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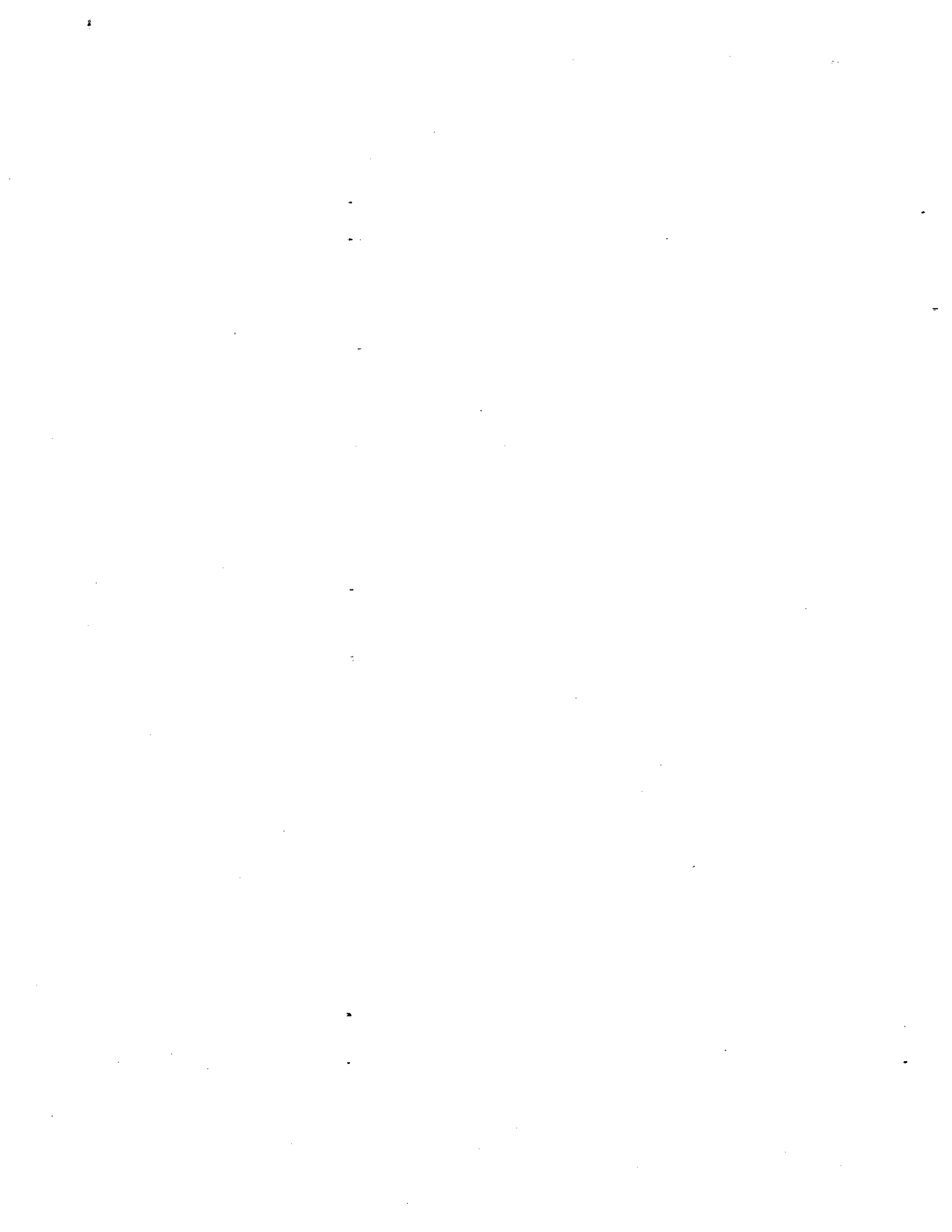
**bread for the world**  
a christian citizens' movement in the usa

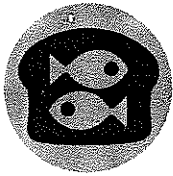
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Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C.  
**James Wright**  
U.S. Representative from Texas

