

97-GS-42 VOTED: The Twenty-first General Synod adopts the Resolution "Democracy and Human Rights in Nigeria."

RESOLUTION ADEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA®

WHEREAS, the unelected military dictatorship of Nigeria, headed by General Sani Abacha, has demonstrated its intent to remain in power without returning the country to civilian rule any time soon;

WHEREAS, the Nigerian military regime has abused systematically civil and human rights of the Nigerian people, as documented by Amnesty International and other international human rights organizations; and

WHEREAS, the World Council of Churches International Strategy Meeting on Nigeria in 1996 urged member churches to work towards democratization of Nigeria;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-first General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

- A. Calls on the Nigerian military regime to move without further delay to relinquish its undemocratic hold on power and allow the country to return to civilian rule, under representatives elected June 12, 1993;
- B. Urges the government of the United States to exercise leadership concerning Nigerian issues within international organizations such as the United Nations by:
 1. Calling for a complete freeze of the assets and bank accounts of Nigeria's rulers and their families;
 2. Calling for an international travel ban on Nigeria's military rulers, their families and civilian officials in the employment of the military regime;
 3. Calling for an international ban on the sale of military or police equipment to Nigeria;
 4. Calling for an international sports boycott of Nigeria;
 5. Calling for international suspension of all non-humanitarian aid to Nigeria;
 6. Continually pressing the Nigerian military regime to free all political detainees, to lift restrictions on media, and to practice judicial processes which provide the fair legal representation to which Nigerian citizens are entitled;
 7. Making significant funds available to non-governmental organizations and grassroots community groups in Nigeria to enhance their capacity to do human and democratic rights education and other work which will encourage democratic and popular participation and build a more extensive democratic culture;
 8. Calling for an international ban on the purchase of Nigerian oil;
 9. Continuing to press Shell Oil to work to influence its parent company, Royal Dutch Shell, to cease despoliation of the natural environment in Ogoniland; to take measures to ensure that in the future the lands and livelihoods of the Ogoni people are not adversely affected by oil extraction techniques; to take steps to rehabilitate the spoiled environment in Ogoniland; and to compensate adequately the Ogoni people whose livelihoods have been adversely affected by environmental degradation;
 10. Being prepared to provide significant and sustained aid to Nigeria once civilian rule is in place to help build a strong and vibrant civil society, and to strengthen or put in place appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic development and the establishment of good governance practices;
- C. Directs the President of the United Church of Christ to:
 1. Represent this position to government bodies, ecumenical organizations, advocacy groups and partner churches grappling with human rights today in Nigeria: and
 2. Communicate this position to religious organizations and leaders in Nigeria, including the Christian

Council of Nigeria and the Church of the Province of Nigeria;

D. Requests the United Church Board for World Ministries and the Commission for Racial Justice to develop educational and advocacy materials focusing on human rights in Nigeria.

Subject to the availability of funds.