

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 1, 2005

His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
The President's Office
Abuja, Nigeria

Dear President Obasanjo,

We write to express our serious concern over a recent case in the northern state of Kano of a 50-year-old Nigerian man who was sentenced to death by stoning after admitting to homosexual sex. According to reports, the man was charged with sodomy, based on an accusation made by a neighbor, and was arrested and brought before a Shari'a court.

After the man was acquitted for lack of evidence, the judge then asked him if he had had homosexual sex on other occasions, and when the man said yes, on that basis, he was convicted of sodomy and sentenced to death by stoning. There was no suggestion in the conviction that the sex was not consensual.

The specific circumstances of this conviction are highly problematic, and, in fact, we believe that the execution by stoning or by any other means of any individual for private, adult, consensual sexual activity is grossly inhumane and well below the standards that any civilized society should uphold.

We strongly urge you to intervene in this case to assure that this man's legal and human rights are respected and defended. We share the view of the special rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights who recently ended a visit to Nigeria with a call for the death penalty to be dropped in cases of homosexuality and for "immediate measures to review the entire proceedings" of this man's case in particular.

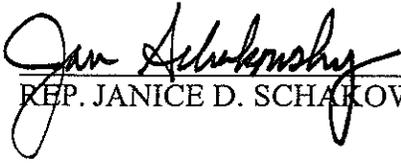
We have been very supportive of your efforts to transform Nigeria from military to civilian rule, and we applaud in particular the role your country is playing to help foster stability in West Africa. We also continue to be supportive of U.S. aid to Nigeria, but we must tell you that Americans are also entitled to expect that countries that benefit from our humanitarian and economic assistance will not tolerate practices that are so clearly in violation of basic human rights

REP. BARNEY FRANK

REP. BARBARA LEE

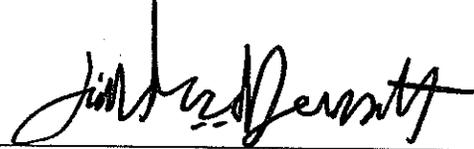

REP. DONALD M. PAYNE


REP. TOM LANTOS



REP. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

REP. JULIA CARSON



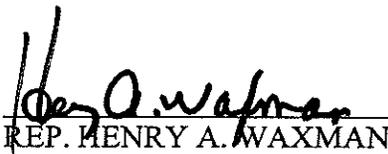
REP. JIM McDERMOTT

REP. TAMMY BALDWIN



REP. SUSAN A. DAVIS

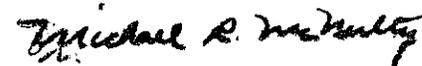
REP. JOSEPH CROWLEY



REP. HENRY A. WAXMAN

REP. MICHAEL M. HONDA

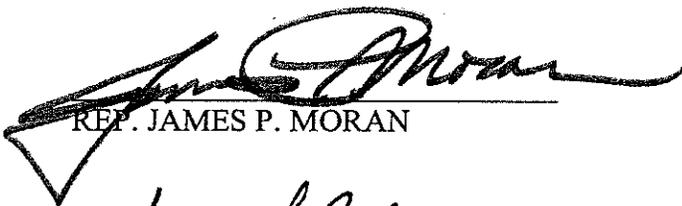
REP. BERNARD SANDERS



REP. MICHAEL R. McNULTY

REP. JAMES P. McGOVERN

REP. VIC SNYDER



REP. JAMES P. MORAN



REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL



REP. GARY L. ACKERMAN

REP. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

REP. DENNIS J. KUCINICH



REP. BETTY McCOLLUM