

Letter to press
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Grilled in Congress, plunged to £3 per share and forced to pledge billions of dollars in compensation, BP is paying the price for the damage it has caused in the Gulf of Mexico – and rightly so.

Yet in Nigeria, oil companies such as Shell, Chevron and ExxonMobil have been largely responsible for decades of oil spills that destroy livelihoods and violate the human rights of local communities. Unlike victims in the US, villagers in Nigeria have nowhere to turn for adequate remedies.

A global coalition of human, environmental and children's rights groups, prominent individuals and experts is calling on oil companies in Nigeria, including Shell, Chevron and ExxonMobil, to begin repaying their ecological debt by investing in an independent compensation body responsible for dealing holistically with the impact of oil spills.

President Goodluck Jonathan must lead this process and toughen Nigeria's regulatory framework to protect the environment and people of the Niger Delta, rather than allowing companies to pollute with impunity.

Until then, home governments and courts in London, The Hague and Washington should impose penalties on companies operating double standards abroad and establish mechanisms to provide redress for the victims.

Signed:

1. Center for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD), Nigeria
2. Stepping Stones Nigeria
3. Stakeholder Democracy Network, UK/Nigeria
4. Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation, Netherlands
5. Professor Scott Pegg, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis, US
6. PLATFORM / remember saro-wiwa, UK
7. Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR), UK
8. Justice in Nigeria Now (JINN), USA
9. Stepping Stones Nigeria Child Empowerment Foundation (SSNCEF), Nigeria
10. Bayelsa Union of Great Britain and Ireland
11. Nigeria Liberty Forum, UK
12. Ijaw People's Association of Great Britain and Ireland (IPA)
13. Centre for Defence of Human Rights and Vocational Training in Africa (CDHRVTA), Nigeria
14. Sokari Ekine – blacklooks.org, USA/UK
15. Social Action, Nigeria
16. EarthRights International, USA
17. Centre for Social & Corporate Responsibility (CSCR), Nigeria
18. Gender And Development Action, Nigeria
19. Bayelsa Non-Governmental Organisations Forum, Nigeria
20. Socio-Economic Rights & Accountability Project (SERAP), Nigeria
21. Guy Hibbert, Screenwriter, UK
22. Professor Rick Steiner, USA
23. Communities for a Better Environment, USA
24. Michael Watts, University of Berkeley California, USA
25. Patrick Bond, senior professor, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa
26. Centre for Civil Society Environmental Justice project, South Africa
27. Niger Delta Professionals For Development, Nigeria
28. Gordon Roddick, UK

29. Niger Delta Development Initiative, UK/Nigeria
30. Women of Africa, UK
31. Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders (CACOL), Nigeria
32. International Institute for Environment and Development, (IIED), UK
33. IKV Pax Christi, Netherlands
34. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Nigeria
35. Caroline Lucas, MP for Brighton Pavilion, UK
36. Kebetkache Women Development & Resource Centre, Nigeria
37. Priority Africa Network, USA
38. Alona Clifton, Community Advocate, USA
39. Global Fund for Women, USA
40. Frances M Beal, activist, USA
41. Jeremy A. Pearce, Financial Advisor, Socially Responsible Investments, USA
42. Pro-Natura International (Nigeria)
43. Scottish Education and Action for Development, (SEAD), Scotland