

2 June 2000

Further information on UA 83/00 (AFR 56/07/00, 12 April 2000) - III-  
treatment of government opponents

**TANZANIA**

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Since April there have been far fewer arbitrary beatings of supporters of the Civic United Front (CUF) opposition party on Zanzibar. In April police beat more than 300 CUF supporters, one of whom is reported to have died as a result. Neither the Zanzibar government nor the Tanzanian (Union) government has responded to Amnesty International's appeals.

All those who were arrested and charged with "vagrancy" or other criminal offences have been released on bail. No trials have been scheduled yet.

There were further arrests of prominent CUF members on Zanzibar in mid-May, including medical doctor Juma Amir Muchi, a former CUF parliamentary candidate. Two of those arrested, Seif Nassor Maalim, a former member of the Tanzanian (Union) parliament, and Ali Juma, a CUF official are possible CUF candidates in the parliamentary elections set for 29 October 2000. They were held in police custody for longer than the permitted 24-hour period, then released on bail after being charged with "vagrancy". Amnesty International considers the use of this vague criminal charge to be unreasonable and intended to suppress the right to freedom of opinion and association as well as obstruct fair and free elections if used against election candidates.

More CUF members have been arrested in connection with the 2 April police raid on a CUF office meeting, in which armed policemen were beaten and disarmed by CUF guards. Seventeen people are now facing trial with CUF secretary general Seif Sharif Hamad. All have been released on bail.

In a new development in the imminent treason trial of 18 CUF members and supporters, on 2 May the judge rejected the defence lawyers' pre-trial applications to have the case dismissed and he ordered the defendants to enter pleas. They all pleaded "not guilty" to the capital charge of treason. The trial, however, has not yet started as the defence has lodged an appeal with the Tanzanian (Union) Court of Appeal against the pre-trial judgement. The next hearing is on 1 August.

**Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from Urgent Action participants. Amnesty International will be closely monitoring the human rights situation in Zanzibar in the run-up to the October elections and campaigning in other ways against any human rights violations.**