

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 70/92 Legal/Medical Concern

26 February 1992

TANZANIA:

Juma Ngwali
Omar Msellem
Mkubwa Makame
Soud Mohammed Nuhu
Said Abdulla
Ali Nassor
Massoud Ali
Nassor Seif
Othman Makame

and six others whose names are unknown

Amnesty International is concerned at the arrest on the island of Zanzibar of 15 alleged opponents of the government, nine of whom are named above, on 25 February 1992. The organization is concerned that they may be prisoners of conscience, detained for the non-violent expression of their political views.

Their arrests follow a public announcement made on 22 February 1992 by the President of Zanzibar, Dr Salmin Amour, that anyone found "instigating" others against the political stand taken by the sole-ruling political party in Tanzania, Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), Party of the Revolution, would be arrested.

It is not clear under what legislation these people are being held, or whether the government intends to charge them with any offence. However, most of those named above have previously been detained without charge or trial for varying periods in mid-1990 on allegations of campaigning against the one-party state in Tanzania and the union between the mainland and the islands of Zanzibar.

Amnesty International is additionally concerned about the effect the detention may have on the health of Juma Ngwali, who suffers from hypertension. During his previous detention he was allegedly denied medical treatment for his condition. Amnesty International is seeking assurances that he and other detainees are receiving any medical attention they may require.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 1964 Zanzibar (consisting of the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba) entered a political union with mainland Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania. In 1977 the CCM, became the only political party in Tanzania, with no independent political activity or organization allowed.

Anti-union activism in Zanzibar has been growing since early 1988 and there has been repeated harassment of anti-union activists, with many being detained for brief periods before being released uncharged (see external document, AFR 56/13/90). In January 1992,

the CCM, accepted recommendations of a Presidential Commission for the introduction of a multi-party political system in Tanzania which would take effect from April 1992. However, it also ruled that any new political parties would have to be organized nationally, a decision interpreted by anti-union opponents in Zanzibar as aimed at curbing their separate political aspirations and reducing the islands' status in relation to the mainland. There has been a vigorous campaign in recent weeks against these new provisions which it is believed may have prompted the crackdown on political opponents by the government.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the arrests of 15 people who include the 9 named men on the island of Zanzibar and requesting information about the reasons for the arrests, the legal basis for their imprisonment and the nature of any charges that are being prepared against them;
- stating that Amnesty International is concerned that those detained may be prisoners of conscience held for the non-violent expression of their political beliefs;
- asking where each prisoner is being held and seeking assurances that they are being humanely treated and that they have access to visits from their lawyers and families;
- urging that the prisoners be released if they are not to be charged with an offence of a recognizably criminal nature and brought promptly to trial.

APPEALS TO:

The Hon. Ndugu Salmin Amour
President of Zanzibar
Office of the President of Zanzibar
PO BOX 776
Zanzibar, Tanzania
Telexes: 57311, 57367
Telegrams: President, Zanzibar,
Tanzania
Salutation: Dear President

The Hon. Ndugu Omar Ali Juma
Chief Minister of Zanzibar
Office of the Chief Minister
PO BOX 437
Zanzibar, Tanzania
Telexes: 57017
Telegrams: Chief Minister, Zanzibar,
Tanzania
Salutation: Dear Chief Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Ndugu Ali Hassan Mwinyi
President of the United Republic of Tanzania
Office of the President
State House
PO BOX 9120
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

The Hon. Ndugu Idi Pandu Hassan

Attorney-General of Zanzibar
Office of the Attorney-General
PO BOX 437
Zanzibar, Tanzania

and to diplomatic representatives of Tanzania in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 March 1992.