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## [Ogoni released in Nigeria: a light of hope](#)

The news of the release on September 9th. of the 20 Ogoni youths that had been held without charge since 1994, is a hope for reconciliation and peace in the abused and ravaged Niger Delta. The land, waters and the atmosphere of the Niger Delta have suffered, and continue to suffer much abuse and the presence of the occupation force officially known as the Rivers State Internal Security Task Force. Local people have been bearing the brunt of the adverse effects of oil exploration, exploitation and transportation, that have proved detrimental to the environment and to their livelihoods. The dictatorial government of Nigeria has been defending the interest of the oil giants --Shell, Chevron, Agip, Elf, Texaco, Mobil-- that continue to destroy peoples' livelihoods and the environment for their mere profit (see WRM Bulletin 10). Oil companies enjoy the right cover to disregard safety measures and responses from the people are readily put down with the help of the apparatus of state repression, including propaganda against indigenous people of the region, unfairly considered subversive and dangerous. The Ogoni have been repressed for the benefit of Shell, while the Ilaje people of Ondo State have suffered for that of Chevron.

Source: Environmental Rights Action/ FoE Nigeria