



# Press Release

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For immediate use

## Obasanjo mustn't abuse democracy in Nigeria, and should step down

The aim of this seminar is to stimulate debate regarding democracy and human rights in Nigeria. With the advent of the 2007 presidential elections, such a debate will be very timely.

It is worth noting that 10 November will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Ken Saro-Wiwa the renowned Nigerian writer and environmental campaigner who was executed along with eight other Ogoni minority rights activists on murder charges, after a trial generally perceived to be seriously flawed. The execution provoked international outrage and Abacha's military regime became an international pariah.

Increasingly, many Nigerians are concerned that Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, may force through constitutional reform permitting him to serve a potential third term in office. While many believe such change would adversely affect the fledgling democracy, others believe that President Obasanjo has been a much needed stabilising force in Africa's largest and most diverse nation state. This is arguably demonstrated most recently, by the pivotal role Nigeria has played as Liberia's "big brother" in brokering a 2003 peace deal and granting asylum to Liberia's ex-President Charles Taylor. As well as this, President Obasanjo's leadership has been credited for actively supporting this year's presidential elections in Liberia.

**ENDS**

**Editor's Notes**