armed conflict, which began in eastern Zaire in October 1996, Amnesty International has been documenting human rights abuses committed by the AFDL and their allies. These abuses have included large-scale deliberate and arbitrary killings, "disappearances", torture and arbitrary arrests. In the short time since the AFDL have taken control of the whole country and established a transitional government, many more severe violations have continued to be reported, particularly against actual and perceived supporters of former President Mobutu Sese Seko and members of opposition political parties, which have been banned.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/courier/express/airmail letters in French/English or your own language:

- calling for the current whereabouts of Jonas Mukamba Kadiata and Kumbu Kumbel and the reasons for their arrests to be made public immediately;
- seeking assurances that they are not being ill-treated and urging that they be allowed immediate and continuing access to relatives, legal counsel, representatives of humanitarian organizations, and independent medical care;
- urging that if they are not to be promptly charged with recognizable criminal offences, they be released immediately and unconditionally;
- urging the authorities to ensure that humanitarian organizations, such as the Red Cross, have full access to all detainees and detention centres.

APPEALS TO:

Head of State

Son Excellence

Laurent-Désiré KABILA

Président de la République

Présidence de la République

Kinshasa-Ngaliema

Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: President Kabila, Kinshasa, DR Congo

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République

Minister of the Interior

M. Mwenze KONGOLO

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Hôtel du Conseil exécutif

Kinshasa-Gombe

Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Kinshasa, DR Congo

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

Minister of Justice

M. Celestin LWANGI

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

BP 3137

Kinshasa-Gombe

Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Kinshasa, DR Congo

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

COPIES TO:

M. Gaetan Gakudji

Gouverneur du Shaba

Hotel de Ville

Lubumbashi

Democratic Republic of Congo

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 July 1997.