June 5, 1983

Dear Friends:

The Struggle is still on!

Those of you who have been following the case of Dr. Dennis Brutus, the South African poet in exile, who has applied for political asylum and is fighting a deportation order, will be interested to know that the date for his next hearing has been set for July 18 in Chicago, Illinois. Letters of support should be written to Judge Irving Schwartz, Immigration Court, 219 South Dearborn, Room 484, Chicago, Illinois 60604 with copies to:

The Dennis Brutus Defense Committee
P.O. Box 59364
Chicago, Illinois 60659
(312) 677-7416

For further information, please contact the DBDC in Chicago or the DBDC representative in your area, or contact Afrika Baraza.

Please spare your precious summer time and do something to help this internationally known scholar and freedom fighter!

Africanly yours,

[Signature]

Professor Dibinga wa Said, Th.D., Ph.D.
AFRIKA BARAZA DIRECTOR

The liberation of African neo-colonies is unconditionally interwoven with qualitative liberation of Southern Africa.

AFRIKA BARAZA is an independent organization for the promotion of freedom, peace, justice and progress to human-kind and to the whole world.

This organization is based on

(a) two African principles that "freedom brings peace and peace brings progress," and the world is but made of mutual aid; and on

(b) the following provisions of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3—"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Article 5—"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 9—"No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

AFRIKA BARAZA seeks to bring justice, peace, freedom and progress to those whose human rights are systematically violated.
Dear Colleagues,

May 25, 1983

Allow us to interject with your free but perhaps busy summer moments with another human problem which, we believe, will not only be of great concern to you, but will also prompt, on your part, some kind of positive action.

Dr. ABEL GOMBA, former World Health Organization physician, former Vice-President of the First Republic (1958) and recently, former President of the University of Bangui and the most trusted leader by the people of the Central African Republic, is now Languishing in a military prison somewhere in the country. Since his family is allowed to see him only after 15 years (See Jeune Afrique review, May 8, 1983, p. 1165), there is no way that one can, for sure, know what has become of this man and other prisoners of conscience there.

Would you mind sending a letter to the Head of State of that country making inquiries about Dr. GOMBA and co.; making request about his immediate release? If you can not write, could you ask your religious or civic leaders, friends or organizations to do it for you or with you? A sample letter copy is on the back of this letter. Please feel free to make alterations/changes. Please send your inquiries to:

General Andre Kolingba
President of the Republic
Presidence de la Republique
Bangui, Central African Republic

His Excellency Ambassador
Central African Republic Missions to UN
386 Park Avenue St. # 1614
New York, N.Y. 10016

Please feel free to contact us for more information.

Yours, Sincerely,

Professor Dibinga wa Sami, Th.D., Ph.D.
AFRIKA BARAZA, Director.

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TO HIS EXCELLENCY ANDRE KOLINGBA  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
BANGUI  
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the detention in Central African Republic of Professor ABEL GOUMBA (and co.), and to respectfully request information about his present condition. Dr. ABEL GOUMBA is an important member of the academic and medical communities, who has made distinguished contributions to scholarship, science and teaching, and who is respected by colleagues in many countries. His status in incarceration is therefore a matter of wide concern.

I am particularly concerned to know his physical condition. Is he in good health? I wonder as well whether Professor GOUMBA is in contact with his family, and whether he has had access to legal counsel. May I ask your assurance on these two points? Finally, may I know Dr. GOUMBA’s place of detention?

I would be very grateful to hear from you on these matters.

Respectfully,

Name  
Title  
Institution

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GOUMBA sentenced to five years

Professor Abel Goumba, the veteran politician with friends in high places in the French Socialist Party, has been sentenced to five years’ imprisonment. 10 years’ loss of civil rights and fined 2m. CFA francs, writes our correspondent.

Professor Goumba, leader of the proscribed People’s Front Party (PFP), was found guilty of engaging in political activities, writing and distributing materials critical of the military regime and contacting foreign powers. He was arrested on August 23, 1982, following the discovery of four “subversive” letters on the person of Patrice Endjinmorongu, the European representative of the PFP, at Bangui airport. Goumba was Rector of the University of Bangui at the time. M. Endjinmorongu, who was tried at the same time, received a similar sentence to the professor for “activity”. Endjinmorongu’s younger brother was fined 200,000 CFA francs on a separate charge of “insulting the Head of State”.

Professor Goumba, who the PFP claims has now become the symbolic leader of all CAR opposition militants in detention, wrote in a letter from the Kaisai military prison last September (copies of which are in the possession of West Africa) that he was suffering breathing and urinary problems. Another letter from Kaisai, signed by 50 prisoners, complains of the “stepping-up” of physical and psychological torture against Central African political prisoners in the Kaisai military camp.

Precise estimates of the number of political prisoners in Bangui jails are not available, but an indication of the scale, reliable sources said that about 100 people arrested in connection with the May 1981 cinema bombing were recently transferred from Kaisai to the Ngaraba prison. Ngaraba was the site of the infamous murder of children during the time of “Emperor” Bokassa. In addition, at least 15 people were arrested in February following the strike against the 5 per cent “solidarity tax” imposed by the military rulers.

Amnesty International has named Professor Goumba a “prisoner of conscience”. He thus receives this dubious honour for the second time; in December 1990 he was imprisoned for illegal opposition activities.

The Professor admitted recently that he had committed criminal acts, “if it is a crime to defend the interests of the oppressed Central African people”.

West Africa, May 2, 1983, p.1091