STATEMENT OF BREAD FOR THE WORLD  
BEFORE THE  
GSP SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE TRADE POLICY STAFF  
COMMITTEE (USTRO)  
ON  
THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES  
(WORKERS' RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN REP. OF ZAIRE)

Prepared by  
Dominic Kwang Ntube  
Policy Analyst  
June 10, 1985





# bread for the world

a christian citizens' movement in the usa

June 10, 1985

The Executive Director  
Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
Room 316  
600 - 17th St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Sir/Madam:

## Request for Oral Testimony - GSP Hearing

My name is Dominic Kwang Ntube. I am a policy analyst on trade and finance issues with Bread for the World (BFW), a Christian citizens' movement on hunger and poverty issues. I wish formally to request to testify before the GSP Subcommittee of the Trade Policy Staff Committee (USTRO), at a public hearing scheduled for June 24-25, 1985 concerning GSP beneficiary countries practices as related to human rights, including the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. The Republic of Zaire would be the focus of my testimony.

Bread for the World is a grassroots, anti-hunger organization with a membership of over 47,000 in over 400 congressional districts nationwide. Bread for the World members participated actively in the passage of the new and reformed version of the GSP trade legislation. The members supported the inclusion of a "land for food" provision that would ensure that appropriate U.S. agencies work with GSP beneficiary countries to ensure that increased agricultural exports do not come at the expense of production of food for local consumption, and also a human rights and labor rights provision that would have denied a country eligibility for GSP if its government failed to protect human and labor rights.

Bread for the World regard both the CBI and GSP as hunger related issues. Denying workers the right to organize, to bargain collectively and to strike, if necessary, for better wages and working conditions often condemns them to poverty and hunger. Blatant human rights violations further makes

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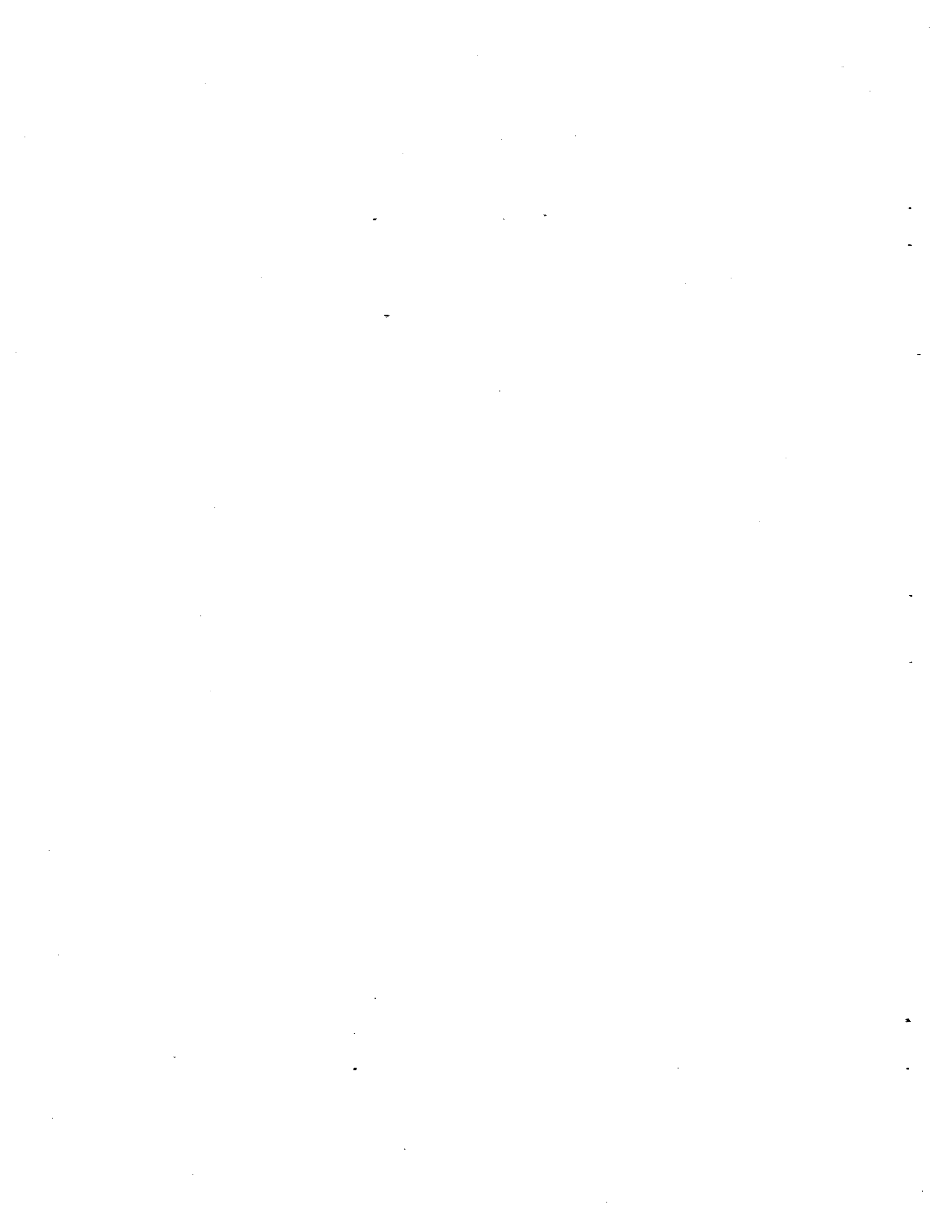
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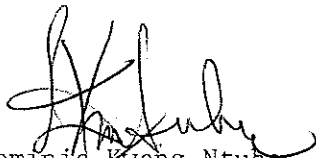
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development and a solution to acute hunger problems even more difficult. Available documents testify to gross violation of human rights and of internationally recognized workers' rights as outlined in ILO Conventions by Zaire for which the government of that country is signatory.

