

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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## **Nigeria: Lagos State government should stop harassment and intimidation of evicted residents of Badia East**

Amnesty International is calling on the Lagos State Government (LSG) to cease all acts of harassment and intimidation of the forcibly evicted residents of Badia East settlement in Lagos State, Nigeria.

On 23 February, the LSG carried out a forced eviction in Badia East, demolishing over 300 homes and structures which rendered hundreds of people homeless. The LSG failed to provide the evicted residents of Badia East with alternative housing and/or compensation; hundreds of people are still homeless and have nowhere to go to. Many are sleeping outside next to their demolished homes or in provisional shelters made from materials salvaged from the ruins of their homes.

On 25 March, police officers visited Badia East harassing the forcibly evicted residents who were living in the open or in provisional structures, telling them to move elsewhere. The harassment continued on 26 March when officials of the Monitoring and Enforcement Task Force chased people away from where they have been camping and destroyed their provisional shelters.

On 25 March, five residents of Badia East, who were among those forcibly evicted on 23 February, were arrested by the police. They were building a water tank for the storage of emergency water supply as the pipe supplying water to the residents had been cut off by one of the Lagos State Government bulldozers. The men were released on bail after the intervention of the Nigerian NGO Social and Economic Rights Action Centre (SERAC).

SERAC has been campaigning for justice for the forcibly evicted residents. A lawsuit was filed by SERAC on 28 February at the Lagos State High Court on behalf of the Badia East residents. The lawsuit is seeking an injunction to restrain the LSG from carrying out further demolitions or making use of the land that Badia East residents were evicted from.

Amnesty International urges the LSG to immediately ensure that the residents of Badia East who were forcibly evicted from their homes are not further harassed or intimidated by the State authorities. The organisation urges the LSG to conduct a prompt and independent investigation into the acts of police harassment and intimidation against residents of Badia East as well as the use of force by the police. The LSG, in line with Nigeria's international human rights obligations must provide adequate alternative housing and access to effective remedies to the people of Badia East whose homes have been destroyed. Amnesty International also urges the LSG to ensure that legal and procedural safeguards are in place before any further evictions are carried out.

### **Background**

Badia East is an informal settlement in Lagos State, Nigeria; and it is part of a larger Badia community which is one of the host communities slated for slum upgrading under the \$200 million World Bank-funded Lagos Metropolitan Development and Governance Project (LMDGP).

Following the demolition of homes in Badia East and a petition by SERAC, a representative of the World Bank visited the settlement. The World Bank representative, appalled by the dire living conditions of the forcibly evicted residents, requested that the LMDGP should supply emergency water to the residents. Following this visit, residents had started building a water tank to receive the emergency water. From the information provided to Amnesty International, residents in the community are yet to be supplied with the emergency water.

In July 2012 the LSG, in a manner similar to the demolition in Badia East, had demolished parts of Makoko, another informal settlement in Lagos, without adequate notice, genuine consultation, and compensation.