

URGENT ACTION

FOUR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS THREATENED

Four human rights defenders in the city of Lubumbashi, Katanga province, south-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), have received anonymous text messages threatening them with death. The threats are continuing.

Three men: **Grégoire Mulamba, Timothée Mbuya, and Emmanuel Umpula**, and one woman, **Dominique Munongo**, all human rights defenders, have been receiving the threats since 16 September. The defenders have led a local campaign in defence of Golden Misabiko, who is being prosecuted before the Lubumbashi Magistrates Court on charges of threatening state security (see UA 208/09, AFR 62/013/2009, and follow-up).

Among messages received by the four defenders are: "You think you are clever. Understand that it is not over. We shall see when you are all dead...whether you can still organize protest marches" (*Vous pensez être plus malin. Saches que ce ne pas fini. On verra quand vous serez tous mort ... si vous ferrez encore des marches*); and, "After your declarations [on local radio and television] we give you 48 hours to get out of Lubumbashi... or to say goodbye to your families" (*Après vos déclarations, nous vous accordons 48 heures soit pour quitter Lubumbashi... soit pour dire au revoir à vos familles*)

The latest, received on 21 September, said: "We are serious... We know all your movements and home addresses... It's a question of hours." (*Nous sommes et nous restons sérieux à nos décisions... Nous avons tous vos mouvements et vos habitations. C'est un problème des heures...*)

The threats are being made from three mobile telephone numbers whose details the defenders have submitted to the Lubumbashi Prosecutor, as part of a legal complaint asking that the threats be fully investigated.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in FRENCH or your own language:

- √ Calling on the authorities to investigate the death threats against Lubumbashi human rights defenders Grégoire Mulamba, Timothée Mbuya, Dominique Munongo and Emmanuel Umpula, and to bring those responsible to justice;
- √ Calling on the authorities to ensure that the defenders are protected against further threats and possible attack;
- √ Demanding an end to acts of intimidation and arbitrary arrests of human rights defenders by the DRC's security services.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 NOVEMBER 2009 TO:

President

Son Excellence Joseph Kabila

Président de la République

Palais de la Nation

Avenue de Lemera

Kinshasa-Gombe

Democratic Republic of Congo

E-mail: presipp@yahoo.fr

Salutation: Dear President

Kabila/Son Excellence Monsieur le

Président

Justice Minister

Luzolo BAMBUI Lessa

Ministère de la Justice

228 Avenue de Lemera

BP 3137

Kinshasa-Gombe

République Démocratique du Congo

Salutation: Dear Minister / Monsieur

le Ministre

Governor of Katanga

Moise Katumbi Chapwe

Please leave a message

on the Governor's official website :

[http://www.katanga.cd/index.php?](http://www.katanga.cd/index.php?option=com_qcontacts&view=contact&id=3%3Akatumbi&catid=39%3Agovernors&Itemid=30&lang=fr)

option=com_qcontacts&view=contact&id=3%3Akatumbi&catid=39%3Agovernors&Itemid=30&lang=fr

Salutation: Dear Governor / Monsieur

le Gouverneur

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of the DRC accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grégoire Mulamba is Executive-Secretary of the NGO Centre des Droits de l'Homme et du Droit Humanitaire (CDH), Timothée Mbuya is Vice-President of the l'Association Africaine de Défense des Droits de l'Homme, section du Katanga (ASADHO/Katanga), Dominique Munongo is Coordinator of the Centre de Développement pour la Femme (CDF) and Emmanuel Umpula is Executive Director of Action Contre l'Impunité pour les Droits de l'Homme (ACIDH)

Golden Misabiko, President of ASADHO/Katanga, was arrested on 24 July 2009 on charges of threatening state security, because of a 12 July report published by ASADHO/Katanga which alleged that government officials were complicit in illegal mining at a closed uranium mine 150km from Lubumbashi. Amnesty International considered him a prisoner of conscience. His trial began on 19 August. The prosecution claims that by publishing the contested report, ASADHO/Katanga, through Golden Misabiko, was seeking to stir up the population of Katanga against the authorities. On 20 August, suffering from ill-health, Golden Misabiko was granted provisional release. The prosecution is continuing and a verdict is expected shortly.

Death threats by anonymous text message against human rights defenders are becoming increasingly common in the DRC, yet the authorities rarely take steps to investigate the threats or to trace the phones used. In early September, three women journalists in the eastern city of Bukavu received similar messages threatening them each with "a bullet in the head". Three journalists have been murdered in Bukavu since 2007, but the perpetrators remain unidentified.

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