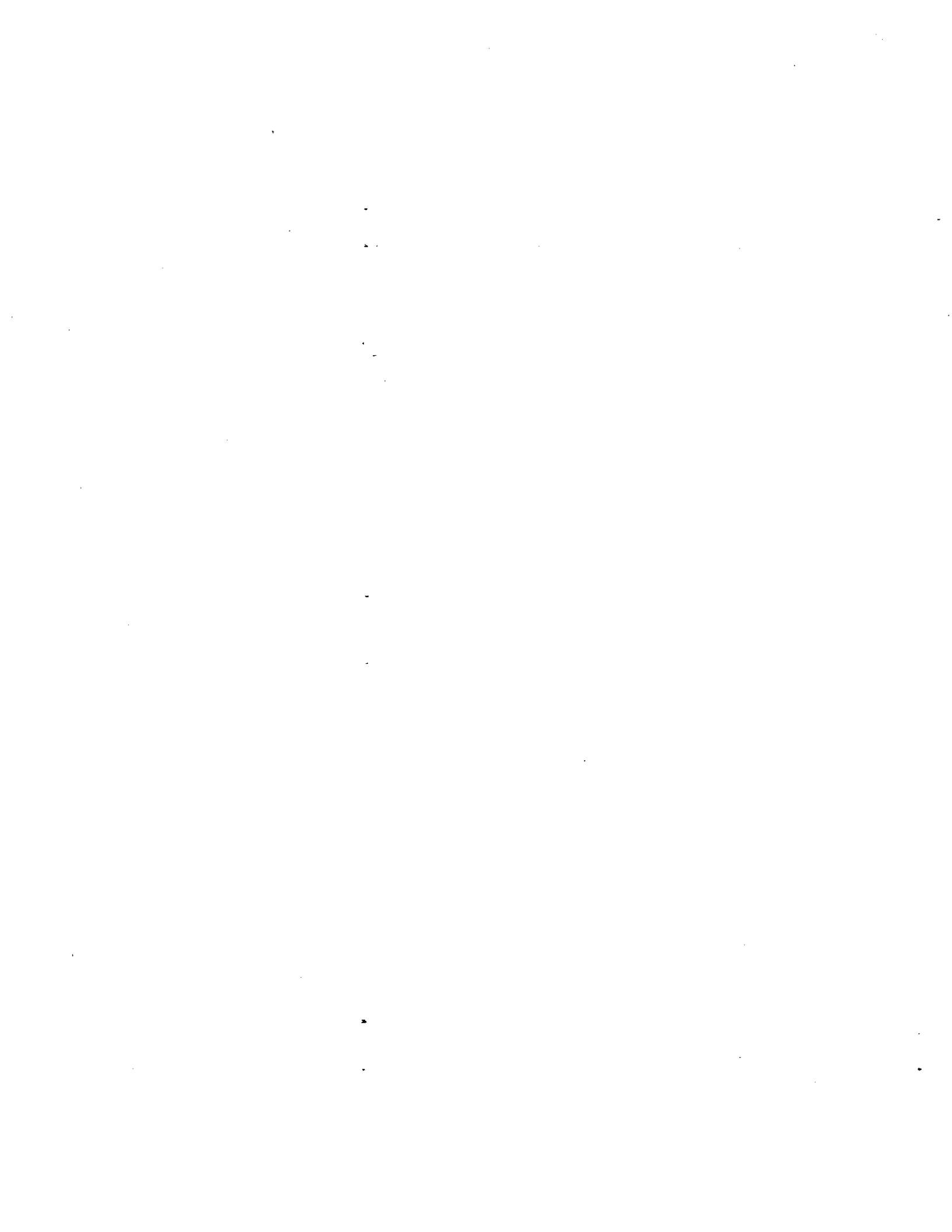
We would be most appreciative to be given an opportunity to come before the GSP Subcommittee of the Trade Policy Staff Committee on this matter.

