

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENCY

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His Excellency,
Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua
President and Commander in Chief of Armed Forces
Federal Republic of Nigeria,
The Presidential Villa.
Abuja.

Your Excellency Sir,

SITUATION REPORT ON THE NIGER DELTA CRISIS AND THE RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

The International Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Society (INHRAS) which Mandates Aims, Policy, Determinations and Mode of Operations are promoting Development, Democracy, Security and to fight corruption and abuse of Human Rights Nationally & Internationally. Also to promote transparency and accountability in the Public and Private Sectors as well as to ensure respect for Socio-Economic Rights of all citizens in line with the United Nations Charter on Universal Declaration on Human Rights, European and African Charter on Peoples and Human Rights and other International Organizations Activities on Human Rights, Security Peace, Justice, Democracy, Anti-Corruption and Development.

As a Legal, Autonomous and Intermediary Entity Standing between the Private Sphere and the State and make demands on the State and holds Public Officials accountable during or after tenure of office. International Human Rights & Anti-Corruption Society is defending and promoting the activities, missions and goals of the United Nations, European Union, African Commission, United Nations Agencies/Commission and all other International Organization activities on Human Rights, Anti-Corruption, Democracy, Security and development at Global Affairs.

The Organization makes a Periodic Appraisal of Governments/ Organizations Performance, that of Individual and Corporate Bodies in terms of Social and Economic Responsibilities and Individual leadership Ingenuity as they affect the Society and Humanity in particular.

Our Society wishes to use this medium to bring to your Notice the brief to research and some Situation Reports on the Niger Delta Crisis and the Possible Solutions to these problems in order to show our Solidarity and Democratic Role to the Government as part of our contributions to the General Development of the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria and Africa.

(A) General Survey of the Problems in the Niger Delta Region:

- 1) Youth Restiveness
- 2) Under Development of the Area
- 3) Unemployment
- 4) Insecurity
- 5) Lack of Sincerity of leaderships- the shake-holders
- 6) Poor leadership:
 - (a) At the State and Local government levels; and in the Public and Private Sectors;
 - (b) Random award of Contracts without following the Due Process, due to undue political manipulations and influence couple with Economic powers.
- 7) Lack of commitment by the Legislators who represents the Niger Delta Region to promote a people-oriented bill which could embolden the indigenes to expose corruption.
- 8) Failure by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Government to scrutinize the Master Plan effectively, before implementation in the last fifteen (15) years.
- 9) Non provision of Social Amenities/Services to the indigenes of the Niger Delta Region.
- 10) Award of Non-Existent (ghosts) contracts to defraud the Niger Delta Government.

- 11) Abandonment of Projects after contracts had been awarded by the NDDC Management.
- 12) Losses incurred by the Niger Delta Region to the tune of billions of Naira due to gas flaring.
- 13) Oil pipe line vandalization
- 14) Unabating Militancy and indolent activities
- 15) Sea pirate/terrorist attacks
- 16) Hostage taking/ kidnapping

From the above, HIRAS have carefully researched and analyzed the problems critically; here proffer solutions to enable assists the government responds to the yearning and aspiration of the people in the Niger Delta Region. Because the people in these areas have suffered severe hardship, deprivation, degradation, poverty. Unemployment, to mention but few. These are the causes of the present crisis in the Area.

The importance thing to note here, Sir, is that International Human Rights & Anti-Corruption Society wishes to ensure that the adequate attention/proper focus is shifted to the Niger Delta Area by the Federal Government. If Government can develop these Communities involved, it would be good for all Nigerians, as the neglect of the Niger delta has both National and International implications.

Again, in solving the Niger Delta problems, we are aware that this will not require only the Government alone, International Human Rights & Anti-Corruption Society acknowledges that all hands are to be on deck as the Public, Private Enterprises/Sectors e.g. the Oil Companies, NDDC and the NGOs – must be actively involved in the Development of the Area.

The International Human Rights & Anti-Corruption Society as Veteran Institution suggested the following ways to tackle the menace or problems of the Niger Delta Region.

