

IYC accuses Britain of fueling N-Delta crisis

Written by Miebi Senge
Wednesday, 16 July 2008

THE Ijaw Youth Council, (IYC) yesterday accused the international community, especially the British government of culpability in the on-going crisis in the Niger Delta to undermine any meaningful development from taking place in the region.

President of IYC, Dr. Chris Ekiyor who addressed a press conference in Lagos following the council's recent extraordinary meeting held in Patani, Delta State, stated that the "British Prime Minister's recent inhumane insensitivity to the plight of the Niger Delta by his pronouncement to assist the Federal Government with military support is a confirmation of how Britain underdeveloped all its colonies in Africa, rather than mediate and review its colonial errors".

While calling on the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, to "resign from the exalted position of trust as Prime Minister of Great Britain", Ekiyor stated that the Premier holds a neo-colonisation policy on the Niger Delta and has "fallen prey to predators in the dirty waters of Nigerian politics".

Reading from a 14-point communiqué issued at the end of the Patani meeting, Dr. Ekiyor admitted that the Niger Delta governors have failed in delivering democracy dividends in their states, but added that "the Federal Government is most guilty of inactivity.

If the Federal Government decides to do the right thing with the enormous funds at its disposal, the state governors would have no excuse but toe the light of good governance."

The Ijaw youth leader admitted that the "struggle for emancipation by the well meaning people of Niger Delta has now been infiltrated by criminal elements".

According to the Patani communiqué, the IYC resolved to take the struggle to a new non-violence phase.

"That in as much as we do not subscribe to any form of violence, which is why we are currently embarking on non-violence as the next move for agitating for our God given right, we shall not be intimidated by the so-called increased Joint Task Force (JTF)."

The group also called on the "Federal Government to change its psyche about the Niger Delta and approach the issue in a more diplomatic manner that can win the confidence of the people, and by so doing pronounce developmental emergency for the region and appropriate fund for its implementation without further delay.

Replace the gunboats and warships with bulldozers and cranes that will massively create employment and transform the region."

And as a way forward towards ensuring lasting peace in the region, Dr. Ekiyor said the Ijaw youths as a "matter of urgency, close ranks with all ethnic nationalities of the Niger Delta to force our governors to be accountable even in little - 'for he who is diligent in little shall likewise be trusted with great things'.

We therefore, demand unequivocally, that the various state governments of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Ondo and Rivers begin forthwith, an all inclusive agenda that will usher development rather than spend our resources in frivolities that will bring more under-development.

We charge you to with immediate effect commence developmental initiatives with resources at your various disposals that will transform that state such that our demand for more resources will be justified."