Enclosed is a statement of our proposed testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dominic Kwang Ntuba', written in a cursive style.

Dominic Kwang Ntuba  
Trade/Finance Analyst



Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Dominic Kwang Ntube. I am a policy analyst on trade and finance issues with Bread for the World (BFW). Bread for the World, a Christian citizens' grassroot anti-hunger with a membership of 47,000 strong, appreciates this opportunity to submit a statement to the United States Trade Representatives Office. Bread for the World recognizes that the hungry, whether found in a little village in the Shaba province of Zaire or in North Carolina in the U.S. has a shortage of lobbying advocates in their respective governments. We have therefore assumed the responsibility to be the mouth-piece of those with little or no opportunity to be heard but who bear consequences of policies formulated by others. We are particularly concerned with the problems of rural and urban poor, of wage earners, of petty traders, of share-croppers, of peasant farmers and of all those too powerless to demand their internationally recognized rights.

Bread for the World recognizes the importance of international trade for alleviating poverty and hunger. We believe that trade is one of the most common manifestation of the economic interdependence of the South (developing countries) and the North (industrialized countries). Like many others, we view trade as an "engine of growth" and of development for both North and South alike. We believe that international trade provides a chance to break the cycle of poverty, hunger and economic injustice with the provision of jobs for workers and most needed foreign exchange for international transactions. Thus, Bread for the World members have tirelessly worked on international trade issues and for the first time addressed U.S. trade policy in the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). Our members strongly supported the renewal of the reformed Generalized





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System of Preferences trade legislation. We particularly support its discretionary "land for food" provision that would ensure that appropriate U.S. agencies work with GSP beneficiary countries to ensure that increased agricultural exports do not come at the expense of production of food for local consumption. The mandatory labor rights provision is of equal importance since it would deny a country eligibility for GSP if its government violates labor rights.

Bread for the World believes that labor rights are an important factor in the fight against unemployment and malnutrition and starvation. Denying workers the right to organize, to bargain collectively and to strike, if necessary, for better wages and working conditions often condemns them to poverty and hunger. Blatant human rights violations makes further development and solutions to acute hunger more difficult. Available documentation testifies to gross violations of these human rights including internationally recognized workers' rights as outlined in ILO Conventions by most authoritarian African regimes and especially by Zaire. The Republic of Zaire became a member of the ILO in 1960 and has ratified a number of ILO Convention related to workers' rights. This statement today, will address the following aspect of the GSP: Human rights and Workers' rights violation by the Republic of Zaire - a Top African GSP Beneficiary Country.

