

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 385/94 (AFR 53/34/94, 26 October 1994) - Death Threats / Extrajudicial Executions

SOUTH AFRICA Beauty MKHIZE, Chairperson of South African Rural Women's Movement, field worker for Transvaal Rural Action Committee, Driefontein, Eastern Transvaal Province

 Yunus CAJEE, Member of the African National Congress (ANC), shopkeeper, Driefontein

Since November 1994 the harassment of Beauty Mkhize and Yunus Cajee has declined. They have received no further death threats. Beauty Mkhize has been provided with two armed police guards, on the instructions of the Minister of Safety and Security for Eastern Transvaal Province. However, at least two other shooting incidents have occurred in Driefontein and residents remain fearful. The police have not given community representatives any feedback yet on the progress of their investigations into past incidents, despite an undertaking to do so. No arrests have taken place so far.

Apparently under the authority of the provincial Minister of Safety and Security, responsibility for the investigation of past attacks and threats against Driefontein residents was removed from the local Driefontein police to a team of police investigators from the larger towns of Volksrust and Standerton. The police investigators agreed to give an update on developments in their investigations to Driefontein community representatives at a meeting scheduled for 20 January 1995. Some community representatives travelled a considerable distance to attend the 20 January meeting, but when they assembled at the police station they were told that the police investigators were not available to meet them. The police said that a junior police officer only could attend the meeting. The community declined this proposal because they felt a junior officer would not be able to give them the information and assurances they needed.

Driefontein residents still feel vulnerable to attack, particularly in view of the police failure to arrest the perpetrators of previous killings and in view of further recent incidents. On 4 January 1995 a Driefontein shopkeeper was shot by two armed men who came into his shop, told him not to move, then opened fire at him. Witnesses said one gunman wore a balaclava and the other a hat pulled low over his face, so that the witnesses were unable to identify them. The wounded man was admitted to hospital where he is recovering from his injuries. In early December 1994 an 11-year-old child was shot in circumstances which Amnesty International has not yet been able to clarify. Witnesses remain reluctant to give evidence to the police for fear of reprisals by the so-far unidentified gunmen perceived to be acting in collusion with certain police force members.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- welcoming the fact that the Eastern Transvaal Provincial Minister of Safety and Security has provided police protection for Beauty Mkhize;
- welcoming the authorities' decision to order a non-local police investigation into the killings in Driefontein over the past year;
- expressing concern, however, at the failure of police investigators to provide a report on their investigations to Driefontein residents on 20 January 1995;
- urging the police to provide regular feedback to the Driefontein community, as an important step towards police accountability to them;
- expressing concern that, despite the police investigation, the killings in Driefontein have not stopped;
- continuing to call upon the national and provincial authorities to ensure that all Driefontein residents are given effective protection from further attacks and that suspected perpetrators are arrested and brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1) Mr F S Mufamadi
 Minister of Safety and Security
 Private Bag X463
 Pretoria 0001, South Africa
Faxes: +27 12 320 5065
Telegrams: Safety/Security Minister, Pretoria, South Africa
Salutation: Dear Minister

2) Mr Jabulane Stephen Mabona
 Eastern Transvaal Provincial Minister for Safety and Security
 PO Box 1862
 Nelspruit 1200
 South Africa
Faxes: +27 1311 554 965
Telegrams: Safety/Security Minister, Eastern Transvaal Province, Nelspruit, South Africa
Salutation: Dear Minister

3) Major-General C P J Serfontein
 Regional Commissioner of Police
 Private Bag X1801, Middelburg 1050
 South Africa
Faxes: +27 132 23332
Telegrams: Regional Commissioner of Police, Middleburg 1050, South Africa
Salutation: Dear Major-General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Standerton District Police Commissioner, Standerton
 Police Station, Standerton 2430, South Africa

Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC), PO Box 2827,
 Johannesburg 2000, South Africa

and to diplomatic representatives of South Africa accredited to your

country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 March 1995.