

Socio- Economic empowerment for ethnic minorities in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

I am the current president of the Niger Delta Peoples movement & New Cannan Environmental Development Organization (NCEDO), a body committed to nurturing the environmental and social fabric of the Niger Delta in Nigeria. A region abundant in natural resources, paradoxically epitomizes a stark reality where wealth and poverty coexist. This region, predominantly inhabited by ethnic minorities, has long suffered environmental degradation due to extensive oil exploration and exploitation. This has not only led to a devastating ecological footprint but also to a severe infringement of human rights.

The minorities groups in the communities face a myriad of several challenges including lack of meaningful participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives directly. Yet, within these challenges lie opportunities for growth, partnership, and transformative change. NCEDO has been actively involved in creating platforms for dialogue and action.

Looking forward, our vision for human rights in the Niger Delta region and indeed globally, hinges on three pillars: recognition, representation, and revitalization. Recognition of the unique challenges faced by minorities, representation in policymaking and development agendas, and revitalization of communities through equitable and sustainable practices.

We are here, at this esteemed gathering, to call for a global partnership that recognizes the interconnectedness of environmental rights and human rights, and one that actively supports the inclusion and socio-economic empowerment of minority communities in the global narrative.

In conclusion, I envision a future where the voices of ethnic minorities groups are not just heard but heeded; where their rights are not merely acknowledged but actively protected; and where their dreams of a prosperous and sustainable future are not aspirations but realities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our journey and our vision. Together, let's forge a future that values every individual, every community, and every ecosystem. Thank you.