1. Definition of Human and or Workers' Rights:

Human rights are often narrowly thought of in terms of free speech and political prisoners. This issue is far broader. The ability of people to act to end their hunger and poverty is a basic

human right that is a far easier task when their political rights are protected. The rights of poor people and workers to earn a fair wage and share fully in the benefits of GSP-related trade depends as much on their ability to defend their interest as it does on the trade benefits themselves. Brazil for example, attained high rates of economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s based on strong expansion of its export trade. While, this rapid growth occurred, civil liberties were suspended. Union and peasant leaders were jailed or disappeared. Not surprising, the benefits of growth were not used to alleviate hunger and poverty problems of the destitute who had lost their rights to free expression and collective bargaining. There is evidence to show that the standard of living of the poorest people in Brazil, has actually deteriorated during the great growth in export trade.

In Africa, particularly in Zaire, the right to strike has been severely curtailed. For example, January 1985, 20,000 workers of the national transport office (ONATRA) went on strike for a 50% salary increase and better working conditions. The six day strike was said to have paralysed Matadi, the sole seaport, and freight movements between there and the capital and along the River Zaïre delayed exports of copper, the main source of foreign currency earnings. On the fifth-day of the strike, the UNTZa workers' delegates and ONATRA staff met with the "premier commissaire d'etat" - first commissioner of state. They were given 48 hours to return to work. The workers did not achieve their objectives because of state intervention. President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire ruled out any compromise of a 50% pay raise for the workers. He instead fired the Director of the national transportation office, a Belgian, for inefficiency and for compromising with the workers. The Director was used as a scapegoat for the strike. The workers received the appointment of a pro-Mobutu new director and an IMF package, clearly not in their interests.

Small groups of primary and secondary school teachers have gone on strike every year since 1980 for higher salaries. The teachers involved have frequently been arrested either because the strikes were not authorized by the nation's single trade union or because the organizers of the strikes are considered subversive elements by the authorities. The arrests and dismissals of teachers always ended the strikes. (See Appendix I for individual cases of imprisoned teachers as reported by Amnesty International).

## 2. Zaire and the GSP Program:

The GSP agreement in 1984. (See Appendix II) Major products receiving duty free access to the United States from Zaire under the program include: Cobalt Oxide - 5% of total annual import; Unwrought Copper NES - 6% and Cobalt Compounds NSPF - 4%. (See Appendix III)

Although Zaire's participation in the GSP program may be insignificant when compared with the Top 15 recipient developing countries, human rights and labor repression are highly visible and known worldwide. It is difficult to distinguish between political and labor unrest in Zaire.

This even more so because the only political party of Zaire, Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution (MPR) created in 1967 is closely tied with the only legal workers' union, Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Zaire (UNTZA). A number of existing unions including the teachers' trade union, the Federation Nationale des Enseignants du Zaire (FENEZA) became part of the main workers union, UNTZA in 1971 when the country (Congo Kinshasa) was renamed Zaire. The fact that the UNTZA is closely tied to the MPR explains the close control of union activities by the

government of President Mobutu. In fact, in 1970 Bo-Boliko, Raphael Bintou, Thomas Booka and Victor Beleke, who were founding fathers of the UNTZA, were appointed to important political posts by the President and subsequently left the trade union movement not without continuous influence. Because of the centralization of union activities under the national political party, MPR, political disturbances and activities of striking workers are indistinguishable. The government's answer is more often political repression than discussion and bargaining with labor leaders.

3. Zaire and the IMF Austerity Measures:

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies of adjustments are one of the main reasons for Zaire's repressive attitude on its labor force. Yet Zaire has little choice in implementing austerity measures. Zaire, is one of the world's poorest countries. Her per capita income of \$190 in 1984 declined by \$30 in 1985 to \$160. Other negative indicators include: a very high infant mortality rate, a low life expectancy rate at birth and a very low literacy rate as well. But last year, following an IMF prescription, Zaire had to dismissal 7,000 university and secondary school teachers as part of IMF new credit conditions to the country. According to Radio France International, the number dismissed formed 50% of Zaire's total teaching force. The impact of such a measure for a country in need of skilled manpower can be readily understood. What is more, those dismissed received little or no compensation and in most cases no warnings. They joined the unemployed in the cities and added to already known social problems.

