

PUBLIC

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Ill-treatment and torture/harsh conditions of detention  
Medical concern

08 May 2006

DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF  
CONGO (DRC)

All detainees at the *Inspectorat Provincial de Kinshasa* (IPK),  
Kinshasa Provincial Inspectorate of Police

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Amnesty International is deeply concerned that detainees at *the Inspectorat Provincial de Kinshasa* (IPK), Kinshasa Provincial Inspectorate of Police, one of the main police detention centres in the city, are routinely being subjected to severe ill-treatment which may in some cases amount to torture.

Amnesty International representatives visited the IPK detention cells in March 2006. Among the 100 detainees, at least 20 bore signs of ill-treatment. These included open wounds to the legs, arms and head, and in one case apparent cigarette burns to the body. Many bore friction burns to the wrists suggesting that they had been tied up. Some of the wounds appeared fresh. None of these detainees had access to medical care.

Central to detainees' allegations of ill-treatment was that a number of them are taken daily from the detention block to a nearby open hangar, where they are tied to pillars and then beaten with sticks or bricks and kicked. Corruption seems to be the main motive, with beatings reportedly accompanied by demands for money. When Amnesty International representatives tried to inspect the hangar, they were prevented from doing so by a police officer.

When Amnesty International challenged the deputy commander of the detention centre, a police major, he denied the allegations of ill-treatment. He asserted that such beatings could not be taking place because, if they were, "I would be able to hear the cries from my office". In fact, Amnesty International believes that he and other senior IPK personnel are fully aware of the beatings taking place at the IPK and that they are routinely party to detainees' cries of pain and distress.

Conditions of detention in the IPK are inhumane, with overcrowding, unsanitary and sometimes overflowing latrines, and poor ventilation. Women and child detainees are not always separated from adult males. Food rations are minimal and irregular, with detainees depending almost entirely on family visits for food. Prison guards allegedly demand money from relatives before allowing food to be given to the detainees.

Many of those detained at the IPK are being held well beyond the time limits laid down in Congolese law. Civilians in police detention must be transferred to the custody of the courts within 48 hours, however when Amnesty International visited the IPK several civilian detainees had been in IPK detention for three weeks or longer. This problem is compounded by haphazard record-keeping. At the time of the visit, the number of detainees did not correspond with numbers in the register and some details, including date of arrest, were not recorded in the register.

Despite the major's promises to investigate Amnesty International's concerns, the organization understands that the situation has not since improved at the IPK. Amnesty International is therefore calling for a full, prompt and independent investigation of the allegations of ill-treatment at the IPK. Pending the outcome of this investigation and possible legal proceedings against the perpetrators, Amnesty International is also calling for the immediate suspension from duty of the senior officers in charge of the IPK detention centre.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The IPK detention centre consists of a block of eight small unlit cells, into which around 100 men, women and children are typically crammed. During street round-ups and other large policing operations in the city,

the centre may hold many more. The detention centre holds military and police as well as civilian detainees, all of whom are pre-trial detainees held for interrogation or pending transfer to the courts.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in French or English or your own language:**

- expressing concern at the established pattern of ill-treatment or torture at the IPK police detention centre;
- calling on the authorities to intervene immediately to ensure that detainees are protected from further acts of ill-treatment;
- calling for the detainees to be given access to medical treatment should they require it;
- calling for Amnesty International's allegations to be promptly and fully investigated, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- calling for police officials – including the senior commanders --in charge of the IPK detention centre to be suspended from duty pending investigation;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that UN (MONUC) human rights officers and other relevant human rights and humanitarian organizations are granted unconditional and unrestricted access to the IPK detention centre at all times;
- calling for strengthened scrutiny of the IPK to ensure that legal time limits for detention are scrupulously observed, that adequate food rations are made available to detainees and that the inhumane conditions of detention are urgently improved.

**APPEALS TO:**

President

President: Son Excellence Joseph KABILA,  
Président de la République,  
Palais de la Nation, Kinshasa-Ngaliema,  
République Démocratique du Congo.

**E-mail:** presipp@yahoo.fr

**Salutation:** Your Excellency / Son Excellence Monsieur le Président de la République

Vice-President and Head of the Political, Defence and Security Commission

Son Excellence Azarias RUBERWA MANYWA,  
Vice-Président de la République chargé de la Commission politique, défense et sécurité, Présidence de la République,  
Le Cabinet du Vice-Président,  
Kinshasa-Ngaliema, République Démocratique du Congo.

**E-mail :** vice\_presidence.rdc@ic.cd

**Salutation:** Your Excellency / Son Excellence Monsieur le Vice-Président de la République

Minister of Interior

Théophile MBEMBA FUNDU,  
Ministre de l'Intérieur, Décentralisation et Sécurité, Ministère de l'Intérieur, Décentralisation et Sécurité,  
Kinshasa-Gombe BP 7949  
République Démocratique du Congo

**E-mail :** mininterieur@yahoo.fr

**Salutation:** Dear Minister / Monsieur le Ministre

Inspector General of Police

Général Daniel KATSHUVA WA KATSHUVIRA  
Inspecteur Général de Police  
Police Nationale Congolaise Inspection Générale  
Kinshasa-Gombe

**E-mail:** igpncrdc@micronet.cd

**Salutation:** Dear General / Mon Général

**COPIES TO:**

Minister for Human Rights

Marie-Madeleine KALALA

Ministre des Droits humains, Ministère des Droits humains  
33/C Boulevard du 30 juin, Kinshasa-Gombe, République Démocratique du Congo  
**E-mail:** [min\\_droitshumains@yahoo.fr](mailto:min_droitshumains@yahoo.fr)

and to diplomatic representatives of the Democratic Republic of Congo accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 June 2006