



# **MOVEMENT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE Ogoni PEOPLE (MOSOP)**



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**February 27, 2007**

## **Press Release**

### **RE: THE FATHER KUKAH COOKED OGONI MoU**

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) has reacted to media reports credited to Reverend Father Matthew Hassan Kukah in which he was said to have given the impression that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would soon be signed between the Federal Government, Rivers State Government, Shell, UNEP and Ogoni to enhance a so-called clean up of the Ogoni environment and facilitate Shell's return to the area to commence oil production describing it as gravely insensitive, unfortunate and a huge joke.

MOSOP would ordinarily not have bothered to respond to any self delusion that any person would feel comfortable to indulge in but for the seriousness of the issue involved, the huge sacrifices which the Ogoni people have paid in the struggle for justice and the possibility that some people may be genuinely deceived by the impression of resolution of the Ogoni-Shell problem. For the avoidance of any doubt MOSOP has continued to insist that whilst not opposed to any genuine process of resolving the Ogoni question such resolution must be transparent, honest, credible and effectively participatory. As the Fr Kukah initiative was unveiled as lacking even the rudiments of transparency and credibility, MOSOP has long declared it dead and we insist that nothing further has occurred to make us change our position.

In MOSOP's view, the present approach smacks of desperation and betrays some sinister motive of giving the impression of success where nothing concrete has been attempted. If the idea was an attempt to deceiving unsuspecting Ogoni people and the general public that the Ogoni issue is about to be resolved, MOSOP insists that there has not been even one single attempt of a meeting between the contending parties. If it is a case of self congratulation for a failed attempt to achieve a predetermined outcome of forcing Shell on the Ogoni people without resolution of outstanding critical issues, then it is a dangerous past time.

MOSOP wishes to make it very clear that as far as the Ogoni people are concerned, there has been no sincere and open discussion between Government, Shell and the Ogoni people on the Ogoni question not to talk of any agreement on the issues of environmental clean up and Shell's return to Ogoniland. Facts abound that the Ogoni people in September 2006 reaffirmed its position that she will have nothing to do with Shell and called on the Federal Government of Nigeria to consider allocating the Ogoni oil concession to a new operator if it wishes to extract our oil. We therefore do not see how Ogoni can enter into such MoU

with Shell and her friends when no credible discussion has taken place, and our people are resolute on not having anything to do with the enemy (Shell). The assertion of Reverend Matthew Hassan Kukah is therefore not well intended.

We find it extremely difficult to rationalize a situation where people are talking about MoU to enhance clean up of Ogoni when Shell that would be a party to the planned, so-called understanding is already carrying out a controversial clean up exercise in the area. If actually the government, Father Kukah and UNEP mean well, why have they failed to check the excesses of Shell in Ogoni particularly as it relates to the controversial clean up exercise aforesaid? In the absence of clear condemnation of Shell's current unilateral 'clean up' which is basically cover-up, MOSOP would view the development as a secret arrangement approved by government and which UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) would only come to endorse.

Whilst MOSOP would be meeting with UNEP to express our concerns about the use of their image to launder a flawed process, we must warn Ogonis and others who would want to collaborate with the dubious process that they would be held squarely responsible for any crisis occasioned by the current attempts that lack credibility and transparency. This stems from the fact that since the intensification of the non-transparent phase of the Kukah process in the Ogoni matter coupled with the dubious activities of Shell, conflicts in local communities especially arising from award of remediation contracts to incompetent persons, which appear to have been used as bait to organize support for the company's interests in the area, have been on the rise and this has heightened our doubts as to the real intentions of the initiators.

MOSOP insists that, in the prevailing circumstances, the Ogoni people cannot be part of the current process driven by Father Kukah. As we are committed to dialogue, it is our position that government should consider how it could re-engineer a more transparent dialogue process, which will have nothing to do with the current process in which we have lost confidence.

Signed:

**Bari-ara Kpalap**  
***Information Officer***