

PUBLIC

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25 May 2007

UA 125/07 **Fear for safety**

NIGERIA **Bari-ara Kpalap (m)**
Baridi Kpalap (f), his wife
His four children

Armed men attacked the wife and children of Bari-ara Kpalap, a staff member of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), on 19 May. Amnesty International believes that his life and those of his family may be at risk.

At about 2am on 19 May, four unidentified armed men broke into the home of Bari-ara Kpalap in the city of Port Harcourt in southern Nigeria, and entered the room where Bari-ara Kpalap's children were sleeping. While pointing their guns at the children, the men asked them where their father was. When the children responded that their father was not in the house, the men hit them. When Bari-ara Kpalap's wife came into the children's room, the men took her at gunpoint to another room where they also hit her, leaving her with bruises and an injury to her leg. The men then left the house, warning that they would be back. The attack was reported to the police but no effective action has been taken so far.

MOSOP is a community organization that campaigns to ensure that oil companies and the Nigerian government address environmental pollution linked to oil exploitation and pay adequate compensation to the oil producing regions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Ogoni ethnic group, based in Rivers State, have been subjected to serious human rights violations in the past in its fight to get compensation for the environmental damage caused by oil companies. In 1995, during the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha, Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists were executed for their work in defence of human rights. Ten years later, in 2005, the federal government appointed an independent mediator, the Reverend Matthew H. Kukah, to assist the reconciliation between the oil company Shell Nigeria and the Ogoni community. Disagreement between different groups representing the Ogoni community has led to recent tensions (including previous death threats to the President of MOSOP) as to how to deal with the reconciliation process.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Bari-ara Kpalap, from the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and his family;
- urging the authorities to take immediate and effective action to protect Bari-ara Kpalap, Baridi Kpalap, and their children, in accordance with their wishes;
- calling the authorities to order a thorough and independent investigation into the attack on his wife and children, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Governor of Rivers State
His Excellency Celestine Ngozichim Omehia
Governor of Rivers State,
Office of the Governor

Government House
Port Harcourt
Rivers State, Nigeria
Email: celestine@celestineomehia.net
Salutation: Your Excellency

Rivers State Police Commissioner
Mr Felix Ogbaudu
Commissioner of Police
Rivers State Command Headquarters
Moscow Road,
Port Harcourt
Rivers State, Nigeria
Salutation: Dear Sir

Director of Rivers State Security Service
Alhaji Kola Adesina
Director of the Rivers State Security Service
State Security Service Headquarters
Forces Avenue (old GRA)
Port Harcourt
Rivers State, Nigeria

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Nigeria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 July 2007.