

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 19/02/91
Distr: UA/SC

2 April 1991

Further information on UA 459/90 (AFR 19/07/90, 14 November 1990) - Legal Concern

CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC:

Thomas Koazo, journalist and former prisoner of
conscience 1986-9

General Thimothée Malendoma

Godefroy Mokamanede

Tobie N'Garagba, accounts clerk

Simon Sakebede

and others

Of those named in the original Urgent Action, the five named above remain held and have been charged with state security offences. They had been arrested in the capital, Bangui, between 13 and 17 October 1990 after calling for a national conference to discuss multi-party democracy. They held a public meeting on 13 October to discuss the organization of such a conference. The peaceful meeting was dispersed by the security forces, provoking demonstrations and riots which continued until 15 October, leaving several dozen people injured. None of those arrested is believed to have been involved in acts of violence

In February 1991, they appeared before the examining magistrate of the *Haute cour de Justice*, High Court and were charged under articles 77 and 185 of the Penal Code. They are due to be brought to trial on charges of using banners carrying slogans likely to encourage people to endanger public security and holding an illegal meeting which led to violent acts.

Amnesty International is concerned that these five people are detained solely on account of peacefully exercising their political rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the continued imprisonment of the five people named above;
- seeking information about the evidence against each individual defendant;
- explaining that from information available to Amnesty International those charged were not involved in acts of violence nor did they advocate the use of violence. Amnesty International believes they are prisoners of conscience and is therefore seeking their immediate and unconditional release.

APPEALS TO:

Son Excellence
Général d'Armée André KOLINGBA
Président de la République
Palais de la Renaissance
Bangui
République centrafricaine

Monsieur le Lieutenant-Colonel Christophe GRELOMBE
Ministre de la Défense et de la Justice
Ministère de la Défense
Bangui
République centrafricaine

Monsieur Thomas MAPOUKA
Ministre de la Sécurité et de l'Administration du territoire
Ministère de la Sécurité
Bangui
République centrafricaine

COPIES TO:

Monsieur Laurent GOMINA-PAMPALI
Ministre des Affaires étrangères et de la coopération internationale
Ministère des Affaires étrangères
BP 936
Bangui
République centrafricaine

and to diplomatic representatives of the Central African Republic in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 May 1991.