



Petroleum & Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN)

...An affiliate of Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC)

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ARREST AND DETENTION OF 21 EXXONMOBIL PERSONNEL BY RIVERS STATE AUTHORITIES: WE DEMAND THEIR IMMEDIATE RELEASE AND A STOP TO HARASSMENT OF OUR MEMBERS NATIONA WIDE

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN), is highly embarrassed over the continuous harassment of our members in the Oil and Gas industry especially the most recent ones with our members in Tecon Oil Company and ExxonMobil on essential duty.

Yesterday, about 21 of our members from Exxon Mobil on essential duty coming into Port Harcourt for 'quarantine' before going offshore were arrested by men of the Nigeria security agencies, under the Rivers State Police Command on the pretext of enforcing the State Government directives on the Executive Orders assumedly proclaimed by the State on the wake of the CORONAVIRUS pandemic.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Federal and State Governments lists detailing the categories of persons exempted from the total lockdown directives include senior staff in oil and gas industry which PENGASSAN represents.

We are therefore miffed that operatives of Government Security Agencies who are vested with the responsibilities to enforce laws should turn around to intimidate and harass our members who are on legitimate and patriotic duties as essential workers. Only patriotic Nigerians with national interest at heart would venture out of their comfort zones during this period of global pandemic and national emergency.

Recall that before this latest incident, 10 of our members on board Caverton helicopter were meted with similar act of brutal force in the guise of sustaining the war against the COVID-19 pandemic.

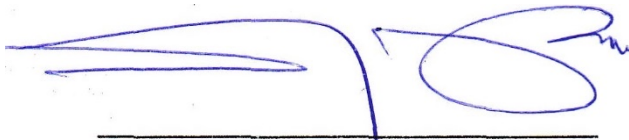
Our Association condemns this new form of intimidation and therefore demands an unconditional release of all the 21 staff of ExxonMobil still under detention with apologies.

We warn that should this high level of intimidation and harassment persists, PENGASSAN will, in consultation with our sister union in the sector, have no option than order our members out of the various oil platforms, rigs and other facilities without further notices.

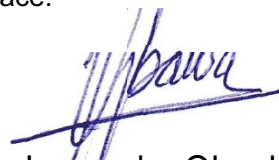
We implore the Federal Government and all interested stakeholders to, as a matter of economic and national urgency, prevail on the all security agencies in Rivers State and all other states to stop forthwith this unpleasant anti-workers posture that also amounts to hostage-taking.

The Association also demands the establishment of Covid -19 Testing Centre in Port Harcourt where all Oil and Gas workers going to rigs, offshore platforms etc., must be tested before sending them to such work locations as against quarantining them for 2 weeks before going to work with attendant psychological and cost implications on workers and organizations respectively.

Finally, we seek that every law and legislation should have a human face.



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