

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**Fear of Extrajudicial execution**

**25 May 1993**

**SOUTH AFRICA (Bophuthatswana): Solomon (Solly) Bokaba**, age 27, President of the Students Representative Council (SRC) at the University of Bophuthatswana (UNIBO)

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Solomon (Solly) Bokaba, who has received death threats while in the custody of the Bophuthatswana "homeland" police and who was brutally assaulted by Bophuthatswana police officers on 7 May 1993. Solly Bokaba is currently in hospital in Johannesburg receiving medical treatment. Amnesty International is concerned that he is being targeted because of his leadership position as President of the Students Representative Council (SRC) at the University of Bophuthatwana, and fears that when he returns to Mmabatho, his life will be at risk.

The 7 May assault on Solly Bokaba occurred when heavily-armed police moved on to the University of Bophuthatswana (Unibo) campus, near Mmabatho, to prevent students holding a march. The students' demands relate to difficulties within the educational system and to the continuing refusal of the Bophuthatswana authorities to permit free political activity in the "homeland". While student and staff representatives and police officers were negotiating, the police suddenly, and without warning, opened fire with rubber bullets and teargas and assaulted students with rubber batons. Eye-witnesses have said that the students were unarmed and peaceful and had offered no provocation.

Eye-witnesses reported that Solly Bokaba appeared to be personally singled out for assault. He was hurrying towards a group of negotiators and police when a number of police officers suddenly moved in on him. They rained blows on him with rubber batons, hitting him on the head and body until he lost consciousness. Students who tried to protect him were assaulted and shot at. Many other students were injured, including Gloria Sekamoeng. The police surrounded her, and fired rubber bullets at her from a distance of only three to five metres, then kicked her as she lay bleeding. A third student, Tsepo Mofokeng, was shot with a rubber bullet in the neck. The three were admitted to Bophelong hospital for treatment, and Solly Bokaba and Gloria Sekamoeng were subsequently transferred from there to a hospital in Johannesburg where they are still receiving medical care. Many other students also required medical treatment.

Solly Bokaba and Gloria Sekamoeng were held under police guard at Bophelong hospital until lawyers intervened to negotiate their release and transfer to Johannesburg. They are required to report back to the police when they return to Bophuthatswana.

Twenty-seven-year-old Solly Bokaba has been active as a student leader and with the African National Congress (ANC), and has tirelessly sought to resolve conflicts between them and the authorities. He is currently studying for a postgraduate degree in law. He has suffered repeated detentions during the past two years as a result of his activities, most recently on 25 April 1993 when he was arrested at a roadblock near Mafikeng with four other student activists. They were held until 30 April by Bophuthatswana police based at Mmabatho police

station and the security police offices in Mafikeng, then released without charge. During this time in custody, Solly Bokaba was assaulted by police officers and twice threatened that his "days are numbered". Another of the detainees was also assaulted and required hospital treatment.

After the events of 7 May the Unibo campus was closed. It reopened on 24 May, but the situation remains tense and there have been reports that the pattern of harassment of students is continuing.

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

- expressing fears for the safety of Solly Bokaba, following assaults on him and death threats made against him by Bophuthatswana police officers from Mmabatho and Mafikeng while he was in their custody between 25 and 30 April 1993;
- expressing concern that Bophuthatswana police officers who entered the Unibo campus on 7 May 1993 appear to have deliberately singled out Solly Bokaba as a target for their assaults;
- calling upon the authorities to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the police assaults and threats against Solly Bokaba and to bring to justice those responsible;
- expressing concern more broadly that the police appear to have carried out an unprovoked assault on unarmed and peaceful students at the Unibo campus on 7 May and deliberately used excessive and unjustified force against them;
- calling upon the authorities to authorize an independent and impartial inquiry into police conduct at the Unibo campus on 7 May 1993 and to bring to justice police officers responsible for assaulting and injuring students;
- urging the authorities to commit themselves to respecting the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials adopted in 1990, which restricts the use of force and firearms against non-violent demonstrators, even if the demonstration is illegal.

**APPEALS TO**

1) Mr F W de Klerk  
President  
State President's Office  
Private Bag X83  
Pretoria 0001  
South Africa

**Telegrams: President de Klerk, Pretoria, South Africa**  
**Telexes: 321695 SPLIB SA, 321890 PRES SA**  
**Faxes: + 27 12 323 3982**

**Salutation: Dear State President**

2) Chief L M Mangope  
President  
Government Offices  
Mmabatho  
Bophuthatswana, South Africa

**Telegrams: President Mangope, Bophuthatswana, South Africa**  
**Telexes: 937 3008 BOP**  
**Faxes: + 27 140 842626**

**Salutation: Dear President Mangope**

3) Mr Rowan Cronje  
Minister of State and Defence  
Department of Defence  
Private Bag X2003  
Mmabatho 8681  
South Africa

**Telegrams: Defence Minister, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, South Africa**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

4) Major-General P J Seleke  
Commissioner of Police  
Private Bag X2006  
Mmabatho 8681  
South Africa

**Telegrams: Police Commissioner, Mmabatho, Bophuthatswana, South Africa**

**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO**

Mr H J Kriel  
Minister of Law and Order  
Private Bag X463  
Pretoria 0001  
South Africa

- Sowetan, POB 6663, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- City Press, POB 3413, Johannesburg, South Africa
- The Mail, Mafikeng 8670, Bophuthatswana, South Africa
- Mafikeng Anti-Repression Forum, P O Box 158, Ratshidi 8681, South Africa
- Lawyers for Human Rights, Mafikeng Regional Office, POB 945, Mafikeng 8670, South Africa

and to diplomatic representatives of South Africa accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 July 1993.