

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 223/93 Fear of Extrajudicial Execution/Extrajudicial Execution

9 July 1993

**SOUTH AFRICA:**

**Johnson MPUKUMPA, vice chairperson UMZAMO Development Project, South African National Civics Organization (SANCO) regional representative on the Peace Committee for the Western Cape, co-founder of the Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association (HDA), former national President of the General Workers Union**

~~**Super NKATAZO, 62 years-old, SANCO Treasurer for the Western Cape, UMZAMO Treasurer, Secretary, Methodist Church Circuit for Cape Town, former General Secretary of the HDA**~~

**Eric HEWU, 16 years-old, student, nephew of Johnson Mpukumpa and two others whose names are not known to Amnesty International**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Johnson Mpukumpa in view of the attempts on his life and the murders in late June 1993 of his colleague, Super Nkatazo, and his nephew, Eric Hewu. The perpetrators of these murders and of the attempts on Johnson Mpukumpa's life appear to be members of a gang, known locally as the "Balaclava Gang" or the "Big Eight", which operate with impunity in the Cape Town area. Despite their notoriety and their alleged involvement in other killings in the area, the police have failed to arrest the gang members. Human rights monitors fear that the gang is operating at the behest of members of the South African Police. On 7 July 1993 the gang members opened fire on mourners arriving to attend a memorial service for Super Nkatazo, killing at least two people. According to eye-witnesses, policemen in an armoured vehicle were in the vicinity and failed to intervene.

Johnson Mpukumpa has survived two attempts on his life. On 22 October 1992 he was nearly killed when gunmen in a moving vehicle opened fire on his car. He required medical care in hospital for a month afterwards. On 15 May 1993 gunmen driving at high speed opened fire on Johnson Mpukumpa's car which was being driven by a friend. The driver was not wounded, although there were bullet holes in the car. Both of these incidents happened in Nyanga township, near Cape Town. On 25 June 1993 Eric Hewu was driving Johnson Mpukumpa's car when it ran out of petrol. He left the vehicle and went on foot to buy petrol at a nearby station. He was abducted near the Nyanga (bus and taxi) Terminus and police found his body later where it had been "thrown into the bushes".

On 27 June 1993 Super Nkatazo disappeared after he left a meeting of the SANCO executive committee in the Nyanga area at about 6.30 pm. There are unconfirmed reports that he was seen walking with two men before getting into a combi (minibus). He failed to turn up at work the following day. Johnson Mpukumpa and another colleague from UMZAMO found his body in the state mortuary on 30 June. They saw that Super Nkatazo's body had injuries on the jaw, right eye and elbow, and gunshot wounds in the chest. The police reportedly informed them that they had found the body early on the morning of 28 June dumped on the bridge between Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha Township, about three kilometers from Nyanga. Super Nkatazo had survived a previous attempt on his life in February 1992.

At about 5 pm on 7 July 1993 gunmen driving in at least one, but possibly more, vehicles

opened fire on mourners who had arrived to attend a memorial service for Super Nkatozo at the Zolani Centre in Nyanga. According to eye-witness reports, a police casspir (armoured vehicle) drove past the Centre minutes before the shooting started. The shooting was prolonged (one witness reported that it continued for 15 minutes). By that stage the police casspir had turned around and was standing in a parking or taxi rank area opposite the Centre. As mourners continued to flee for shelter, the gunmen came onto the grounds of the Centre and opened fire again. They fired into several of the parked vehicles, causing their petrol tanks to explode. At least two people were killed by the gunmen. Eyewitnesses reported that the gunmen were not disguised and identified them as members of the "Big Eight" gang. The gang comprises former members

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of a taxi association which had received police support during the height of the "taxi wars" violence in Cape Town in 1991.

No-one has been arrested or brought to justice for the attempted assassination of Johnson Mpukumpa, or for the murders of Super Nkatozo, Eric Hewu or the two people who were killed at the Zolani Centre on 7 July 1993. The failure of the police to conduct swift and effective investigations into these crimes and to provide protection for the mourners creates the suspicion that the police are acting in collusion with the killers.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Johnson Mpukumpa and other officials of UMZAMO and SANCO who appear to be targets of a gang of trained killers operating with impunity in the Cape Town area;
- calling upon the authorities urgently to investigate the attempts on Johnson Mpukumpa's life and the murders of Super Nkatozo and Eric Hewu, and to bring the perpetrators to justice;
- urging the authorities to ensure the effective protection of Johnson Mpukumpa and other officials of UMZAMO and SANCO who are involved in efforts to improve the circumstances of hostel dwellers and other township residents;
- expressing concern at reports that a police casspir was near the scene of the attack on mourners attending a service for Super Nkatozo on 7 July, but failed to intervene to protect the mourners, and requesting information about what steps the police have taken to investigate the Big Eight gang who are reported to have been linked to these attacks.

**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**

Pretoria 0001, South Africa  
**Telegrams: Minister Law/Order, Pretoria,  
South Africa**  
**Telexes: 321353**  
**Faxes: + 27 12 322 2559**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**Salutation: Dear State President**

2) Mr H J Kriel  
Minister of Law and Order  
Private Bag X463

3) Lt-Gen P J Vijoen  
Regional Commissioner, Western Cape  
Private Bag X9004  
Cape Town 8000, South Africa  
**Telegrams: Lt-Gen Vijoen, Commissioner,  
South African Police, Cape  
Town, South Africa**

**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

4) Major Brink  
Office of the Unit Commander  
National Peace Accord Complaints  
Investigation Unit  
Private Bag X52, Region A, Bellville 7535  
South Africa  
**Telegrams: Major Brink, Commander  
Complaints Investigation Unit,  
Bellville, South Africa**  
**Faxes: + 27 21 949 1587**

**Salutation: Dear Major**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

The Cape Times  
PO Box 11  
Cape Town 8000, South Africa

UMZAMO  
47 Lower Main Road Observatory 7925  
South Africa

SANCO  
3rd floor Goldhouse  
37 Harrington St Cape Town 8001  
South Africa

Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee  
(UMAC)  
3 Drake Street, Observatory 7925  
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 20 August 1993.