

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Brussels, 9 November 1995

11433/95 (Presse 315)
P. 97/95

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the trial of Ken Saro-Wiwa**

The European Union expresses its grave concern about the confirmation by the Provisional Ruling Council of the death sentences passed on Ken Saro-Wiwa and other accused of the murders of Ogoni leaders. The European Union notes the harshness of the sentencing, the lack of a right of appeal, and of basic legal rights for the accused during the whole process. The European Union appeals to General Abacha to exercise his right of clemency in this case.

The European Union also regrets the lack of respect for the basic rights of the population that has led to the present situation in Ogoniland and other minority areas of Nigeria. In its last declaration published on October 20, the European Union made public its disapproval of the growing occurrence of special tribunals, secret proceedings and lack of guarantees for detainees and accused in Nigeria.

The European Union reminds the Nigerian Government once again that Nigeria is obliged to abide by the provisions of the international treaties on human rights, to which Nigeria is a party and signatory. Respect for human rights is a basic and unavoidable principle for internal policies and international relations and is an essential criterion in determining the level of cooperation between the European Union and Nigeria, which will be subject to evaluation in the light of events.

The EFTA countries members of the EEA, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta align themselves with this declaration.