

UA 306/99

"Disappea

DRC/UGANDA About 25 people including:

Mbula Bwambukamo]senior members of the armed
 Jonas Mutamo]opposition group
 Kambale Bahekwa]*Rassemblement congolais*
 Commandant Kakulele]*pour la démocratie*
 Commandant Muhendu]
 François Mwamba - member of the armed opposition group *Mouvement pour la*
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Around 25 people, including those named above, were arrested by the Ugandan army after a senior Ugandan military commander was killed by armed opposition groups on 14 November 1999. It is not known where they are held, but others recently arrested by the Ugandan armed forces in the area are reported to have been severely tortured (See EXTRA 163/99, AFR 25/41/99, 12 November 1999).

Major Ikondere was apparently killed by one of a number of indigenous armed group known as the *Mayi-Mayi*, in Butembo, a town in northeastern DRC, close to the Ugandan border. Those accused of complicity in the killing, who were arrested shortly afterwards in and around Butembo, North-Kivu Province, are members of two armed opposition groups fighting alongside the Ugandan army, *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD), Rally for Congolese Democracy, and their allies the *Mouvement pour la libération du Congo* (MLC), Movement for the Liberation of Congo.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The current armed conflict in the DRC began in August 1998 when the RCD, supported by Rwandese and Ugandan government forces, launched a rebellion against the new government of Laurent Désiré Kabila. In May 1999, however, the RCD itself split into two factions, RCD-Goma (allied to Rwanda) and RCD-Kisangani (allied to Uganda), which are now fighting each other as well as the government.

The DRC is now effectively split three ways between the government, RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani. Both factions of the RCD and their allies are also fighting against several *Mayi-Mayi* groups, who are opposed to all foreign troops.

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

- calling on the authorities to reveal where the 25 people arrested on 14 November 1999 in connection with the death of Major Ikondere are held, and seeking assurances that they will not be tortured;
- urging that they be granted a fair trial if charges are to be brought against them;
- urging the RCD and its allies, the Ugandan armed forces, to stop all use of torture in the DRC.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Republic and Minister of Defence

Mr Yoweri K MUSEVENI

Office of the President

Parliament Buildings

PO Box 7168

Kampala

Uganda

Telegrams: President Museveni, Kampala, Uganda

Faxes: + 256 41 235462 / 257986

Emails: museveni@starcom.co.ug

Salutation: Dear President

Minister of State for Defence

Mr Stephen KAVUMA

Ministry of Defence, PO Box 7069

Kampala

Uganda

Telegrams: Minister of State, Kampala, Uganda

Faxes: + 256 41 245911

Salutation: Dear Minister

President RCD

Professor Wamba dia Wamba

President RCD

Faxes: + 256 41 22 37 08

E-mails: cmadishi@hotmail.com

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES TO:

Uganda Human Rights Commission (government body)

PO Box 4929

Kampala

Uganda

Brigadier James Kazini

Army Chief of Staff

Armed Forces Headquarters

PO Box 3798

Kampala

Uganda

and to diplomatic representatives of Uganda accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 January 2000.