

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

NEW YORK
SENATOR

RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 476
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3204
202-224-4451

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3204

September 4, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing to express my concern with the detention by Nigerian authorities of New York filmmaker and journalist Andrew Berends. I urge the State Department to press Nigerian authorities to ensure that Mr. Berends receives proper treatment, to bring to an end his detention, and to secure his safe and prompt return to the United States.

As you know Andrew Berends was detained on Sunday, August 31 by the Nigerian military along with two other individuals. Mr. Berends entered Nigeria legally in April 2008 to work on a documentary film. Following his arrest, Mr. Berends was held in custody for 36 hours, was temporarily released, but has since been subjected to briefings and questioning by the State Security Services, which confiscated his passport and personal property. Though he has been temporarily released at times, he is still subjected to periods of detention. Mr. Berends' treatment by Nigerian authorities is unacceptable.

I appreciate the efforts by the State Department to track the whereabouts and monitor the treatment of Mr. Berends, as well as the Department's effort to keep Mr. Berends' family and loved ones informed of his status.

However, the situation is untenable and must be resolved as soon as possible. I urge you to press Nigerian authorities – specifically the State Security Services in Port Harcourt – to immediately bring to an end Mr. Berends' detention and to secure his safe and prompt return to the United States.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Hillary Rodham Clinton