

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 221/91 (AFR 53/23/91, 28 June 1991) and follow-ups AFR 53/24/91 (4 July), AFR 53/26/91 (18 July), AFR 53/31/91 (17 September) and AFR 53/32/91 (27 September)- Hunger-Strike/Medical Concern/Ill-treatment

SOUTH AFRICA (Bophuthatswana):

Former hunger-strikers from Rooigrond Prison including:

Johannes SIMELANE - released 19 October 1991

Timothy PHIRI

and over 20 prisoners currently on hunger strike including:

Johannes "Bushy" MOLEFE

Frans MOKOMANE

Johannes Simelane was released from political imprisonment on 19 October 1991 after being on hunger-strike for 61 days. On the same day he was transferred from Odi Hospital, in the nominally independent "homeland" of Bophuthatswana, to GaRankuwa Hospital just outside the "homeland's" boundaries, which has suitable intensive-care facilities. An independent doctor who examined him has expressed particular concern about the possible long-term effects of his prolonged hunger-strike on his kidneys and nervous system. He is receiving appropriate care.

On 17 October 1991, two days prior to Johannes Simelane's release, the Bophuthatswana authorities announced the release of 20 political prisoners. They proceeded to release 18 prisoners, but refused to release the remaining two prisoners when officials learned that they were on hunger-strike. Johannes Simelane was not included among those political prisoners released on 17 October, and the "homeland" authorities reportedly announced specifically that prisoners on hunger-strike would not be released. In the wake of this announcement Johannes Simelane reiterated his determination to continue his fast. The authorities subsequently ordered his release on 19 October.

Over 20 other prisoners are reported to have now resumed their hunger-strike. The majority are still at Rooigrond Prison, where medical facilities are very limited, and three are reportedly at Bophelong hospital and two at Thusong hospital. Human rights workers have expressed concern that the health of the hunger-strikers is not being monitored closely and carefully enough. Concern for the prisoners' health care has intensified since the death on 15 October of Rabusang Monnana, a political prisoner who died from causes at present unknown but who appears to have been denied proper medical care by the prison medical service. In addition, the authorities

have restricted the access to prisoners in hospital by human rights monitors.

Johannes "Bushy" Molefe, who resumed his hunger-strike on 23 September, is currently in Bophelong hospital. He was reportedly assaulted on 18 October 1991 by a prison officer at Rooigrond prison when he was found to be wearing a T-shirt calling for the release of Johannes Simelane.

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Timothy Phiri, a former hunger-striker convicted of treason, was transferred on about 16 October from Rooigrond Prison near Mafikeng to Odi Prison near GaRankuwa.

He is believed not to be on hunger-strike. The reason for his transfer has not been made known, and concern has been expressed for his physical safety in view of his effective isolation from his fellow-prisoners and relatives.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- noting the release of Johannes Simelane on 19 October, and of 18 other prisoners on 17 October 1991;

- noting the transfer of Timothy Phiri from Rooigrond to Odi Prison, ask to be informed of the reasons for the transfer, and seek assurances that he will not be subjected to torture or ill-treatment in custody and that he will have regular access to visits from his lawyer and relatives;

- seeking assurances that all prisoners on hunger-strike, and those who have recently suspended their hunger-strike, will be granted full access to a doctor of their choice and to the treatment prescribed by that doctor, as well as regular access to their families and lawyers;

- urging that the South African government speedily complete its review of the cases of all political prisoners, and that the Bophuthatswana authorities urgently complete their own review of the cases of political prisoners in Bophuthatswana, in order to avoid further suffering to the prisoners and their families.

APPEALS TO:

1. Mr F W De Klerk

Dear President

State President

State President's Office, Private Bag X83

Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Telegrams: President De Klerk, Pretoria, South Africa

Telexes: 321695 SPLIB SA, 321890 PRES SA or 322158 PRES SA

Faxes: +27 12 323 3982

2. Mr R F Botha

Dear Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Department of Foreign Affairs, Private Bag X152

Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Pretoria, S. Africa

Telexes: 0959 350060 EXTERN TTX SA

Faxes: +27 12 323 1664

3. Dr E H Venter

Dear Minister

Minister of National Health
Department of National Health
Private Bag X399
Pretoria 0001, South Africa

Telegrams: Health Minister, Pretoria, South Africa

Telexes: 321320 SA or 321366 SA

Faxes: +27 12 323 0093

4. Chief L M Mangope

Dear President

President
Government Offices, Mmabatho
Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telegrams: President Mangope, Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telexes: 937 3008 BOP

Faxes: +27 140 842626

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5. Dr D N C O B Khaole

Dear Minister

Minister of Health and Social Services
Department of Health and Social Services
Government Offices, Mmabatho
Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telegrams: Health Minister Khaole, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Faxes: (+27) 140 23846 Marked: Please forward to the Ministry of Health

6. Mr S G Mothibe

Dear Minister

Minister of Justice
Department of Justice
Private Bag X2033, Mmabatho 8681
Bophuthatswana, South Africa

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Bophuthatswana, South Africa

COPIES TO: at least one of the following

- The Editor, The Star, PO Box 1014 Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- The Editor, New Nation, PO Box 10674, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- Human Rights Commission, PO Box 32723, Braamfontein 2017, South Africa
- Mafikeng Anti-Repression Forum (MAREF), PO Box 158, Ratshidi 8681, South Africa
- African National Congress, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Department, PO Box 61884 Marshalltown 2307, Johannesburg, South Africa
- National Medical and Dental Association (NAMDA), PO Box 2346, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa

- Medical Association of South Africa (MASA), PO Box 20272, Alkantrant, Pretoria
0005, South Africa

and to diplomatic representatives of South Africa in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your
section office if sending appeals after 5 December 1991.