

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of ill-treatment

1 June 1992

HAITI:

**Rémy AMAZAN, headmaster
Frantz GUILLIT
and others**

Amnesty International is concerned at the reports of widespread arrests carried out by members of the security forces in the town of Les Cayes, South department, on 30 May 1992. Many of those arrested were beaten and according to witnesses some were forced to walk naked through the streets. Subsequently on 31 May, many were reportedly taken to detention centres in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. Amnesty International is concerned that those detained may continue to be ill-treated in custody.

According to preliminary reports received by Amnesty International, dozens of people were arrested in Les Cayes and in the nearby village of Camp Perrin, in what was reported as retaliation following an attack on a military barracks in Camp Perrin. Among those arrested were Rémy Amazan, a headmaster of a public school in Les Cayes and Frantz Guillit, the assistant to the mayor of Les Cayes during the presidency of Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Troops violently overthrew the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who took office in Haiti on 7 February 1991, in a coup on the night of 29 to 30 September. Since then Amnesty International has learned of widespread human rights violations committed by the security forces, including a large number of extrajudicial executions, torture and ill-treatment and mass arrests without warrant. These abuses have been carried out by uniformed security force agents or, on some occasions, by men in civilian clothes ostensibly linked to them (see Haiti: The Human Rights Tragedy - Human rights violations since the coup, AI Index: AMR 36/03/92 of January 1992).

An Amnesty International delegation visiting Haiti in late March and early April 1992 has found evidence of continuing gross human rights violations, including serious intimidation and harassment, arbitrary and illegal arrest, severe ill-treatment and torture and extrajudicial execution. Amnesty International has also found evidence of extortion of money from civilians by the Haitian security forces, in order to ensure that they will not be subjected to arrest, torture or other ill-treatment, that they will be given better prison conditions, or simply to obtain their release from prison. Victims of human rights violations have included all sectors of the population, particularly peasants, trade unionists and popular organizers, students, members of the press and the Catholic church, and virtually anyone suspected of supporting the return of deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

In past weeks, anti-government protests have been followed by increased repression by the security forces, with students and residents of popular districts of

Port-au-Prince being particularly targeted. Following the protests, Amnesty International has learned of increased numbers of arrests and at least nine people have reportedly been victims of extrajudicial execution.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/telephone calls/faxes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the arrest of Rémy Amazan and Frantz Guillit, and others;
- seeking assurances that those detained will not be subjected to ill-treatment in custody;

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- asking for an investigation into the reports ill-treatment of those arrested and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- asking that their legal situation of all of those detained be clarified and that they be released unless charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO

1) Prime Minister:

Maître Jean-Jacques HONORAT

Monsieur le Premier Minister /

Premier Ministre

Dear Prime Minister

Présidence de la République de Haïti
Palais National, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Premier Minister Honorat, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Faxes: + 509 34 1980

2) Minister of the Interior and Defence:

M. le Colonel Serge CHARLES

Monsieur le Ministre /

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Dear Minister

et de la Défense Nationale

Palais des Ministères

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Ministre de l'Interieur Jean, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telephone: + 509 22 9198, + 509 22 1090

Telexes: 20515 Dptindn

3) Chief of the National Police:

Monsieur le Majeur Michel FRANÇOIS

Monsieur le Majeur /

Chef de la Police Nationale

Dear Major

Grand Quartier Général de la Police

Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Chef, Police Nationale, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

4) Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces:

Monsieur le Général Raoul CEDRAS

Monsieur le Général /

Commandant-en-Chef des Forces Armées d'Haïti

Dear General

Grand Quartier Général des Forces Armées d'Haïti

Rue Geffrard, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telegrams: Comandant-en-Chef des Armees d'Haïti Cedras, Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Telephone: + 509 22 3935

Telexes: 20391 gqfadh

Faxes: + 509 23 9007, + 509 23 9407

5) Director of the National Penitentiary:
Major Coulanges Justafort

Monsieur le Commandant /

Commandant, Pénitencier National
Rue du Centre, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Dear Commander

Telegrams: Commandant Penetiencier National Justafor, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Anti-gang investigation and research service:

Monsieur le Commandant

Chef du Service d'investigation et de recherches anti-gang

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

2) Haïti en Marche (Newspaper)

173 N.W. 94 St

Miami, FL 33150, USA

3) Human Rights Organization:

Plateforme Haïtienne des Droits Humains

3 Bis, 3ème Ruelle Rivière

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Faxes: + 509 45 70 41

and to diplomatic representatives of Haiti in your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 July 1992.