

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 36/56/92

Distr: UA/SC

UA 386/92 Legal concern/Fear of ill-treatment

7 December 1992

HAITI: Antoine AUGUSTIN, teacher

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Antoine Augustin, who was reportedly arrested on 5 December 1992 in Cap-Haïtien, North Department. He is a teacher and associate of deposed President Jean Bertrand Aristide.

According to information received by Amnesty International, Antoine Augustin was arrested without a warrant by members of the armed forces, reportedly claiming to be acting under the orders of an officer. However, it is not clear what accusation has been made against him. After his arrest, Antoine Augustin was reportedly transferred to Cap-Haïtien prison.

Since President Aristide was deposed in September 1991 Antoine Augustine had apparently been in hiding in Port-au-Prince, but he had recently decided to go back to Cap-Haitien. Amnesty International is concerned that he may be ill-treated while in custody.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Troops violently overthrew the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who took office in Haiti on 7 February 1991, in a coup on the night of 29 to 30 September 1991. Since then Amnesty International has learned of widespread human rights violations committed by the security forces, including a large number of extrajudicial executions, torture and ill-treatment and mass arrests without warrant. Several of those detained by the authorities remain "disappeared". These abuses have been carried out against supporters and those perceived to be supporters of the deposed president by uniformed security force agents or, on some occasions, by men in civilian clothes ostensibly linked to them. (see Haiti: Human Rights Held to Ransom, AI Index: AMR 36/41/92, August 1992)

On 19 June 1992 a new prime minister, Marc Bazin was sworn in. Several days before he took office, he pledged before the Haitian senate to "stop repression and restore freedom of the press". However, Amnesty International is continuing to receive reports of widespread human rights violations.

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

- expressing concern at the arrest reportedly without warrant of Antoine Augustin;

- asking that his physical integrity be guaranteed while in detention and for confirmation of his current whereabouts;

- requesting clarification as to his legal situation that he be allowed access to legal representation as well as access to his family.

Page 2 of UA 386/92

APPEALS TO

1. Prime Minister:

Marc BAZIN

Premier Ministre

Palais National

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telegrams: Premier Ministre BAZIN, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Faxes: + 509 34 1980, 23 2121

Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Minister/Dear Prime Minister

2. Minister of Justice

Maître Moïse SENATUS

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

Cité de l'Exposition

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telegrams: Ministre de la Justice SENATUS, Port-au-Prince

Telephone: +509 45 0474, 45 1626

Telexes: 20166 Justice

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/Dear Minister

3. Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces:

Monsieur le Général Raoul CEDRAS

Commandant-en-Chef des Forces Armées d'Haïti

Grand Quartier Général des Forces Armées d'Haïti

Rue Geffrard

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telegrams: Comandant-en-Chef des Armees d'Haiti Cedras, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Telephone: +509 22 3935

Telexes: 20391 ggfadh

Faxes: +509 23 9007, 23 9407

Salutation: Monsieur le Général/Dear General

4. Director of Cap-Haïtien Prison:

Monsieur le Directeur

Prison de Cap-Haïtien

Cap-Haïtien

Département du Nord

Haïti

Telegrams: Monsieur le Directeur, Prison de Cap-Haïtien, Cap-Haïtien Haiti

Salutation: Monsieur le Directeur/Dear Director

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Public Prosecutor for Gonaïves:

Monsieur le Commissaire du Gouvernement

Tribunal de Première Instance

Cap-Haïtien

Haïti

and to diplomatic representatives of Haiti accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 January 1993.