



AFRICA NETWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

(Non-governmental Organisation)

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7th August, 2012.

Mrs. Hilary Clinton
US Secretary of State

Through:

US Embassy in Nigeria
7 Mambilla Street
Off Aso Drive
Maitama District
Abuja, Nigeria

Dear Mrs. Hilary Clinton,

UNLAWFUL ARREST, INTIMIDATION AND CONTINUED DETENTION OF REV. DAVID UGOLOR, A CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVIST BY THE NIGERIAN POLICE

We warmly welcome you to Nigeria on this your auspicious visit aimed at discussing Nigeria US bi-lateral relations and wish to use the opportunity of your state visit to bring to your attention the illegal arrest, detention, and dehumanization of one of Nigeria's leading human and environmental rights activist, Rev. David Ugolor, who is being framed up by the Nigerian police acting on a trumped up allegation of murder of the Private Secretary of the Edo State Governor, Mr. Olaitan Oyerinde who, incidentally was a bosom friend of David Ugolor.

A team of heavily armed Policemen invaded the corporate office of Africa Network of Environmental and Economic Justice (ANEEJ) in Benin City, Nigeria, where David works as Executive Director on Friday, July 27, 2012 and ransacked the office.

The reason for the invasion according to the policemen was that one of the suspects held by the police in connection with the murder of Comrade Olaitan Oyerinde, the Principal Private Secretary to Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, described his sponsor and the police assumed his description fits Rev. David Ugolor and the police later claimed he mentioned the name "David" which necessitated an immediate identification parade where a self-confessed criminal was brought in chains and pointed at David Ugolor almost immediately and the police decided to detain him till date. A face to face encounter between David Ugolor and his mystery accuser revealed that the accusers know him not, neither his office, home nor his car.

Interestingly, the Department of State Security Service (SSS) in Nigeria on Wednesday morning (August 1st, 2012) paraded, six armed robbers in Abuja, Nigeria who confessed to killing Olaitan Oyerinde. Their names are Mohammed Abdullahi, Raymond Origbo, Chikezie Edeh, Saidi Yakubu

(aka Imam), Sani Abubakar and Hassan Bashiru. Items stolen from Olaitan's house including his phones, i-Pad, wedding ring of his brother-in-law who was equally robbed were displayed by the SSS. The robbers confessed that it was a robbery case that went awry and even the gun used by the robbers to kill Olaitan was also recovered from the robbers by the SSS. In spite of the convincing revelation by the SSS, David Ugolor is still being kept in police detention in Benin City, Nigeria.

Rev. David Ugolor whose activism spans over two decades of coordinated, well articulated and result oriented activities both nationally and internationally we suspect he is being victimized by the Nigerian police because he has led several campaigns for the reform of the Oil and Gas industry in Nigeria. He is the arrow head for the call for the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) and led several protests to the National Assembly. He recently led a Civil Society meeting which made critical analysis on the new Bill recently sent to the National Assembly. His organization had taken the petroleum Minister to court over her qualifications to the office of the Minister. Rev. Ugolor has also led Civil Society Campaign to "occupy the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)" following the release of the KPMG report and he is vocal in calling for the enforcement of the National Assembly Ad-hoc committee report on petroleum subsidy sleaze. Ugolor also led other Civil Society activists to launch the "End Immunity Now" Campaign which is focusing on the corruption in the Oil and Gas industry.

Before his arrest, ANEEJ was denied accreditation to observe the Edo State Governorship election, having observed previous elections and we suspect the police are using the opportunity of his having been invited six times to offer statement on the murder of his bosom friend to now frame him up as the sponsor of the killing.

While we believe in the rule of law to arrest and investigate crime, however, we are beginning to get worried by the continued detention and deprivation hatched on him by the Nigeria Police; even when the SSS have concluded investigation and exposed the suspected killers.

Two weeks now, the police has refused to release their report on the matter and also refuse to disclose the identity of the suspect who they claim described somebody whose identity fits David. Civil Society Organizations that have worked with Rev. David Ugolor can vouch for his innocence in the police frame up and have continue to protest the injustice being meted out to him.

It is against this backdrop that we appeal to the US Government to speak to our President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan to ask the Inspector General of Police to release Rev. David Ugolor from police detention or charge him immediately to court if they have any case against him.

Thank you and we wish you a pleasant stay in Nigeria.

Yours faithfully,



Comrade Nowinta Igbotako
Director, Board of Trustees