The IMF austerity program in Zaire known as the "Mobutu Plans", in 1976, 1977, 1979, 1981 and 1983 as well as 1984 and 1985 have included blatant repression of workers rights. The 1984-85 Mobutu Plan included an 8% devaluation of the zaire (currency), cutbacks in government employment and price increases for essential goods previously subsidized by the government and a limit of salary increases to 25% only. The austerity program was imposed by the IMF for a 15-month period in exchange for a 350-million dollar aid package signed in January 1984. Although the interests of the people were not represented in the negotiations with the IMF, Premier Kengo Wa Dondo of Zaire recently called on the country's employers and unions to enter into a "Social Pact" with the government in support of tough austerity measures. But the Premier failed to indicate how the interests of these workers and the peasant farmers were going to be protected from the wrenching social effect of IMF stabilization plan.

Zaire has a debt burden of nearly \$5 billion - one of the highest in Africa - 3½ of the debt owed to the IMF; 8.7% to the World Bank and other international organizations; 75.8% to bilateral credits, including publicly insured private bank loans; 11% uninsured bank debt while uninsured commercial debt, 1.4%. Under such a debt burden Zaire is on the verge of economic collapse, a situation exacerbated by corruption and mismanagement which have become associated with Mobutu and his ruling elite. Power, order, defense, glory, grandiose projects, flaboyant lifestyle, and the inherent corruption and largesse of such a personalized regime have come at too high a cost for Zaire. The cost is being borne by the wage earners, the rural poor and peasant farmers and all those at the periphery of the social strata.

The misery and starvation in the country faced with IMF austerity, the fraudulent trade by many military officers, the activities of the so called "barons du regime", have been highlighted by the former Prime Minister of Zaire, Nguza Karl-I-Bond in his testimony of September 15, 1981 before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives. The disparity between wages is clear when one compares the salary of 500-800 zaires per month of civil servants, including medical doctors with that of an MPR central committee member of 15,000 zaires per month. Such unequal wages lead subsequently to riots, unrest, political instability and a decline in productivity.

4. Recommendations:

Zaire is a very poor country, indeed. Its per capita income has declined from \$190 in 1984 to only \$160 in 1985. Like most African countries it is suffering from teething development problems. It is suffering from a huge debt burden and general misery. Removing the Republic of Zaire from GSP benefits would augment the nation's economic problems. Rather Bread for the World recommends that USTRO and Congress call for changes in IMF loan conditions and policies on the poorest of the poor developing countries as Zaire. This country is hard pressed to improve labor rights while harmful IMF austerity plans continue. In addition, Zaire needs to be warned to improve its human and workers' rights conditions.

Bread for the World further recommends that the "land for Food" provision in the GSP be given serious consideration and be implemented in line with the wishes of Congress. This is crucial to the food production of this country, a largely agricultural nation, as well as

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food self-sufficiency for African GSP beneficiary countries. Export-led development advocated by the IMF threatens Zaire's ability to produce food needed by her own people. Increased exports will clearly diminish Zaire's debt burden and balance of payment and other economic problems. However, these exports must not come at the expense of domestic food production and the United States can ensure that this is the case through implementation of the land for food provision of the GSP trade legislation passed by the U.S. Congress October 4, 1984.



## APPENDIX I

From Cases of Teachers Detained for Political Reasons  
in the Republic of Zaire, Amnesty International, June 1984

### IT PRISONER CASES

#### 1. ADUBANGO-ALI-ATHOCON

He held the post of Coordinator of Roman Catholic schools in the diocese of Kisangani (Coordinateur diocésain des Ecoles conventionnées catholiques) at the time of his arrest on 18 December 1983. His arrest took place several days after a secondary school teacher had allegedly been severely tortured at the local AND headquarters in an apparent attempt to make him implicate senior figures in the local Roman Catholic church in the alleged formation of an unofficial Christian trade union for school teachers. He had also taken part in negotiations with the authorities concerning the strike.

