

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 44/25/96

17 October 1996

Further information on UA 138/96 (AFR 44/09/96, 7 June 1996) and follow-ups (AFR 44/19/96, 2 August and AFR 44/23/96, 24 September) - Fear of extrajudicial execution / Prisoners of conscience / Health concern / Legal concern

NIGERIA Alhaja Kudirat Abiola (f)
Moshood Abiola

Alhaji Ganiyu Dawodu
Chief Ayo Adebajo
Senator Abraham Adesanya

The opposition group, the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) has announced that its three imprisoned leading members, Chief Ayo Adebajo, former Senator Abraham Adesanya and Alhaji Ganiyu Dawodu, were released without charge on 14 October 1996.

The High Court had ordered their release on 16 July 1996 and again on 11 October on the grounds that their detention was illegal. Although the three were ostensibly arrested on suspicion of involvement in the assassination of Alhaja Kudirat Abiola on 4 June 1996, no evidence had been produced to substantiate this accusation. Their continued detention appeared to be politically motivated. On 6 September 1996 Archibong Nkana, head of the police Federal Intelligence and Investigation Bureau (FIIB), said that their investigations into the killing had not made any progress due to lack of public cooperation; on 13 September he was one of three senior officers retired in a restructuring of the police. No independent or impartial investigation has been established into the assassination which, it is feared, may have been the work of government agents, acting with or without the knowledge of the central authorities.

On 2 October 1996 the authorities released two other prisoners of conscience: Ayo Opadokun, the former Secretary General of NADECO detained without charge or trial since October 1994, and Chima Ubani, General Secretary of the Democratic Alternative, a pro-democracy organization, and a senior official of the Civil Liberties Organisation, a leading human rights group. Their releases had been announced in June 1996, during a Commonwealth ministerial meeting to discuss sanctions on Nigeria, but they were not in fact released at that time.

ONE FURTHER ROUND OF LETTERS FROM THE UA NETWORK, IF POSSIBLE, IS REQUESTED:

- welcoming the unconditional release of prisoners of conscience Chief Ayo Adebajo, former Senator Abraham Adesanya and Alhaji Ganiyu Dawodu;
- expressing concern at their extended detention without charge or trial in harsh conditions, especially in view of their age and health, all being more than 60 years old;
- reiterating calls for a thorough and impartial investigation into the assassination of Alhaja Kudirat Abiola which would satisfy the UN 1989 Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions;
- repeating calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Moshood Abiola.

APPEALS TO:

General Sani Abacha
Chairman, Provisional Ruling Council

State House, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Faxes: + 234 9 523 2138

Salutation: Dear General

Mr Michael Agbamuche
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice, PMB 130, Abuja
Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Salutation: Dear Minister

Alhaji Ibrahim Coomasie
Inspector General of Police
Nigeria Police Force Headquarters
Garki, Abuja, Nigeria

Salutation: Dear Inspector General

COPIES TO:

Chief Tom Ikimi, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Maputo Street, PMB 130, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

The Editor, *The News*, PMB 21531, Ijeka, Lagos, Nigeria
The Editor, *Tell*, PMB 21749, Ijeka, Lagos, Nigeria
The Editor, *Vanguard*, PMB 1007, Apapa, Lagos, Nigeria
The Editor, *The Guardian*, PMB 1217, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria

and 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 December 1996.