

# Nigeria

<b>Response to Information Request Number:</b>	NGA00001.SPM
<b>Date:</b>	October 27, 1999
<b>Subject:</b>	Nigeria: Information on the persecution of National Democratic Coalition members in Nigeria
<b>From:</b>	INS Resource Information Center, Washington, D.C.
<b>Keywords:</b>	Nigeria / Abacha / Freedom of Association / Freedom of political opinion / National Democratic Coalition / NADECO / Obasanjo / Political movements / Political opposition / Political parties / Political persecution / Political violence

## Query:

Since the death of General Abacha and the transition to civilian rule has there been evidence or information that members (both leadership and rank-and-file) of the National Democratic Coalition in Nigeria have been harmed or persecuted by political opponents?

## Response:

A search of FBIS, LEXIS/NEXIS, several national newspaper databases (*Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Lagos Guardian*), and extensive internet resources did not find any references to persecution of National Democratic Coalition members in (or out) of Nigeria following strongman Abacha's death. To the contrary, a wealth of information indicated generally positive human rights trends in Nigeria following General Abubakar's succession of Abacha and especially following his return of the country to civilian rule with this February's election of President Olusegun Obasanjo (*New York Times* 18 Oct. 1999).

The National Democratic Coalition, or NADECO, initially expressed reservations about whether General Abubakar genuinely intended to restore democracy in Nigeria (BBC 11 June 1998), but their complaints for the most part subsided this year. During the Abubakar interregnum NADECO sought constructive relations with the government. Its most recent substantive political disagreement with the government seems to be its rejection of the constitution promulgated immediately before Abubakar stepped down in May (FBIS 10 May 1999). Nothing to follow up on that has been heard from them since. This August they filed a claim with a Nigerian human rights commission for \$20 million in compensation for abuses suffered under the Abacha regime (AFP 22 Aug. 1999).

In September 1998 Nigerian police declared a senior NADECO leader a wanted man, but this was in connection with bank fraud. Air Commodore Dan Suleiman was believed to be living in the UK (FBIS 14 Sept. 1998).

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RIC within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

## References:

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