

PUBLIC

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Fear of Torture

31 January 2001

TANZANIA

Mohammed Ali Yussuf
Hamad Masaud Hamad
Maulid Makame Abdallah
Juma Othman Juma
Ahmed Seif
At least 300 others

The five named above were among several hundred people, who were arrested between 25 and 28 January on the islands of Unguja, Pemba and Zanzibar, and in Dar es Salaam in mainland Tanzania. Some of the detainees have reportedly been tortured. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety, and at reports that the police are continuing to arrest suspected opposition members.

At least 37 people, including six police officers are reported to have been killed, and an unknown number injured as government authorities responded to a call for countrywide demonstrations by the Civic United Front (CUF) and other opposition parties. There have been countrywide reports of killings, torture, rape and beatings, and the paramilitary police appear to have used excessive force, especially on the island of Pemba, where tear gas and live bullets were used against the local population.

Those arrested are reportedly being held incommunicado detention and some have been charged with unlawful assembly. Others, who were injured during clashes with the police, are held under police guard in hospital. Relatives of the arrested and injured have been denied access to them. Some have been unable to either locate arrested family members or establish what has happened to them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On Saturday 27 January, CUF and other opposition parties called for countrywide demonstrations to demand another rerun of presidential and legislative elections on the semi-autonomous island of Zanzibar. On 5 November 2000, there was a partial rerun of elections in Zanzibar after the international community criticized the initial elections on 29 October as being unfair. Protestors also demanded a reform of Zanzibar's electoral commission and a new constitution for the United Republic of Tanzania and Zanzibar. The authorities, who have consistently attempted to stifle political opposition on the island over the last few years, for example by imprisoning members of the CUF, reacted by banning the demonstration. This ban was challenged by CUF on the grounds that the police did not have the legal authority to restrict freedom of assembly.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of individuals held in incommunicado detention, including Mohammed Ali Yussuf, Hamad Masaud Hamad, Maulid Makame Abdallah, Juma Othman Juma, and Ahmed Seif, and seeking assurances that they will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- asking the police to confirm the names of all those in detention or under police guard in hospital;
- urging that those in detention be given immediate and regular access to their families, legal representatives and any necessary medical attention; and be charged with a recognisable criminal charge or released;

- expressing concern about the excessive use of force by the police and urging the authorities to set up a prompt and impartial investigation, ensuring that those who are responsible are brought to justice;
- expressing concern at reports that the police are continuing to arbitrarily arrest CUF supporters, opposition activists and others.

APPEALS TO:

President Benjamin Mkapa
Office of the President
PO Box 9120
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

Telegrams: President Benjamin Mkapa, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Faxes : + 25551 113425 / + 255 222 11 3425
Salutation: Your Excellency

President Aman Abeid Karume
Office of the President of Zanzibar
PO Box 2422
Zanzibar
Tanzania

Telegram: President Aman Abeid Karume, Zanzibar, Tanzania
Faxes: + 25554 233722
Salutation: Your Excellency

Omar Mahita,
Inspector General of Police
Tanzania Police Headquarters
PO Box 9223
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

Telegrams: Omar Mahita, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Faxes: + 255 51 136 556 / + 25551 118334 (c/o Ministry of Home Affairs)
Salutation: Dear Inspector General

Police Commissioner of Zanzibar
Zanzibar Headquarters
PO Box 4220
Zanzibar
Tanzania

Telegram: Police Commissioner of Zanzibar
Faxes: + 2554 233722 (c/o the President's Office)
Salutation: Dear Commissioner

COPIES TO:

Mr Andrew Chenge
Office of the Attorney General
PO Box 9050
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

Telegram: Mr Andrew Cheng, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Faxes: + 255 51 116 654
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Mr Iddi Hassam Pandu

Attorney General's Chambers

P O Box 239

Zanzibar

Tanzania

Telegram: Mr Iddi Hassam Pandu, Zanzibar, Tanzania

Faxes: + 255 24 318 22 (c/o Office of the President)

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

and to diplomatic representatives of Tanzania accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 March 2001.