(B) **SOLUTIONS**

1. **Youth Restiveness:**

The solutions to youths restiveness, first and foremost – is Dialogue, Conflict Resolution and Mediation of Youths have to be cautioned and educated against violence by the Government. Encouraging dialogue between the youths and the Government of the Niger Delta Areas where the Youths can table their problems before the Government and have them resolved speedily.

The youths must be discouraged from stopping Developmental Projects in their Communities, and to refrain from harassing Oil Workers, Foreign Nationals and resorting to violence as the last resort. In the Oil and Gas Industry, skills are required, and where the youths in these Regions are not skilled, the Oil and Gas Companies together with the NDDC, must empower and train these youths to acquire the relevant skills that can be useful to them, not only in the Oil and Gas Sector, but throughout their life time.

2. **Underdevelopment:**

The cause of the Niger Delta crisis is largely due to under development, lack of infrastructures, total dislocation and displacement of the life of the people caused by oil exploration and exploitation, lack of Social Amenities and Services, etc. As a result of these, a lot of activities had been displayed, the people were engaged in to earn a living e.g. fishing and farming etc. are no longer there.

The Government needs to find ways to engage the people so they can earn a living and be assured that the oil that is produced in their areas are not a curse but a blessing. The people need to be empowered to be able to develop themselves so that they can in turn develop their communities and the entire region. If the infrastructures are developed and the people are not trained and empowered, they will not be actively engaged to be able to maintain themselves and these infrastructural facilities in their communities.

Also Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) had claimed to be well funded by the Federal Government but lately, it has been seen and discovered that NDDC has been Awarding Contracts which were

executed in some of the Niger Delta Areas and, most of such contracts do not pass through Due Process. NDDC would award contracts and money paid to the contractors, but at the end the projects were abandoned by the contractors also the NDDC always Award infeasible contract – (Non Existing Projects.)

3. **Unemployment:**

It has been observed that there is reluctance on the part of the Oil Companies to have early addressed the problems of the youth unemployment in the Niger Delta Area. Most of the Oil Company's Staff operating with them as Liaison Officers are not from the Niger Delta; as such they are often ill-equipped to advice the Oil/Gas Companies on how to build relationship with the People or Host Communities.

Since most of the people of these areas who were mostly farmers, fishermen and traders were displaced in their various professions or callings, due to oil exploration and exploitation; and since Oil/Gas were discovered in their Communities, the Governments, NDDC, the Oil and Gas Sectors need to find new ways to engage them in order to empower them to become useful citizens. Thus, there is need for NDDC, Governments, the Anti-Corruption NGOS, etc. to train, mobilize and empower the people of the Niger Delta Region by creating employment opportunities for the youths and the young school leavers.

4. **Insecurity:**

The Niger Delta Region has serious problems which need to be speedily addressed. The security of lives and property had been threatened due to the activities of the militants. The President has voted huge sums of money for security which includes the security in the Niger Delta Region but has been taken over by corruption. Efforts should also be made by the legislators to pass a Bill discouraging the activities of the militant groups in the Niger Delta Region through Amnesty.

5. **Lack of Sincerity In Leaderships:**

Most of the leaders of the Niger Delta Region had failed to impart Good Governance to their people due to lack of sincerity and transparency. There has been no Good Governance due to lack of Due Processes and completion in the award of contracts by the NDDC and the Governments of the Niger Delta. Lack of Accountability, Transparency in the Leaderships of the Leaders and Equity in the NDDC and the Governments and non participation in Governance by the peoples who are subjected to untold hardship and poverty.

When there is sincerity, transparency, equity and accountability in the Governments of the Niger Delta Region, the Dividend of Democracy will be witnessed there. Also, effective monitoring teams comprising of the Anti-corruption and Human Rights Groups. EFCC, ICPC etc. should be given a free hand to monitor activities of the Government at the Niger Delta Region with the mandate to check, slam and prosecute all suspected offenders in both Public and Private Sectors.

6. **Lack of Commitment by the Legislators:**

There is lack of commitment by the legislators representing the Niger Delta peoples in both the States and National Assemblies. This is shown by their failures to promote peoples oriented Bills which will go a long way to addressing the yearnings of the people and bring solutions to their problems.

