

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 32/05/92

Distr: UA/SC

10 March 1992

Further information on UA 19/92 (AFR 32/01/92, 14 January 1992) - and follow-up:
AFR 32/02/92, 20 January 1992 - Legal Concern

Kenya: 1. Professor Wangari Maathai (female), chair of Green Belt Movement
2. Josephat Karanja, former Vice-President of Kenya
3. James Orengo, lawyer
4. Wanguhu Ng'ang'a, businessman
5. Matu Wamae, former member of parliament
6. Virginia Wambui Otieno (female)
7. Kimani wa Nyoike, former member of parliament
8. Abdi Kadir Hassan (please note corrected name), former
member of parliament

and new names:

9. Luke Obok, former member of parliament
10. Abdi Baricha Ali
11. Wilson Pyman Onyango

and George Njanja

The above is a full and corrected list of the 11 (not nine, as earlier stated) prominent members of the opposition Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) who were arrested in mid-January 1992 and charged with "publishing a false rumour which is likely to cause fear and alarm to the public". They are all currently free on bail and no date has been set for their trial. Their defence lawyers have initiated a pre-trial legal action claiming that the charge violates their constitutional right to freedom of expression.

The 11 had held a press conference in Nairobi on 10 January 1992 at which they claimed that the government intended to hand over power to the army and they expressed fears for their safety as government opponents. The government denied this.

George Njanja was released without charge.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is required at this stage.

Further information on Wangari Maathai is contained in UA 74/92 (AI Index: AFR 32/04/92, 5 March 1992). She was beaten unconscious by riot police while participating in a hunger-strike by women members of the Release Political Prisoners Group in Nairobi on 3 March 1992. She has reportedly been discharged from hospital but has said she will resume her hunger-strike.