

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



Ken Wiwa at Laurier to discuss growing up *In the Shadow of a Saint*
Wiwa speaks about father Ken Saro-Wiwa, internationally known writer, activist and martyr

For Immediate Release

**February 08, 2001
14-01**

Contact: Kathryn Wardropper -

**Book Buyer and Special Events Co-ordinator, Laurier Bookstore
(519) 884-0710, ext. 3109**

or Michael Strickland, Manager, Media Relations & Information (519) 884-0710, ext. 3070

WATERLOO - Growing up as the child of an extraordinary man or woman can be hard enough, but growing up in the shadow of an internationally renowned human rights activist is another matter. Ken Wiwa, son of Nigerian writer and hero Ken Saro-Wiwa, tells the story of his father and their relationship in his book *In the Shadow of a Saint*, which he will discuss on Friday at 2:30 p.m. in the Paul Martin Centre at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Saro-Wiwa - leader of the Ogoni people of Nigeria, Nobel Peace Prize nominee, poet, martyr - was executed in 1995 following a controversial trial related to a campaign against Nigeria's military dictatorship and Shell Oil's drilling in the Niger Delta. Human rights organizations and independent observers from around the world condemned the trial and execution of Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni defendants. Since that time, Wiwa has traveled extensively, lobbying world leaders and mobilizing public opinion, to ensure his father was recognized as a hero and a symbol of the struggle for environmental justice.

"We're honored that Ken Wiwa has chosen our campus as one of the few venues to discuss his book. He's a very engaging writer with a very important, high-profile story to tell," says event organizer Kathryn Wardropper. "There's already a great deal of excitement around campus about this event."

- more -

- Ken Wiwa Event / 2 -

Wiwa, who was educated in Britain, came to Canada with his wife and son in May 1999. He is a former journalist and editor at *The Guardian* and is now the senior resident writer at Massey College, University of Toronto, where a Nigerian-decorated chair honoring his father is housed. In addition to writing *In the Shadow of a Saint*, Wiwa produced a major documentary about his father for CBC-TV.

This event, which is being co-sponsored by the development and international studies program and the department of religion and culture, is just one of the presentations in the Laurier Bookstore's Meet the Author series. In the past 15 years, the Laurier Bookstore has brought to the community such world-renowned authors as Margaret Atwood, Timothy Findley, W.O. Mitchell and Jack Granatstein.