

PUBLIC

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7 July 2000

Further information on UA 179/00 (AFR 62/13/00, 26 June 2000) - Arbitrary arrest / Fear of torture

Members of the National Prison Fellowship in Congo, including:

Jonas Mukamba Kadiata
Pastor Nkashama
Christophe Tshimona
Pastor Tshisumpa
M Tshitenge

New Name: Bintu Mukamba, (f) wife of Jonas Mukamba Kadiata
And at least 20 other men and women

Released: Pierre Mombele
Caroline Pare (f), British BBC television producer
Mieke Rang (f), Dutch NGO worker
Mianda Tshimona (f) wife of Pastor Tshisumpa

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

As many as 30 people are now reportedly held in incommunicado detention in the DRC capital Kinshasa with Jonas Mukamba Kadiata and other members of the Congolese prisoner support group the *Fraternité Nationale de prison au Congo* (FNPC), National Prison Fellowship in Congo. All are in danger of being tortured.

Jonas Mukamba Kadiata and other members of the FNPC were arrested on 23 and 24 June. They are held in various detention centers run by the security services, including the *Détection militaire des activités anti-patrie* (DEMIAP - the Military Detection of Unpatriotic Activities). Amnesty International has documented past cases of torture in these detention centers and is concerned for the safety of those held there. Poor conditions and lack of medical treatment have apparently already led to several detainees becoming ill.

The reason for the arrests remains unclear and no formal charges are known to have been made. Some reports have suggested that the arrests may be connected to the disputed ownership of a valuable diamond which recently went on sale in Kinshasa and which has already led to the separate arrests of three government ministers. However, the authorities may also be exploiting this opportunity to crack down on the legitimate activities of Pastor Tshisumpa, president of the FNPC, and his colleagues.

On 26 June Caroline Pare, a television producer working for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), was released uncharged together with her Congolese assistant Pierre Mombele and an unnamed interpreter. Caroline Pare was expelled from the DRC the next day. Mieke Rang, a Dutch national, was also released uncharged on 26 June. Their arrests were apparently due to their connection with Jonas Mukamba Kadiata.

On 1 July Mianda Tshimona, the wife of Pastor Tshisumpa, was released with her baby. Minutes after she returned home, members of the security services arrived to search their house and reportedly confiscated a number of items including notebooks and videotapes of a recent visit by Pastor Tshisumpa to Europe to meet various non-governmental organisations (NGOs). DEMIAP agents are also reported to have recently searched the Kinshasa offices of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), an international NGO of which Pastor Tshisumpa is also the DRC branch president.

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

- expressing concern at the continuing detention in security service detention centers in Kinshasa, reportedly without charge, of FNPC members and their associates;
- expressing your fear that those arrested may be at risk of torture in these detention centers and urging the authorities to take immediate steps to ensure that torture does not take place;
- urging that the detainees be given immediate access to lawyers and relatives and to any medical treatment which they might require;
- seeking clarification of what, if anything, the detainees have been charged with;
- urging the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained if they are not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

President

Président Laurent-Désiré KABILA
Président de la République, Présidence de la République
Kinshasa-Ngaliema, Democratic Republic of Congo

Telegrams: President, Kinshasa, DR Congo

e-mails: UPP@ic.cd

Fax: +243 880 2120 (this number may be very difficult to get through to)

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République / Dear Président

Minister of Justice

Monsieur Mwenze KONGOLO
Ministre de la justice
Ministère de la justice
BP 3137 Kinshasa-Gombe, Democratic Republic of Congo

COPIES TO:

Minister of Human Rights

Monsieur Léonard SHE OKITUNDU
Ministre des Droits humains
Ministère des Droits humains
Kinshasa-Gombe, Democratic Republic of Congo

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 18 August 2000.