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His Excellency
President Muhammadu Buhari
President of Nigeria
Aso Rock Presidential Villa
Three Arms Zone
Federal Capital Territory
Abuja
NIGERIA

IN RESPECT OF SULAIMON OLUFEMI

Your Excellency,

I write to you in respect of Sulaimon Olufemi, a Nigerian national, who has been languishing in prison in Saudi Arabia since 2002. After a grossly unfair trial, Sulaimon Olufemi was convicted and sentenced to death in May 2005 over the death of a police officer.

Sulaimon Olufemi had travelled to Saudi Arabia in September 2002. On 28 September 2002, some days after he arrived in Saudi Arabia, he followed some Nigerians he was staying with to a car wash in the Bab Sharif area of Jeddah, where many African nationals worked as car cleaners. On the day, a group of local men with guns, among them a police officer, raided the location and a dispute broke out between the local men and the foreign nationals which resulted in the police officer getting injured, he later died. The following day, 29 September 2002, mass arrests were carried out of foreign nationals by the Saudi authorities. Sulaimon Olufemi and 12 Nigerian nationals were among those arrested in their accommodation. Many of the foreign nationals arrested over the incident were put on trial, sentenced to short prison terms and lashes, and then deported. However, Sulaimon Olufemi and the 12 other Nigerian nationals were put on trial together for the incident and the death of the police officer. Sulaimon said he was tortured during interrogation in order to force him to sign statements written in Arabic, a language that he could neither read nor understand. Under duress he was said to have put his fingerprints, which can be taken as a substitute for a signature, to a statement written in Arabic. He later learnt in court that he had "signed" a statement that said that he had hit the police officer over the head with a gun.

At his trial, Sulaimon had no legal representation, no consular assistance, no adequate translation facilities and the 'confession' in Arabic (a language he does not understand) which had been obtained under torture was used. While Sulaimon was sentenced to death, other members of the group received 15 years imprisonment with 1,000 lashes. One of the men died in prison while 11 others were released and deported to Nigeria in 2017 after completing their sentences. Sulaimon has always maintained his

innocence and his co-defendants have stated that he was not involved in the incident that led to the death of the police officer.

The Saudi authorities have been detaining Sulaimon in prison, for several years, to allow the youngest child of the deceased police officer to reach the age of 18, when the family can accept or reject the payment of *diya* (financial compensation) in place of the death penalty. In October 2021, following the intervention of the Nigerian Embassy in Saudi Arabia, the family of the deceased police officer requested from Sulaimon Olufemi the payment of two million riyals (US\$ 532,590) *diya* (financial compensation) in place of the death penalty. The family also indicated that the money must be paid within 18 months of their demand otherwise Sulaimon will be executed. Sulaimon Olufemi, having been in detention since 2002, cannot afford to pay two million riyals (US\$ 532,590) *diya* (financial compensation). His family in Nigeria is poor and cannot afford to pay the financial compensation.

I am urging your Excellency to have mercy, intervene in this case; and ensure Sulaimon is granted clemency in Saudi Arabia and returned to Nigeria.

Yours sincerely,

[Unterschrift]

[dein Vor- & Nachname]