There must be determinations by the present Administration to address some monumental flaws arising from the last Administration. There must be passed bill providing protection for any person who sticks out his/her to expose corruption in his/her work places. Since most of often people who does such things are victimized, legislators must push forward Bills that will continually protect such persons from being victimized and, if this is done, Nigerians in the Niger Delta Area and in other parts of the Country, will be emboldened to oppose corruption, insecurity and violation of Human Rights.

7. **Improper Appointments of NDDC Board of Directors:**

Failure by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Government to scrutinize the Master Plan effectively before implementation in the last Fifteen (15) years. This was due to the caliber of appointees to the Board of the Commission. They were not there to further the interest of the Government and the people, but their personal and selfish interests.

8. **Non Provision of Social Amenities/Services to the Indigenes:**

The money meant for the provision of Social Amenities and infrastructures for the Host communities were grossly abused by the NDDC operators. So many Host Communities were awarded non-Existing contracts.

9. **Award of Non-Existing (ghosts) Contracts to Defraud the Niger Delta Region:**

Because there was no checks and balances in the activities of the NDDC management, contracts were awarded by proxy and without due process. Some of the said contracts were not visible but were only on papers to deceive the Government and the Public.

10. **Abandonment of Projects After Contracts Had Been Awarded By The NDDC:**

Most of the contracts were abandoned by the contractors after collecting payments. The NDDC management would not see the reason why that contract or project could be completed for the benefits of the Niger Delta Region and the Federal Government.

11. **Gas flaring:**

Facts have emerged that over N1 billion has been lost to our Country, Nigeria daily, due to gas flaring, especially in the Niger Delta Area. As we also bemoan such huge losses to gas flaring, we deem it unacceptable to continue to lose such colossal amounts of money while the needs the gas cannot meet its obligation to the people.

The Factors against Gas flaring are:

- (i) Selfish Economic Interest on the part of the Oil and Gas Operators.
- (ii) Under development of domestic market for gas and gas products;

- (iii) Inappropriate gas and gas product pricing.
- (iv) Inadequate gas transmission and gas distribution infrastructures.
- (v) Lack of legislation by Government to implement flare down in the Niger Delta Area.

These drastic measures must be taking sincerely to put gas flaring to a stop such as:

- (a) Speedy adoption of the New Gas Master Plan that is being worked out;
- (b) Shutting down of Gas wells that does not stop gas flaring;
- (c) Differing the revenue from those wells for future use for the good of the Niger Delta Area and Nigeria as a whole.

12. **Oil Pipeline Vandalization:**

Due to the incessant activities of oil pipe line vandals, most Nigerians in the Niger Delta Region have suffered loss of lives and properties through explosion. The reason is that vandalized products are mixed with kerosene for quick profits by the vandals. Thus, the Governments must partner with Independent Anti-Corruption Organizations with status to combat the menace. Un-abating Militancy and violent Activities, Sea Privacy Terrorists Attack and Hostage Taking/Kidnapping Undermined Government's genuine strives to address the myriad of problems facing the Nation.

(C) **CONCLUSION**

From the above surveys, Fact findings and solutions, if the Federal Government will act positively with adequate external and independent monitoring, the problems shall be resolved and the goals shall be achieved for the purpose of peace, security, unity and Development of the Niger Delta Region and Nigeria in general.

(D) **RECOMMENDED SOLUTION**

- 1) To chart a new cause for the youths and the Nation that will usher in Peace, Political stability and Socio-Economic growth, Government must partner with the Anti-corruption NGOs, the

media, to reach out to the militants with a passionate plea on them to drop their arms and embrace dialogue.

- 2) The youths should be taught to pursue the agitation for a better Society through intellectual and Economic Approach rather than militancy, while emphasizing that militancy has done more than good both to the Nation and to the people of the Niger Delta in particular.
- 3) The Federal Government of Nigeria has a matter of urgency and humility should grant amnesty proclamation to the militants and their sponsors rehabilitate the militants to become useful ingredient to the society, this will promote lasting peace and security in the Niger Delta Region thereby brings development in Nigeria.
- 4) The Federal Government of Nigeria should adopt effective and efficient project monitoring, evaluation and reporting through independent International Human Rights & Anti-Corruption Society to prevent corruption and Socio-Economic Rights of the citizens

The above recommendations are for the purposes of attaining the lasting solution to the crisis in the Niger Delta Region.

