



Contact: Ateqah Khaki, Riptide Communications, 212-260-5000  
Marco Simons, EarthRights International, 917-696-3304

**FEDERAL JUDGE ADDS TORTURE AND CRUEL TREATMENT CLAIMS AGAINST CHEVRON TO  
UPCOMING TRIAL ON BEATING AND SHOOTING OF NIGERIAN PROTESTORS**

*Trial Will Include Claims Under International Human Rights Law Brought by Victims of 1998 Attack on  
Demonstrators at Chevron Offshore Platform in Nigeria*

San Francisco, June 2: In a ruling issued late last Friday, United States District Court Judge Susan Illston held that the beating and shooting of Nigerian protestors at a Chevron offshore platform may constitute torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment under international human rights law, expanding the upcoming trial in this case to include these claims.

Four Nigerian plaintiffs and their families are suing Chevron in federal court in San Francisco over a 1998 incident in which Nigerian military and police paid by Chevron and using Chevron helicopters shot and tortured villagers who protested Chevron's oil activities in the desperately poor Niger delta. Judge Illston had previously ruled that the plaintiffs could proceed to trial on claims under California and Nigerian law, including wrongful death and assault and battery. The new ruling confirms that there is evidence that these abuses also constitute violations of international law.

*"An important part of achieving justice for these victims is affirming that they suffered abuses under international human rights law,"* said plaintiffs' counsel **Marco Simons, Legal Director at EarthRights International**. *"One of the victims' major goals has always been to tell the truth about what they suffered, and the truth is that they were victims of torture and other human rights abuses."*

Finding evidence that Chevron's Nigerian subsidiary "authorized or ratified the alleged conduct at issue," the judge also affirmed that the oil giant was subject to punitive damages at trial. *"The jury will have the opportunity not only to give some measure of redress to these victims, but also to punish Chevron for its reprehensible conduct,"* said **Lauren Teukolsky, an attorney at Hadsell Stormer Keeny Richardson & Renick, LLP (HSKRR)**.

A jury trial in the case, *Bowoto v. Chevron Corp.*, No. 99-2506, is set for September 29, 2008. In addition to ERI and HSKRR, the plaintiffs are represented by the private law firms of **Traber & Voorhees** and **Siegel & Yee**; the **Center for Constitutional Rights**; and **Paul Hoffman, Cindy Cohn, Robert Newman, Anthony DiCaprio, Michael Sorgen, and Richard Wiebe**. More information about the case is available online at <http://www.earthrights.org/legal/chevron>.

-30-

**EarthRights International (ERI)** combines the power of law and the power of people in defense of human rights and the environment. We focus our work at the intersection of human rights and the environment, which we define as earth rights. We specialize in fact-finding, legal actions against perpetrators of earth rights abuses, training for grassroots and community leaders and advocacy campaigns. Through these strategies, ERI seeks to end earth rights abuses, provide real solutions for real people, and to promote and protect earth rights. For more information, please visit [www.earthrights.org](http://www.earthrights.org).