ADUBANGO-ALI-ATHOCON was detained for about 10 days at the AND headquarters in Kisangani and was then sent to a village near Mahaqi more than 500 kilometres away, near the frontier with Uganda, where he was forbidden to leave the village. As far as Amnesty International is aware, he is still restricted to this village area.

#### 2. KABEYA

He is a secondary school teacher in a non-denominational or "official" school in Lubumbashi, who was reportedly arrested in March 1984. Although no charges are known to have been brought against him, he is reported to have been accused by his AND interrogators of being one of the "agitators" among the teachers and therefore allegedly involved in a short teachers' strike in January 1984. He is also reported to have been accused of having once entertained in his house one of the UDPS leaders. In 1982 similar accusations were used to convict and sentence to one year's imprisonment several Lubumbashi women who had given meals to former members of the national assembly believed to be connected with the UDPS.

KABEYA is believed to be detained without charge or trial at the Lubumbashi AND headquarters.

3 LWITELA Majaliwa

He is not a teacher in Zaïre, but is a Zaïrian national who at the time of his arrest in November 1983 held a post in a private secondary school in Bujumbura, the capital of neighbouring Burundi, called the "Collège de la Liberté", (Freedom College).

He was arrested at the border between Burundi and Zaïre, at a frontier post known as Kamvivira, just outside the Zaïrian town of Uvira in eastern Kivu region, when he was on his way to visit his family in Uvira. He was taken to a detention centre in Uvira and reportedly subjected to severe beatings. The authorities apparently suspected that while he had been working in Burundi, LWITELA Majaliwa had been in contact with a Zaïrian opposition leader who is based in Belgium.

After being interrogated in Uvira, he was transferred to the AND headquarters in the local provincial capital, Bukavu. He is reported to be still held there, although no criminal charges are known to have been brought against him. He is held incommunicado and conditions at the AND detention centre in Bukavu are reported to be extremely harsh.

4 MBUYI Tshisanji

He is a 35-year old school teacher who is employed by the largest company operating in Kasai Oriental region, the Société minière du Bakwanga (known as MIBA), a diamond mining company. He was arrested in August 1983 and has been held without charge or trial since then.

MBUYI Tshisanji is also reported to be an active trade unionist. However, it was apparently on account of his suspected support for the UDPS that he was arrested, along with a considerable number of others, in August 1983. Although most of the others detained were soon released, he and about 10 others remained in custody. Unofficial reports indicate that they were initially held at a military camp in Mbuji-Mayi, the main town in the province, where they are alleged to have been subjected to severe beatings. It appears that some of them were subsequently transferred to the custody of the AND in Mbuji Mayi, while others were sent to the AND detention centre in Kinshasa.

.../...

5 NGOMA Igamba

He is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Lubumbashi who is reported to have been arrested in March or early April 1984.

Although no charges are known to have been brought against him, it appears that he tried to stand as a candidate in Zaïre's presidential elections, which are scheduled for July 1984. The elections are in fact for the post of president of the ruling party, the MPR, whose leader automatically becomes head of state for a seven-year term. The post has been held continuously since the formation of the MPR in 1967 by Marshal MOBUTU Sese Seko.

Candidates for the post of MPR president were required to register with the Party's Central Committee in Kinshasa, the capital, between 25 January and 29 February 1984. It is the responsibility of the MPR Central Committee to choose just one candidate to recommend for approval by the MPR Congress and eventually, by the electorate.

At the time of the last presidential elections in 1977, Amnesty International learned of the case of an individual who tried to register as a candidate but was unable to find a suitable department in the administration with which to register. He subsequently tried to form a political party and was arrested in 1979, detained without trial for several years and then restricted to his home village.

