

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 44/002/2003

UA 27/03

Detention without charge/Fear of torture or ill- treatment/
Prisoner of conscience/Health concern

28 January 2003

NIGERIA

Festus Keyamo (m), lawyer

Lawyer and prisoner of conscience, Festus Keyamo, is being held in incommunicado detention without charge at an unknown location. He has reportedly been denied adequate food, clothes and medical assistance. He is reportedly on hunger strike and is at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Festus Keyamo was arrested by the Nigerian Police on 28 December 2002. He was held at various locations and is known to have been transferred to the Nigerian Federal Police Headquarters in the capital Abuja. He is reportedly currently being held incommunicado at an unknown location, though he has managed to get a letter, dated 31 December 2002 to the international media.

In the letter, Festus Keyamo claims to have been kept incommunicado detention, denied medical assistance as well as adequate food and clothes. In protest against his detention and the conditions in which he was being held, he announced that he would go on hunger strike. It is unknown whether he is still on hunger strike and there are also concerns for his health.

Festus Keyamo is the leader of Movement for the Actualization of the Future Republic of the Niger Delta. It is feared that he may have been detained, for his public call for a wider autonomy for the Niger delta region in southern Nigeria. This followed President Obasanjo's public explanation in late December 2002, of why he refused to sign a bill that would have given Nigeria's coastal states a percentage of revenue from offshore oil. The bill would particularly have benefited the States of the Niger delta oil-producing region.

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

- expressing concern for the safety and health of Festus Keyamo;
- asking the authorities why he has been arrested and detained without charge;
- calling for Festus Keyamo's current location to be made public;
- calling for guarantees that he will not be tortured or ill-treated while in detention;
- urging that he be held in conditions which conform to international standards for the treatment of prisoners, and that he be allowed visits from lawyers, doctors and family members;
- urging that he be released unless he is promptly charged with a recognisable criminal offence and brought to trial in accordance with international standards, including Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Nigeria has ratified.

APPEALS TO: (note that fax numbers can be very difficult to obtain, but please keep trying)

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Alhaji Sule Lamido

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Maputo Street, Zone 3, Wuse District

PMB 130, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Telegram: Foreign Affairs Minister, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Fax: + 234 9 523 0208

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

His Excellency Kanu Agabi
Ministry of Justice
New Federal Secretariat Complex, Shehu Shagari Way
Central Area District
Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Telegram: Minister of Justice, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Fax: + 234 9 5235194

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister Police Affairs

His Excellency Mr. Steven Ibn Akiga
New Federal Secretariat complex
Shehu Shagari Way
Abuja, Nigeria

Telegram: Minister of Police Affairs, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Fax: +234 9 5232450

Salutation: Your excellency

Inspector General of Police

Mr. Tafa Balogun
Nigerian Police Force Headquarters
Abuja, Nigeria

Telegram: Inspector General of Police, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Tel/fax: +234 9 2340633

Salutation: Dear Sir

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 11 March 2003.