

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Legal Concern

26 October 1990

**ZIMBABWE: Christopher Giwa, student leader
Eric Nvundudu, student leader
Enoch Mhandhla, student leader
Servias Sibanda, student
Kapofu (first name not known), student**

Seven students were arrested on 25 October 1990 after students from the University of Zimbabwe demonstrated in Harare against a law, the University Bill, which places the university under the tight control of its Vice-Chancellor, who has executive responsibility for the running of the university, and the Minister of Education.

Five of the students were released on 26 October 1990 but two, Christopher Giwa and Eric Nvundudu, President of the Students' Representative Council (SRC) and Secretary-General of the SRC respectively, remain in detention. Also on 26 October, three other students, Enoch Mhandhla, the Treasurer of the SRC, and two other student union members, Servias Sibanda and Kapofu, were detained when they went to inquire about the arrests of Christopher Giwa and the others.

There were further student demonstrations to protest about these arrests on 26 October 1990.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The University of Zimbabwe was closed between October 1989 and April 1990. The closure followed a student gathering on 29 September 1989, held to mark the anniversary of an anti-corruption demonstration which took place in 1988.

Two student leaders were arrested after a statement was issued by the students on 2 October 1989 which criticized Zimbabwe's government for using emergency powers and riot police to disperse the gathering. (See UA 394/89, AFR 46/02/89, 11 October, and follow-ups AFR 46/04/89, 26 October and AFR 46/05/89, 16 November).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/telegrams/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the arrest of the five students who Amnesty International believes may have been arrested for expressing their political opinions in a non-violent manner;
- requesting information about the legal basis of their arrests;
- asking where they are being held and seek assurances that they are being humanely treated, and that they have access to visits from their lawyers and families;
- urging that they be released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to trial.

APPEALS TO:

The Hon. Moven Mahachi
Minister of Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
Mapondera building
Private Bag 8024, Causeway
Harare, Zimbabwe

Telexes: 22141 ZIVGOV ZW
Marked Attention: Minister for Home Affairs
Telegrams: Home Affairs Minister, Harare, Zimbabwe

The Hon Sydney Sekeremayi
Minister of State in the President's
Office for National Security
Office of the President
Munhumutapa Building
Private Bag 7700, Causeway
Harare, Zimbabwe

Telexes: 24254 STATIN ZW
Telegrams: National Security Minister Sekeremayi, Harare, Zimbabwe

COPIES TO:

The Hon Emmerson Mnangagwa
Minister of Justice, and Leader of the House of Assembly
Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs
Mapondera Building
Private Bag 7704, Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe

Mr Henry Mkurazhizha
Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
PO Box 8807 Causeway
Harare Zimbabwe

and to diplomatic representatives of Zimbabwe in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 December 1990.