

UA 328/01

Fear for**JAMAICA Katchroy McLeish**

Katchroy McLeish was shot and wounded by members of the security forces in February this year, and is pressing charges against the officers involved. On 17 December a police officer threatened to kill him. Amnesty International is concerned for his safety.

As he was out cycling a policeman pointed at him and said to a fellow officer: "*Dis a di one who mi bredren did shoot.*" (This is the one my colleague shot). When Katchroy stopped and asked the officer why he was pointing at him, the policeman said "*You gwaan. Your time soon come.*" (You're dead. Your time will be up soon.) Katchroy McLeish reported this to the police authorities (including the Commissioner of Police). The police reportedly told him that the officer concerned would receive a warning.

Katchroy McLeish was shot in February this year as he watched soldiers shooting at another man who was passing on a bicycle. A passerby attempted to take him to hospital, but police tried to stop him at gunpoint. In hospital, he was kept in handcuffs and charged shooting with intent. A magistrate dismissed these charges, but the police then charged him with shooting with intent and illegal possession of a firearm. There are frequent reports of Jamaican police planting firearms on people they have shot, and charging them with firearms offences. The case was adjourned four times when police failed to appear in court. When they finally did come to court, on 24 October, the prosecution withdrew its case unconditionally.

Two soldiers and a policeman are currently on trial in connection with the shooting, charged with unlawful wounding. Katchroy McLeish is also pursuing a civil action against the security forces.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Police officers and soldiers are rarely held accountable for human rights violations which are routine in Jamaica, including extrajudicial executions, use of excessive force, torture and ill-treatment. It is increasingly common for witnesses and victims to be threatened and intimidated while their allegations are investigated. A Witness Protection Programme was set up recently, but has failed to provide all participants with adequate security.

Janice Allen was fatally shot by police in 2000. In May this year, after a police officer was charged with her murder, her brother was detained without charge and her family received death threats.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern that a police officer has threatened to kill Katchroy McLeish, and urging the authorities to take immediate action to ensure that he is effectively protected from further death threats and intimidation;
- asking the authorities to order an independent, prompt and thorough investigation into the death threat, to bring those responsible to justice and suspend any police officers involved from duty while they are under investigation.

APPEALS TO:

Francis A. Forbes, CD, LL.B.
Commissioner of Police
Office of the Commissioner
101-105 Old Hope Road
Kingston 6
JAMAICA
Fax: +1 876 927 7516
Salutation: Dear Commissioner

The Hon. A.J. Nicholson
Attorney General & Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Mutual Life Building
North Tower
2 Oxford Road
Kingston 5
Jamaica
Fax: + 1 876 906 1724 (may be difficult to get through)
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

The Hon. P. Philipps
Minister for National Security
Mutual Life Building
North Tower
2 Oxford Road
PO Box 472
Kingston 5
JAMAICA
West Indies
Fax: + 1 876 906 1712 (may be difficult to get through)
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Constant Spring Police Station
1-3 Cassava Piece Road
Kingston 8
JAMAICA
West Indies
Fax: + 1 876 969 7904

and to diplomatic representatives of Jamaica accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 February 2002.