6 UMBA Kabulo

He is a young teacher at the IMARA II school in Likasi, in southern Shaba region, who was arrested in January 1984 after writing a letter in October 1983 to the Governor of Shaba region complaining about economic and political problems in the country. In particular, the letter is reported to have complained that there were no medicines available in Likasi Hospital, that workers were receiving inadequate wages, that the agricultural sector was being neglected and that no attempts were being made to put government political slogans into practice.

He is reported to have been arrested in Likasi and transferred to the AND detention centre in Lubumbashi, where he is reported to be detained without charge or trial. His wife is said to be expecting a child, but is not known to have been allowed to visit her husband.

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APPENDIX II

\*AFRICA: TOP 13 U.S. GSP BENEFICIARIES  
JANUARY 1984-DECEMBER 1984  
ANNUAL VALUE  
IN US\$

<u>Country</u>	<u>U.S.</u>		<u>U.S.</u>	<u>World</u>		<u>Percentage</u>
	<u>Total Value</u>	<u>Total Value</u>	<u>% Difference</u>	<u>Total Gross Value</u>	<u>Total Gross Value</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
	<u>1984</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1983-1984</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>
1. Zambia	93,572,734	37,691,334	+148%	9,279,467,533	6,477,347,579	1%
2. ZAIRE	40,826,991	46,957,104	-13%	6,798,039,414	4,983,857,890	.6%
3. Mauritius	22,154,897	19,917,498	+11%	14,010,667,673	9,782,417,359	.2%
4. Swaziland	21,423,642	12,289,734	+74%	13,777,421,008	9,476,336,972	.1%
5. Morocco	20,101,117	16,172,480	+24%	10,088,275,223	7,188,938,180	.2%
6. Iv. Coast	18,270,642	20,615,163	-11%	15,450,165,080	10,550,861,448	.1%
7. Egypt	17,294,471	7,303,444	+136%	20,107,504,666	13,862,721,491	.08%
8. Zimbabwe	16,616,505	17,450,903	-4%	14,665,262,386	10,199,235,171	.1%
9. Mozambique	10,938,372	11,854,117	-7%	2,735,451,219	2,078,593,600	.3%
10. Malawi	10,446,825	1,277,517	+718%	9,710,756,860	6,912,166,661	.1%
11. Madagascar	7,107,894	7,174,588	-.9%	7,130,478,567	5,017,845,719	.09%
12. Cameroon	4,882,247	4,059,298	+20%	9,159,111,195	6,195,650,087	.05%
13. Kenya	4,246,875	2,110,241	+101%	18,071,590,631	12,194,089,245	.02%
TOTAL =	287,883,142	194,201,000	+.48%	150,984,480,000		.2%

\*Data compiled from Bureau of Census (U.S.) G.S.P. Statistics, 1984,  
 by Dominic K. Ntube, Policy Analyst, Bread for the World (BFW).

## APPENDIX III

\*\*MAJOR U.S. GSP IMPORTS FROM ZAIRE: 1984

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>GROSS WORLD VALUE</u> <u>1984</u>	<u>VALUE</u> <u>U.S.</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u> <u>U.S.</u>
1. Cobalt Oxide	5,278,761	275,815	5%
2. Cobalt Compounds NSPF	3,051,714	138,984	4%
3. Semi Precious Stones AN	5,957,099	63,607	2%
4. Unwrought Copper, NES	652,483,384	82,620	6%
5. Beads, Ivory NOT Strung	622,766	6,345	1%
6. Drums Flasks Etc. NES	105,945,804	145,209	.1%
7. ENZYMES A Ferments NSPF	90,111,649	188,262	.2%
8. Articles NSPF, of Wood	172,446,184	19,973	.1%
9. Sodium Compounds, NES	27,632,471	31,325	.1%
10. Mineral Substance Artic.	87,535 318	5,247	.005%
11. Articles NSPF of Beads	15,959,670	750	.03%
12. Articles of Ivory NSPF	1,790,441	18,410	1%
TOTAL ON MAJOR IMPORTS =	<u>1,168,815,281</u> =====	<u>976,547</u> =====	<u>.08%</u> =====

\*\*Data compiled from Bureau of Census (U.S.) GSP 1984  
 Statistics by Dominic K. Ntube, Analyst - Bread for the World

