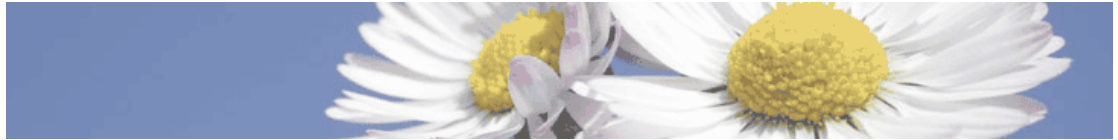


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**This Day (Lagos)**  
**7 February 2008**

Posted to the web 7 February 2008

Deji Elumoye And Uche Nnaike  
Lagos

Thousands of fishing trawlers workers under the aegis of the Fishing Trawlers Workers Association yesterday stormed the office of the Governor of Lagos state, Babatunde Fashola to protest the massive killing of their colleagues by sea pirates on the country's waterways.

They have therefore called on President Umaru Yar'Adua to wade into the matter and stop the killing. The placard carrying members of the association in Lagos, who appeared in black t-shirts with hearse and casket disrupted free flow of traffic for over one hour along the Governor's road said the country's territorial water was no longer safe.

The President of the association, Captain Shehu Kosoko who spoke on behalf of the protesters declared that sea pirates have infested the country's territorial waters like lotus, adding that the activities of the sea pirates' attack has stopped fishing operations. He explained that within the last two weeks, the industry has suffered almost 50 attacks on their vessels while 10 sailors have lost their lives in the last 10 days.

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In a Save our Soul (SOS) letter sent to the President, via Governor Babatunde Fashola and signed by Kosoko and the General Secretary, Captain Isaac Esiekpe, the Association maintained that the sea has become a haven for nefarious acts of brutality by sea pirates, with fishing trawlers crew falling prey everyday from Lagos to Rio in Cameroon border of Cross Rivers State. It maintained that their fishing trawlers operators could no longer carry out their legitimate business with ease in the face of indiscriminate shootings and killings.

According to the group, "These uncontrolled activities of sea pirates and hijackers had necessitated the captains of all fishing trawlers in the country to withdraw all trawlers from the country's territorial waters for the fear of their lives and other crews onboard." It declared that more than 57 ship captains, and sailors have been killed within the period of two years by the said criminals, appealing to the government to liaise with all relevant security agencies with a view to taking necessary actions to clear the sea of the menace. Receiving the letter on behalf of the Governor, the state Deputy Governor, Mrs. Sarah Sosan

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assured the protesters that their message would be given the attention it required, noting that the message would be treated with utmost dispatch to the presidency. Sosan further assured them that all hands would be on deck to save the situation, commiserating with the families of those who lost their lives among the group. "We can't allow this to continue.

We have a duty to protect you as good citizens and I can assure that when the Governor comes back, he would pass your message to Mr. President. "Your job is also a source of foreign exchange income to the nation, we can't afford to lose you people. I assure you that the president will act, like you know he is a listening president", she said.

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