

UA 209/00

"Di.**ZIMBABWE Patrick Nabanyama**

Opposition party worker Patrick Nabanyama was abducted by supporters of the ruling party on 19 June, and his whereabouts are now unknown. The police have been very slow to investigate.

A group of war veterans, supporters of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front), ZANU (PF), seized Patrick Nabanyama from his house, in front of his wife and children. Witnesses recognised local war veterans' leader Simon Rwodizi in the group, and reported this to police that day. Nonetheless it was more than two weeks before Rwodizi was arrested. He leads a local branch of the Zimbabwe War Veterans' Association, which has been repeatedly accused of acts of violence against government opponents throughout Zimbabwe.

Patrick Nabanyama was working as a polling agent (a party campaigner who monitors voting on the polling days) for an opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) parliamentary candidate, David Coltart, in Bulawayo. He was himself a former ZANU (PF) member, and before the parliamentary elections he received death threats from ZANU (PF) supporters. He had an open letter drawing attention to his situation published in the Bulawayo newspaper *Dispatch*, and was about to send another letter when he was abducted.

Patrick Nabanyama is one of 14 MDC supporters working for David Coltart who were kidnapped in the run-up to the election. He is the only one still missing.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The ruling ZANU (PF) won 62 of the 120 elected seats in Zimbabwe's parliamentary elections, held on 24 and 25 June. The main opposition party, the MDC, got 57. The election campaign was marked by violence and intimidation, almost entirely directed at real or perceived opposition party supporters by ZANU (PF) sympathisers.

The MDC won almost all the seats in the three Matabeleland provinces, including all those in Bulawayo, with sound majorities. Thousands of people were killed in these provinces when President Mugabe and his ZANU (PF) party attempted to crush political opposition to the government in 1982-1987.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Patrick Nabanyama, who has not been seen since he was abducted by war veterans on 19 June;
- calling for an immediate and impartial investigation into the abduction;
- urging the authorities to immediately launch a thorough and impartial inquiry into why the police were so slow to investigate his abduction;

APPEALS TO:

Commissioner of Police
Mr. Augustine Chihuri
Police Headquarters
PO Box 8807
Causeway

2

Harare

Zimbabwe

Telegrams: Augustine Chihuri, Police Headquarters, Harare, Zimbabwe

Salutation: Dear Mr. Chihuri

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

The Hon Mr Justice Anthony R Gubbay

Supreme Court

PO Box CY 870

Causeway

Harare

Zimbabwe

Telegrams: Chief Justice, Supreme Court, Harare, Zimbabwe

Salutation: Dear Chief Justice

COPIES TO:

Human Rights organisation

Amani Trust

2 Essex Road

Hillside

Bulawayo

Fax: + 263 9 75522

Newspaper

The Bulawayo Chronicle

PO Box 585

Bulawayo

Fax + 263 9 75522

and to diplomatic representatives of Zimbabwe accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 August 2000.