

29 April 1999

Further information on EXTRA 55/99 (AFR 59/12/99, 27 April 1999, and news service item 081/99) - Fear of Imminent Executions

UGANDA Haji Musa Ssebirumbi, Emmanuel Kasujja, Yefusa Khamali, Justus Robert Bashekana, Benson Komakech, Dauson John Bageya, Erizefani Kasakya, Amisi Katarikawe, Bashir Kanunyuzi, Sowedi Kanunyuzi, Jeflin Lubega, Stephen Sunday, Richard Odongpiny-Omal, Sisto Obwoma, Celestino Olango, Leo Nyendwoha, William Gurikacha, Medadi Tindawesire, Silver Tugugu, Galasino Kinto, William Bataringaya, James Kinyingi Muwanga, John Fisher Iga, John Bosco Kiwanuka, Lwanga Kimbugwe Kaloli, Leo Mwebaze, Joseph Andabati, Ronald Owino

Amnesty International is gravely concerned at unconfirmed reports in the government-owned newspaper *New Vision* that some, possibly all, of the prisoners named above have been executed. Prison officials in Kampala, meanwhile, deny any executions have occurred. While Amnesty International is attempting to verify its information, immediate action is required to stay any remaining executions.

Amnesty International also continues to be gravely concerned not only for the 28 men, but also the implications a resumption of executions will have for the more than 1,000 prisoners currently on death row in Uganda, not all of whom have completed their appeals.

Twenty-six of those due to be hanged have been convicted of murder, the other two of aggravated robbery. One man, Haji Musa Ssebirumbi, was found guilty of murder in 1989 and lost his appeal in June 1992. He has been on death row since then. Details of the others' cases are not known, but it is believed that many of them were convicted of murder over 10 years ago. All were reportedly due to die at Luzira Prison in Kampala at 7.30pm local time on 30 April 1999.

The Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy reportedly recommended confirmation of the prisoners' death sentences after the Supreme Court denied their appeals. This committee advises President Museveni on which death sentences he should commute or confirm. The President still has the option to override the committee, exercise executive clemency and spare the men's lives.

Amnesty International is universally opposed to the death penalty, and is deeply concerned by the possibility of the resumption of executions in Uganda.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Uganda may have executed some or all of the prisoners named above;
- expressing dismay at the reported resumption of execution procedures in Uganda;
- expressing sympathy for the victims of violent crime and their families, but stating opposition to the use of the death penalty in all cases, on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- appealing for President Yoweri Museveni to exercise clemency and to commute these death sentences, and all other death sentences that come before him;

- appealing for a public moratorium on executions in Uganda and urging the authorities to consider abolishing capital punishment completely;
- urging that the Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy commutes all death sentence it reviews.

APPEALS TO:

President Yoweri K Museveni
Office of the President
Parliament Buildings
PO Box 7168
Kampala
Uganda

Faxes: + 256 41 25 79 86 or 25 53 28 or 23 54 62

Telegrams: President Museveni, Parliament Buildings, Kampala, Uganda

Salutation: Dear President Museveni

Mr Jehoash Mayanja Nkangi
Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
Ministry of Justice
and Constitutional Affairs
PO BOX 7183
Kampala
Uganda

Faxes: +256 41 25 48 29

Telegrams: Justice Minister Nkangi, Kampala, Uganda

Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Bart Katureebe
Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
and Constitutional Affairs
PO BOX 7183
Kampala
Uganda

Faxes: +256 41 25 48 29

Telegrams: Attorney General Katureebe, Kampala, Uganda

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

- Uganda Human Rights Commission (a government body), PO Box 4929, Kampala, Uganda
- The Editor, *New Vision*, PO Box 9815, Kampala, Uganda
- The Editor, *The Monitor*, PO Box 12141, 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 27 May 1999.