

Niger Delta People's Salvation Front



Political Wing of the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force
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The Managing Director
Exxon Mobil Nigeria
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Sir,

**THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF COMPENSATING VICTIMS
OF THE JANUARY 1998 IDOHO 24" PIPELINE IN THE NIGER
DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA – PROTEST AGAINST UNFAIR
INTIMIDATION, OPPRESSION AND DEPRIVATION OF
LEGITIMATE DUES THROUGH JUDICIAL MANIPULATIONS**

Again, we are compelled to bring to your notice for urgent solution, the now repetitive and often times ignored plight of the downtrodden Niger Delta people of the contraption called Nigeria.

This time, the targets are several communities of Ogoni in Rivers State and Ikot Abasi in Akwa Ibom State.

It is now common knowledge that a most destructive crude oil spillage occurred from the facilities of Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited at Idoho Offshore 24" oil pipeline about 12th January 1998. The spread of this disaster was legendary and its catastrophic effect was colossal. The thousands of Niger Deltans occupying and doing business along the banks and shorelines of the seas, rivers, canals,

tributaries, channels and waterways suffered damages caused by the dangerous chemical and gas constituents of the crude oil emitted uncontrollably into the environment.

For the avoidance of doubt, the fishing communities affected and whose cases were taken up in the proceedings forming the basis of this particular protest were:

Bomu, Lewe, Gbe, Topsoi, Bon Zarakpeye, Bon Lebala, Seato, Bon Ogboru, Bon Pero bari, Bon Kolgbara, Kobo, Zerima, Manku, Dokawa, Aategio, Bon Tabanyie, Kolgo, Makiri, Gborogoi, Bon Gbarako, Bon Kolbel, Bon Lokporobo, Bon Naniba, Bon Korgbara, Bon Sunday, Mogho, Goi, Kol Nor, Dor Penu, Gio, Kporgor, Wakama, Baraale, Sime, Norkpo, Ekporo, Gbo Dor, Igbanigbo, Numaakaa Village, Kaa Village, Luuyor-Gwara, Laala Village, Wiigamaa, Nordem village, Sii village, Kerekekwire, Boue-be-I-Or creek, Norkwiri Boue-Bukori Dukwiri Creek, Naman village, Nwkiekpo, Kpo-Ue Yargu, Ken-Nwikiru, Kpo-Ue Kono, Kpeen, Asa-kpege, Bo-Popbon, The Royal Fish Farm Association, Lekagah & Lekagah, Luuwa, Lemane-bangha, Kere-bangata, Kabanaha, Opuoko, Bainu, Nyowii, Yae, Kpae, Seme, Luekue, Koi Toi, Bon Lebie and Bon Legbor, Kabari, Gbo Lebo Kposidu, Gbaloo, Kpor, Kiisi and Lewuga fishing communities of Ogoni and Akpanowo, Ayang, Imoenang of Ikot Obong Ikpa-Ibekwe of Ikot Abasi.

The numerous bodies of persons affected waited patiently to be compensated for their losses from January 1998 but the company

Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited exhibited gross insensitivity and refused to pay until a suit was commenced Suit Nos. FHC/CA/CS/30/98 and FHC/CA/CS/31/98 against it and its parent company in the USA. They were successful, but the two companies appealed to the Court of Appeal in Suit No. CA/139/2000 where the judgement of the lower court was affirmed.

Not satisfied with the agony that the two defendants have passed these communities and people through, the defendants further appealed to the Supreme Court which now delivered the death knell, quashing the two previous judgments and sending the case back for retrial by the trial court. Meanwhile, several of the claimants have died and those that are alive are wallowing in abject poverty.

The human beings are being taunted and deprived by a legal process that is most oppressive and inhuman. In fact, the Supreme Court of Nigeria is known for its anti-Niger Delta stance. It showed its insensitivity in the resource control case the Federal Government instituted against the states of the Federation before it. It has interpreted statutes to give exclusive jurisdiction in oil spill cases to Federal High Courts over and above state High Courts all in order to frustrate the poverty stricken Niger Deltans from benefiting even when oil spills damage their properties, environment and life savings. How is it expected that the defendant companies shall be comfortable to continue in business in the communities where their hostile policies are sending human beings to their early graves.

Is it conceivable that the victims of crude oil spillage that occurred since January 1998 should wait another 7 years or more i.e. a range of 15-20 years before being compensated?

Is there any system of law in the world where such injustice can be allowed to flourish except in the Niger Delta? Should a responsible corporate citizen not explore other means of bringing succor to the victims instead of following the example of Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited? Should there be another round of protests to deter this inhuman treatment before help will come?

Our resolve to seek peaceful means should not be mistaken for a weakness. We know what to do if Exxon Mobil and the government of the Nigerian State refuse to be just and honorable. God is our witness.

Yours faithfully

Alhaji Mujahid Abubakr Dokubo-Asari
Chairman