

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**UA 282/93 Legal concern/fear of torture/prisoner of conscience**

**20 August 1993**

**SOUTH AFRICA:**

**Louis SIBEKO, general secretary of the  
Thokoza Civic Association  
Makgowa Letele  
Bushy Boy Machere  
Power Makgothi  
Lucky Maponya  
Gift Moeti Mokoena**

**Ini Mokoena  
Jabu Mokoena  
Buti Moloi  
Motlalepule Motlounq  
Tshepo Sewetsang  
Buti Thinane**

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Louis Sibeko, general secretary of the Thokoza Civic Association, who was arrested in a pre-dawn police raid on his home on 17 August 1993, and for the safety of eleven others arrested at the same time. All twelve are being held at Boksburg Prison under section 3(1) of the "Unrest Areas" (emergency) regulations imposed on Thokoza and a number of other townships to the south east of Johannesburg. The regulations permit the police to hold a person without charge or trial for 30 days and access to the detainee is at the discretion of the police authorities.

On 17 August 1993, the police broke into Louis Sibeko's house, searched it, damaging it in the process, and then took him away. During his interrogation at Nyoni (Vlakplaats) farm police station near Vosloorus, Louis Sibeko was threatened with assault by several of his interrogators. The police later took him to Boksburg Prison where he is currently held. On 19 August a human rights monitor visiting the prison saw him being taken away by police officers to a hospital which the police refused to name. Louis Sibeko managed to inform the monitor that he was experiencing pains in the chest and abdomen. Reportedly the police have returned him to the prison. Louis Sibeko has suffered repeated threats against his life. He is actively involved in various peace committees and has worked tirelessly on behalf of victims of human rights violations by members of the security forces and of armed groups apparently acting with their acquiescence in the Thokoza area.

The eleven others named above were arrested at a number of different residential addresses in Thokoza shortly after the police arrested Louis Sibeko. Human rights monitors are still trying to gather more information about these detainees, some of whose homes were damaged when the police broke in to arrest them.

During the past few weeks the security forces have detained, under the same "Unrest Areas" regulations, hundreds of mainly young men from Thokoza and other East Rand townships. Human rights monitors and lawyers have received reports of assaults, torture and gratuitous destruction of property by the security forces (see, for example, UA 281/93, AFR 53/34/93, 20 August 1993). Amnesty International is concerned at the increasing evidence that the security forces, in their apparent efforts to clampdown on political violence, are violating the provisions of international standards which prohibit all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment even in exceptional circumstances.

**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 Louis Sibeko, general secretary of the Thokoza Civic Association, who was arrested by members of the Internal Stability Unit on 17 August 1993, and reportedly threatened with assault by police officers at the Nyoni (Vlakplaats) farm police station, Vosloorus;

- expressing concern that Louis Sibeko is being held without charge or trial under the "Unrest Areas" regulations at Boksburg Prison, and calling for his immediate and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience;
- calling for the eleven other detainees named above to be released immediately if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought promptly to trial;
- calling for an urgent investigation into the gratuitous destruction of detainees' property by the police when arresting Louis Sibeko and the other detainees named above;
- urging that all security force members involved in seeking to contain violent conflict in South Africa's townships should adhere to the provisions of international human rights standards, in particular the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, which prohibit all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment even in exceptional circumstances.

**APPEALS TO**

1) Mr F W de Klerk  
State 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 President**

2) Mr H J Kriel  
Minister of Law and Order  
Private Bag X463  
Pretoria 0001  
South Africa  
**Telegrams: Minister Law/Order, Pretoria,  
South Africa**  
**Telexes: 321353**  
**Faxes: + 27 12 322 2559**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

1) Colonel Steynburg  
Prison Commander  
Boksburg Prison  
Boksburg 1459, South Africa

the following newspapers:

2) The Editor  
The Star  
PO Box 1014  
Johannesburg 2000  
South Africa

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

3) Lt-Gen J Van Der Merwe  
Commissioner of Police  
Police Headquarters  
Private Bag X94, Pretoria 0001  
South Africa  
**Telegrams: Police Commissioner van Der  
Merwe, Pretoria, South Africa**  
**Telexes: 3-20772 SAPQM SA**  
**3-20838 SAPOB SA**  
**Faxes: +27 12 3232033, +27 12 3265162,  
+27 12 323 2456**

**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

4) Lieutenant-General J F Calitz  
Regional Police Commissioner  
Witwatersrand, Private Bag X5  
Johannesburg 2000, South Africa  
**Telegrams: Witwatersrand Regional Poice  
Commissioner, Johannesburg,  
South Africa**

**Salutation: Dear Lieutenant-General Calitz**

3) The Editor  
New Nation  
PO Box 10674  
Johannesburg 2000  
South Africa

4) Human rights organization:  
Independent Board of Inquiry  
PO Box 32293, Braamfontein  
Johannesburg 2017  
South Africa

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 October 1993.