

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 44/25/97

28 November 1997

Further information on UA 347/97 (AFR 44/21/97, 5 November 1997) and follow-ups (AFR 44/22/97, 20 November, AFR 44/23/97, 21 November) - Fear of ill-treatment / Legal concern

**NIGERIA** Mohammed Adamu, bureau chief in Abuja for *African Concord* news magazine  
Soji Omotunde, editor, *African Concord*  
Adetokunbo Fakeye, defence correspondent, *PM News* newspaper  
Jenkins Alumona, editor, *The News* magazine  
Onome Osifo-Whiskey, managing editor, *Tell Magazine*  
Babafemi Ojudu, managing editor, *The News* newspaper group

new names: Ben Adaji, Taraba State correspondent, *The News* magazine  
Rafiu Salau, administrative manager, *The News* group  
Akinwumi Adesokan, writer and journalist

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Further arrests of newspaper employees in recent weeks have been reported. On 12 November 1997 **Akinwumi Adesokan** was arrested at Nigeria's border with the Republic of Benin. He is an author, literary correspondent for the *Post Express* newspaper, a former literary correspondent of *The News*, and an Association of Nigerian Authors award-winner in 1996. He was arrested as he returned from nearly a year on writing fellowships in the United States of America and in Austria.

Another journalist and an administrative manager of the newspaper group which publishes *The News* magazine and *Tempo* and *PM News* newspapers have been arrested.

On 17 November 1997 **Ben Adaji**, a correspondent of *The News* magazine, was reportedly arrested in Jalingo, capital of Taraba State, northeast Nigeria.

No reason for his arrest has been given but it follows the publication of a report in *The News* about inter-communal killings in October 1997 in Taraba State following intervention by the military authorities in local government disputes. **Rafiu Salau**, administrative manager of *The News* group, was reportedly arrested on 18 November 1997. He had gone to the offices of the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) in Apapa, Lagos, to make inquiries about the whereabouts of Adetokunbo Fakeye, arrested on 4 November.

The other people named above remain in detention. Action for them may continue as specified in update of 20 November.

No details of an amnesty for political detainees announced by the head of state have yet been made public. On 17 November 1997, General Sani Abacha, in a statement to mark the fourth anniversary of the coup which brought him to power in 1993, announced an amnesty for detainees "whose release would constitute no further impediment to the peace and security of our country".

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:**

- expressing concern at the arrest of Akinwumi Adesokan, Ben Adaji and Rafiu Salau;
- asking why they were arrested and continue to be held in detention without charge or trial;
- expressing concern that they may be subjected to ill-treatment in detention, and urging that they be given immediate access to their families, lawyers and doctors of their own choice;

- expressing concern that they may be prisoners of conscience and calling for their immediate and unconditional release if they are not to be charged with recognizably criminal offences and promptly and fairly tried.

**APPEALS TO:**

General Sani Abacha  
Chairman, Provisional Ruling Council  
State House, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria  
**Telegrams: General Abacha, Abuja, Nigeria**  
**Faxes: + 234 9 523 2138**  
**Salutation: Dear General**

Alhaji Ismaila Gwarzo, National Security Adviser  
State Security Service (SSS), Federal Headquarters  
Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria  
**Telegrams: National Security Adviser, SSS, Abuja, Nigeria**  
**Salutation: Dear Sir**

Major-General Abdulsalam A. Abubakar  
Chief of Defence Staff  
Provisional Ruling Council, State House  
Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria  
**Telegrams: Chief of Defence Staff, Abuja, Nigeria**  
**Salutation: Dear Major-General**

**COPIES TO:**

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

Mr Justice P.K. Nwokedi, Chairman  
National Human Rights Commission  
National Assembly Complex, Maitama  
PMB 444, Garki  
Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

The Editor, *Today*, PO Box 10281, Kaduna, Nigeria  
The Editor, *This Day*, PO Box 54749, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria  
The Editor, *The Guardian*, PMB 1217, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria  
The Editor, *PM News*, PMB 21531, Ikeja, 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 10 January 1998.