Thanks and God bless you

Truly Yours,

Engr. Haruna Mohammed

Secretary General

High Chief) U. O. Udofia- Ph.D

Director General

RESEARCH ON NIGER DELTA CRISIS IN NIGERIA – WEST AFRICA

The Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria has in recent times been plagued with tensions including armed robbery attack, kidnapping, hire assassination and other violent crime on Nigerians and Oil/Gas Construction Workers in the Niger Delta Region. This has in turn had a negative reflection on the Country's Daily Revenue. To ensure that Nigeria as a Country continues to maintain its position as one of the world's largest Oil Producers, its Wealth and Position in Africa, the Niger-Delta Crisis must be addressed as an urgent National issue.

THE RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND FACT FINDINGS

The Organization has research on the Factors and Measures taken by the Federal Government of Nigeria into consideration which includes the Non-implementation by the Federal Government of Nigeria on the various Reports, Recommendations and Communiqués of Previous and Various Commission of Enquiries set up by Federal Government on the problems and crisis of Niger Delta Region of Nigeria in West Africa before arriving at the possible solutions, recommendations and submission of SITUATION REPORT ON THE NIGER DELTA CRISIS AND THE RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PEACE, JUSTICE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGER DELTA REGION to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and the Nigeria Vice President, His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Johnathan for action.

The Research Analysis has shown that:

1. The problems with the Niger-Delta region is not the Militants, neither is of the people. In the Pre-Democratic Era, these same People were one of the most peaceful sections in the Country. The current chaos is simply a reaction to years of being deprived of their Fundamental Rights.
2. Series of Military and Democratic Governments have come and gone, leaving empty promises for Niger-Deltans and taking away their Natural God-given wealth without compensation couple with Corruption and irresponsibility displayed by the past Governments have

made the people of the Niger-Delta Region to lose faith in subsequent Governments.

3. Oil and Gas was first exploited from the Niger Delta Region in 1956 at Oloibiri in Rivers State, and 52 years later, there is almost nothing to show for in terms of Youths employment and Development of the Region.
4. The present violence in the Region is then understandable, as a group of people who goes through the same depravity would react the same way, if not worse.

FACT- FINDINGS

1. The Niger-Deltans are grieved over the many years of being cheated by series of irresponsible/corrupt Governments.
2. Niger-Deltans have lost faith in Governments because of poor leaderships.
3. The Niger-Delta Area, being the Financial Base of the Country, ought to be the most beautiful place in the Country, but the reverse is the case.
4. After 52 years of active Oil and Gas production from the Region, the Region should be able to compete favourably with other Oil producing Cities around the World in terms of Social, economic standards and development standard of living infrastructures, job opportunities, education, health care facilities, security, etc. The reverse however is the case.
5. The Niger-Delta Problem are National Problems.
6. Niger Deltan youth have not always been violent.
7. The violence is not intended as an act of rebellion, it is rather a natural response to years of depravity.
8. Nigeria will move forward if the Niger Delta moves forward.

It is the International Human Rights & Anti-corruption Society opinion that deliberations on what the problem of the Niger Delta is, has been carried out extensively several solutions and maps have been prepared. Past Governments have however unfortunately shown so much non-challenge in implementing the plans.

As odd as it may sound, the problem of the Niger-Delta is not complex, and the solutions are not far-fetched and inheres will prevent the Public Report and Solutions to the Federal Government.

REALIZATION:

From the research analysis and fact findings, the Government should realise that:

1. Postponing intensive Development Actions in the Niger-Delta region is only giving the Militants more and more times to build a larger Army, as poor and jobless youths are easily attracted by large sums of ransomed moneys to join Militant groups.
2. As things are, Nigeria would be stranded if the Niger Delta is stranded.
3. The time to act is now.
4. The problem of the Niger-Delta is solvable.
5. The present day Corruption that some Leaders enjoy would eventually threat the possibility of a bright future for our children tomorrow.
6. Government must become responsible.