

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 62/017/2001

15 June 2001

Further information on UA 143/01 (AFR 62/013/2001, 6 June 2001) and follow-up (AFR 62/014/2001, 8 June 2001) - Arbitrary arrest / fear of ill-treatment and new concern: "disappearance"

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) N'sii Luanda Shandwe, human rights defender

Human rights defender N'sii Luanda Shandwe has "disappeared" from the detention centre where he had been held since 5 June, and his whereabouts are now unknown. He is now at much greater risk of torture.

He had been detained incommunicado for at least a week at a security service detention centre run by the *Agence nationale de renseignements* (National Intelligence Agency). The centre is on the Avenue des 3Z in the centre of Kinshasa, opposite the Ministry of the Interior. He is believed to have been taken from the centre within the last 48 hours, possibly for further interrogation about his alleged contacts with suspected government opponents. The use of torture during interrogation sessions to punish, intimidate, humiliate and extract confessions from detainees is widespread in the DRC.

N'sii Luanda is the president of the human rights group *Comité des observateurs des droits de l'homme* (Committee of Human Rights Observers). It seems likely that he was arrested because of his human rights activism. It appears he has not yet been charged with a recognisably criminal offence, even though under Congolese law, detainees may not be held without charge for more than 72 hours. In the absence of any criminal charges, he should be released immediately and unconditionally.

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

- expressing concern that N'sii Luanda has "disappeared" from security service custody, and urging the authorities to take immediate steps to find out where he is, and inform his family and human rights groups;
- urging them to take immediate steps to ensure that he is not tortured or ill-treated;
- urging them to allow his lawyers, family and doctors to see him immediately, and to allow him any medical treatment he may require without delay;
- asking what charges, if any, he faces;
- urging them to release him immediately and unconditionally if he is not to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence and promptly given the opportunity to answer any charge before a court of law;
- urging them to implement President Joseph Kabila's public commitment in March 2001 to close all unofficial detention centres, promptly and fully, and to stop targeting human rights defenders solely because of their legitimate human rights work.

APPEALS TO:

(Please note that all the fax numbers given may be difficult to get through to - please be patient and keep trying)

1. President

Président Joseph Kabila
Président de la République, Présidence de la République
Kinshasa-Ngaliema, Democratic Republic of Congo

e-mails: UPP@ic.cd

Fax: + 243 88 02120

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République / Dear President

2. Minister of Justice

M. Antoine Deogratias Ngele Masudi

Ministre de la Justice et des Affaires parlementaires

Ministère de la Justice

BP 3137

Kinshasa-Gombe

République Démocratique du Congo

Fax:+ 243 12 20 843

Salutation:Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

3. Head of the ANR

Didier Kazadi Nyembwe

Directeur de L'Agence Nationale de Renseignements (ANR)

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Hôtel du Conseil Exécutif

République Démocratique du Congo

Fax:+ 243 12 20 843 (c/o Ministry of Justice)

Salutation:Monsieur le Directeur / Dear Director

COPIES TO:

Minister for Human Rights

Professeur Ntumba Luaba

Ministre des Droits humains

Ministère des Droits humains

33/C Boulevard du 30 juin

Kinshasa-Gombe

République Démocratique du Congo

Fax:+ 243 12 20 664

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

and to diplomatic representatives of the Democratic Republic of Congo accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 July 2001.