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Dutch couple abducted in Yemen pleads for help in video

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USPA News - A Dutch couple kidnapped in Yemen last month have made an emotional appeal in a video posted online on Monday, saying their captors have threatened to kill them within 10 days unless the Dutch government meets unspecified demands. Journalist Judith Spiegel and her husband, Boudewijn Berendsen, were abducted from their home in the Yemeni capital of Sana`a on June 15. The couple was taken by a group of unidentified gunmen from their house in a district which houses many diplomatic missions and is regarded as one of the most secure places in the country.

In a 1.5-minute video posted online on Monday, the couple pleads for help to prevent their execution. "In the beginning we spoke with the ambassador and we explained to him the conditions to get out of this, and until now nothing has happened, there has been no progress," Spiegel said. The journalist, sitting next to her husband, said their captors had previously offered the Dutch government 10 days to find a solution but they received no response. "Now there are again 10 days to do something. These people are armed. If there is no solution in 10 days, they will shoot us," Spiegel warned. Berendsen, who is employed in the insurance industry, called on people to urge the Dutch government to agree to the demands of their captors. "We are very, very afraid and there really has to be a solution and we call on everyone in the Netherlands to get the government and the embassy to agree with the demands," he said. The demands for the couple`s release have not been made public and no group has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping. "Family, media, Dutch people: do something," Spiegel said, becoming visibly emotional while her husband holds her hand. "We need to find a way because in this way we won`t be able to get out of this. Then we`ll be here forever if we aren`t dead in 10 days. Do something everyone. Do something." The Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry said it had been the video, but provided few other details. "The case has our full attention. We are in contact with the families, and in the interest of Mrs Spiegel and Mr Berendsen we don`t make any additional announcements [other] than asking the media to exercise restraint," ministry spokesman Aad Meijer said.

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