

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 354/91 (AFR 44/13/91, 25 October 1991) - Death penalty/legal concern

NIGERIA: Paul Iguele

**Sunday Tomoloju
Trooper Olajide Adelaku
Trooper Chris Aniebi
Lance Corporal Pullen Blacky
Private Okam Enana
Lance Corporal Lucky Iwiero
Warrant Officer Jomo James
Warrant Officer David Mukoro
Sergeant Gatir Ortoo
Trooper Fakolade Taiwo**

Eleven people arrested in connection with the April 1990 coup attempt have reportedly been put through three secret trials before a government controlled tribunal in an apparent attempt to ensure that they are convicted and sentenced to death. Amnesty International fears that executions may be imminent and urges the government not to carry out any executions and to release those prisoners who were acquitted in previous trials before the Special Military Tribunal.

The 11 men named above, who include two civilians, have reportedly been sentenced either to death or to life imprisonment in their third trial before a Special Military Tribunal. They were charged with treason, a capital offence, or concealment of treason, punishable by life imprisonment. Details of their convictions are not known, nor is it clear when the first and second trials took place but they apparently resulted in acquittals. As with similar trials of alleged coup plotters in 1990, it appears that the government ordered their retrial in an attempt to ensure convictions and death sentences. Amnesty International is concerned that the reason for the retrials was political and that the trials were grossly unfair.

Amnesty International earlier expressed concern that Charles and David Mukoro, relatives of an armed forces officer suspected of involvement in the coup attempt who escaped arrest, were among the 11 on trial. In fact, it appears that David Mukoro is an armed forces officer and is among the 11, but that Charles Mukoro may still be detained without charge or trial, as are other relatives of people suspected of organizing the coup attempt (see Nigeria: Detention of hostages, AFR 44/11/91, 8 October 1991).

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams\telexex\faxes\express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern that the Nigerian government has apparently put defendants through three secret trials before a government controlled tribunal

in an attempt to ensure convictions and death sentences;

- requesting information about the 11 prisoners and the three trials they are alleged to have faced before the Special Military Tribunal;

- urging the government not to carry out any executions and to release those prisoners who were acquitted in previous trials before the Special Military Tribunal.

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APPEALS TO

1. General Ibrahim Babangida
President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
State House
Ribadu Road
Ikoyi Island, Lagos
Nigeria

Mr. President

Telegrams: President Babangida, Lagos, Nigeria
Telexes: 21444 EXTNAL NG
or 21236 EXTNAL NG
(via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

2. Admiral (Retd) Augustus Aikhomu
Vice-President
State House
Ribadu Road
Ikoyi Island
Lagos, Nigeria

Mr. Vice-President

Telegrams: Vice-President Aikhomu, Lagos, Nigeria
Telexes: 21444 EXTNAL NG
or 21236 EXTNAL NG
(via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

3. General Sani Abacha
Chief of Defence Staff and Minister of Defence
Defence Headquarters
Ministry of Defence
Independence Building
Tafawa Balewa Square
Lagos, Nigeria

Dear General

Telegrams: Defence Minister Abacha, Lagos, Nigeria

4. Prince Bola Ajibola
Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice
Minister of Justice
The Old Secretariat
PMB 12517, Marina
Lagos, Nigeria

Dear Minister

Telegrams: Justice Minister Ajibola, Lagos, Nigeria

COPIES TO:

Major-General (Retd) Ike O.S. Nwachukwu
Minister of External Affairs
Ministry of External Affairs
Maputo Street
Abuja
Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

The Guardian, PMB 1217, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria
The Punch, PMB 21204, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria
Nigerian Observer, PMB 1334, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria
Nigerian Tide, PMB 5072, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
Nigerian Star, PMB 73, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
President, Nigerian Bar Association, PMB 12610, Lagos, Nigeria

and to diplomatic representatives of Nigeria in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 December 1991.