

THE PAIN OF TORTURE IS UNBEARABLE



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MOSES AKATUGBA

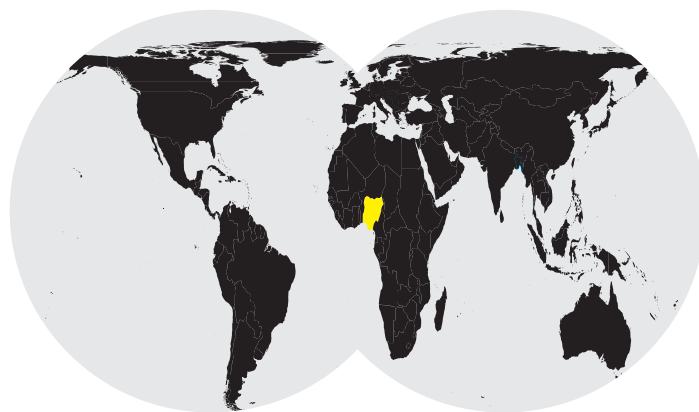
Nigeria

On 27 November 2005, 16-year-old Moses Akatugba was awaiting the results of his secondary school exams when his life changed forever. He was arrested by the Nigerian army and, he says, shot in the hand, beaten on the head and back, and then charged with stealing mobile phones. He was initially held at the local army barracks where, he says, soldiers showed him a corpse. He couldn't identify the dead man, so they beat him.

After being transferred to Epkan police station in Delta State, Moses was tortured again. He said that the police beat him severely with machetes and batons, tied him up and hung him for several hours in interrogation rooms, and used pliers to pull out his finger and toe nails to force him to sign two 'confessions'.

Moses was convicted solely on the basis of the alleged victim's statement and 'confessions' Moses made under duress. After eight years in prison, he was sentenced to death by hanging and remains on death row. His claims of torture have still not been investigated.

'The pain of torture is unbearable. I never thought I would be alive till this day. The pain I went through in the hands of the officers was unimaginable. In my whole life, I have never been subjected to such inhuman treatment,' Moses said in February 2014.



COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Amnesty International regularly receives reports that Nigerian police routinely torture suspects to extract information, and in many police stations suspects are denied access to a lawyer. In military detention, detainees are denied access to family members and lawyers, and in most cases the military refuses to give any information about whether someone is in their custody.

Nigeria's constitution prohibits torture, but no provisions are made for the investigation or prosecution of acts of torture. 'Confessions' extracted through torture are regularly used as evidence in court, contrary to both national and international law.

TAKE ACTION

Amnesty International is calling on the Governor of Delta State to:

- Commute Moses Akatugba's death sentence.
- Institute an independent investigation into his allegations of torture.

Please write to:

His Excellency Dr Emmanuel Uduaghan
Governor of Delta State
Office of the Governor
Government House
Asaba
Delta State
NIGERIA

SAMPLE LETTER

This is an example of what you could write. Please include the two bullet points below in your own letter.

Your Excellency,

On 27 November 2005, 16-year-old Moses Akatugba was arrested, shot in the hand, beaten by soldiers, and charged with stealing mobile phones.

At Epkan police station, he suffered further abuse: he says officers severely beat him with machetes and batons, tied and hung him for several hours in interrogation rooms, and used pliers to pull out his finger and toe nails to force him to sign two 'confessions'. Moses Akatugba was convicted solely on the basis of the alleged victim's statement and Moses's 'confessions' were obtained through torture.

After eight years in prison, Moses Akatugba was sentenced to death by hanging and is still on death row. His claims of torture have still not been investigated, even though Nigeria's constitution prohibits torture.

I call on you to:

- Commute Moses Akatugba's death sentence.
- Institute an independent investigation into his allegations of torture.

SOLIDARITY WITH MOSES

A solidarity message takes only a few minutes to write, but can make a big difference to Moses. Please let him know you are thinking of him and support his struggle for justice.

Address: Moses Akatugba
C/o Human Rights, Social Development and
Environmental Foundation
P.O. Box 1800
Diobu
Port Harcourt
Rivers State
NIGERIA

Preferred language: English

Suggested message:

I am thinking of you and support your fight for justice.

Can I send a religious card? Yes

Can I mention Amnesty? Yes

Can I include a return address? Yes

Amnesty International has campaigned against torture for over half a century. Thirty years ago we helped to secure an historic global ban.

But the governments that signed up to it have failed to live up to their promises. They still use torture to obtain 'confessions', to silence opposition – or simply to punish.

Everybody in the world has the right to live free from torture.

To find out more about this case:

www.amnesty.org.uk/stoptorture