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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION IN SOUTH AFRICA
TO LAUNCH NIGERIA CAMPAIGN

An Amnesty International delegation led by Secretary General Pierre Sané is in South Africa between 4 and 9 November 1996 to mark the first anniversary of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and launch a worldwide campaign on human rights in Nigeria. The delegates will also be discussing Amnesty International's concerns about the current human rights situation in the Great Lakes region.

During the visit the delegates will meet representatives of the South African government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and religious communities. The South African government has been one of the most active African governments working for human rights improvements in Nigeria, and the South Africa-Nigeria Democracy Support Group (SANDSG) is an important NGO coalition network.

The delegation is in South Africa following prolonged but unsuccessful efforts to visit Nigeria itself. The Nigerian authorities have failed to respond to repeated requests for visas for the delegation. Amnesty International first wrote to the High Commissioner in London asking for a meeting regarding this visit in July 1996. In August it wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In September visa applications were submitted. No official response has been received to any of these approaches.

The delegation, which was to have included Mme Danielle Mitterrand, had planned to meet Nigerian government officials, representatives of human rights organizations and other individuals. Amnesty International has throughout been willing to discuss with representatives of the Nigerian government its plans for the visit and remains willing to discuss arrangements for a future visit.

Members of the delegation will be available for interview throughout the visit. Pierre Sané and Corlett Letlojane from Lawyers for Human Rights (representing SANDSG) will be holding a press conference on:

8 November -- 10.30am
Holiday Inn Royal Garden Hotel

For further information, to arrange an interview, or to obtain copies of the media pack please call:

Mark Ogle, Press Officer: Holiday Inn Royal Garden (Room 1501)
 Tel. (27) 011 366 7011
 Fax. (27) 11 336 0515 Mobile (27) 468 670247

Cato Pedder, AI South Africa: Tel./Fax. (27) 011 648 8716
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