

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

**AI Index: AFR 36/12/03**

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**UA 26/93      Fear of ill-treatment/Legal concern**

**3 February 1993**

**MALAWI:      The Reverend Peter Kaleso, Presbyterian church minister and  
                 opposition activist**

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The Reverend Peter Kaleso, an official of the opposition Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) party, was arrested in the capital, Lilongwe, on 24 January 1993 by armed security police, after speaking at an AFORD rally in the city. He has not so far been charged with any offence, although the law requires that anyone who has been arrested should either be charged or released within 48 hours. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience and is concerned for his safety. He is being held in Maula prison in Lilongwe where conditions are harsh. In the past political prisoners have been ill-treated there but no information is available so far about how he is being treated. He has reportedly only been allowed brief access to his family and lawyer.

On 2 February the official news media alleged that the Reverend Peter Kaleso was being held for having insulted Life-President Kamuzu Banda. In his speech at the AFORD rally on the day of his arrest he is reported to have criticized the official allocation of funds for presidential residences while hospitals were short of medicines. He has been arrested before for his criticisms of the government. A previous ban on his speaking in public was lifted by the High Court shortly before his latest speech.

The Reverend Peter Kaleso is a minister of the Church of Central Africa (Presbyterian), CCAP, which is a member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and has strong links to the Church of Scotland. The churches in Malawi have been prominent in the recently growing movement for human rights and democracy. Several ministers of the CCAP (of which Life-President Banda is a member) belong to AFORD and have been arrested for short periods.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In the run-up to the referendum on 15 March 1993 to decide whether to retain the one-party state or not, the opposition groups AFORD and the United Democratic Front (UDF) are being allowed a certain amount of freedom of expression and association but are still being subjected to various forms of repression and harassment. In the past few weeks, for example, dozens of AFORD members in the north have been arrested and held for short periods; some of them were taken to court and fined for minor offences such as incitement to commit a breach of the peace or of being a vagabond. Others have been beaten up by members of the Malawi Young Pioneers, a branch of the ruling Malawi Congress Party (MCP). The police have not taken any measures to stop the Malawi Young Pioneers from doing this.

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

- expressing concern at the arrest of the Reverend Peter Kaleso, who has been held without charge longer than the permitted 48-hour period;
- seeking assurances that he is being treated humanely in prison and urging that he be given regular access to his family and lawyer, and medical treatment if needed;

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- appealing for the immediate and unconditional release of the Reverend Peter Kaleso who is a prisoner of conscience imprisoned for exercising his right to the peaceful expression of his opinions.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) His Excellency Life-President  
Ngwazi Dr H. Kamuzu Banda  
Office of the President  
Private Bag 301  
Lilongwe 3, Malawi

**Telegrams: Life-President Banda,  
Lilongwe, Malawi**

**Telexes: 44389 PRES MI or  
44113 EXTERNAL MI**

**Faxes: + 265 731878**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

2) Mr John Tembo  
Minister of the State  
Office of the President  
Private Bag 301  
Lilongwe 3, Malawi

**Telegrams: State Minister Tembo,  
Lilongwe, Malawi**

**Telexes: 44389 PRES MI or  
44113 EXTERNAL MI**

**Faxes: + 265 731878**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

3) Mr MacWilliam Lunguzi  
Inspector-General of Police  
Malawi Police Headquarters  
Private Bag 305  
Lilongwe 3  
Malawi

**Telegrams: Inspector-General Police  
Lunguzi, Lilongwe, Malawi**

**Salutation: Dear Inspector-General**

4) Mr Friday Makuta  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
Private Bag 333  
Lilongwe 3  
Malawi

**Telegrams: Justice Minister Makuta,  
Lilongwe, Malawi**

**Telexes: 44766 JUSTICE MI**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**PLEASE SEND COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

1) Mr Mwale  
Commissioner of Prisons  
Malawi Prison Service Headquarters  
Box 28  
Zomba  
Malawi

Private Bag 130  
Lilongwe  
Malawi

2) The Officer-in-Command  
Maula Prison

3) Mr Viliera  
Attorney General  
Attorney General's Chambers  
Ministry of Justice  
Private Bag 333  
Lilongwe 3, Malawi

4) Mr Justice Richard Banda  
Chief Justice  
High Court of Malawi  
Box 30244, Chichiri  
Blantyre 3, Malawi

and to diplomatic representatives of Malawi accredited your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 March 1993.