

TO: AIUSA Groups
FR: National Campaign staff

June 21, 1988
RE: The Sharpeville 6

In the last monthly mailing, we promised we would send you a special mailing containing an action to prevent the execution of the Sharpeville 6. We now give you the attached Urgent Action and ask that you get out as many letters as your group can on it. In mid-August, we will know whether our letters have led to a commutation of their sentence.

URGENT ACTION PROGRAM OFFICE • P.O. Box 1270 • Nederland, CO 80466-1270 • 303-440-0913 • FAX: 303-258-7881

14 June 1988

Further Information on UA 340/87 (3 December 1987; 23 December 1987; 9 February 1988; 15 March 1988; 22 March 1988; 20 April 1988; 13 May 1988; 31 May 1988; and 8 June 1988) - Death Penalty

South Africa: Mojalefa Reginald Sefatsa, aged 33
 Oupa Moses Diniso, aged 31
 Reid Malebo Mokoena, aged 35
 Theresa Ramashamole, aged 27
 Duma Joshua Khumalo, aged 27
 Francis Don Mokgesi, aged 31
 known as the 'Sharpeville Six'

On Monday 13 June 1988 Mr Justice W J Human turned down the defense lawyers' application for a reopening of the trial in the case of the Sharpeville Six. The defense lawyers had requested a reopening of the trial on a number of grounds, in particular claiming that a key state witness in the original trial, Joseph Manete, had given false testimony. The judge said in his ruling that he had placed no reliance, in the original trial, on Joseph Manete's evidence and that it would be 'frivolous and absurd' to reopen the case. The defense team then applied for leave to appeal against the judge's ruling, but this application was also turned down.

However, the judge granted the defense team leave to petition the Chief Justice, who has the power to grant the appeal court leave to re-examine the defense case in spite of the ruling made in court. Mr Justice Human granted a stay of execution until 19 July while this legal process takes place. During the same five-week period the six prisoners under sentence of death may petition the State President, P W Botha, once again, either for a review of their convictions or for mercy. However, an earlier petition for mercy by the six was rejected by the State President in March 1988. If these procedures are not completed by 19 July, there can be an application for a further extension of time.

Recommended Action: telexes/telegrams/express letters/airmail letters:

- appealing to the State President to exercise his prerogative of mercy and to commute the death sentences imposed on the 'Sharpeville Six':
- supporting appeals by making some of the following points:
- expressing concern that the six have been under sentence of death for more than two and a half years, since December 1985, and urging commutation of the sentences for humanitarian reasons, to prevent further suffering to the prisoners and their families;
- expressing particular concern that although the cases of the 'Sharpeville Six' have been through a long legal process, serious questions continue to be raised about the evidence on which they were convicted and urging the State President to commute the death sentences in these cases, as in any other where any element of doubt remains about the guilt of the accused:
- expressing concern that both the trial and appeal courts have

This Urgent Action appeal originated from Amnesty International's research headquarters at the International Secretariat in London, United Kingdom. Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the release of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, color, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used nor advocated violence. These are termed prisoners of conscience. It works for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners without reservation.

acknowledged that the six did not contribute causally to the death of the victim, for whose murder they have been found guilty on the basis of the legal doctrine of 'common purpose':

- referring to Amnesty International's unconditional opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a cruel and irrevocable punishment.

Appeals to:

-Your Excellency-
President P W Botha
State President's Office
Private Bag x213
Pretoria 0001
South Africa
(Telegrams: President Botha,
pretoria, south Africa)
(Telexes: 3-21695 SA: 3-21890 SA:
3-22158 SA)

-Salutations-

-Your Excellency-
Mr H J Coetsee
Minister of Justice
Department of Justice
Private Bag x81
Pretoria 0001, South Africa
(Telegrams: Minister Justice,
Pretoria, South Africa)
(Telexes: 3-20678 SA:
3-21347 SA: 3-22139 SA)

Copies to:

National Association of
Law Societies
Metro and Federal Building
12th Floor
Vermueulen Street
Pretoria 002
South Africa

Bar Council of South Africa
Advocates Chambers
Momentum Buildings
East Block
3433 Pretorius Street
Pretoria 0002
South Africa

- South African Press Association, P O Box 7766, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- The Sowetan, P O Box 6663, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- The Star, P O Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- Die Vaderland, P O Box 345, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
- The Weekly Mail, P O Box 260425, Excom 2023, South Africa

Ambassador Piet G.J. Koornhoff
Embassy of South Africa
3051 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington DC 20008

Urgent Action participants are encouraged to write to their Congressional Representatives to solicit their help with this appeal. You may summarize the case in a letter or send a copy of the UA with your own covering letter.

Please send appeals immediately. Please check with the Colorado office WEEKDAYS ONLY between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM Mountain Time if sending appeals after July 19, 1988.

- ☐ Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended action.
- ☐ Telegrams and letters should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan.
- ☐ Postage costs: airmail letters cost 45 cents a page (1/4 oz.) to most

countries; aerogrammes are 39 cents each; airmail postcards cost 36 cents to most countries. Mail with colorful stamps may not reach its destination.

- ☐ The name of Amnesty International may be used, although letters written in a private or professional capacity are often more effective.