***Statement by Mr. Legborsi Saro Pyagbara, President, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) on the occasion of the International Human Rights Day 10 December 2013***

Sixty-five years ago, a historic event took place when world leaders under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as the “common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations” towards which individuals and societies should "strive by progressive measures to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance". The declaration affirmed our sense of common humanity and human dignity.

The reality is that the Ogoni people epitomises the very situation that drove the founding fathers of the United Nations and the drafters of the declaration to put the document in place some sixty years ago. Today, Ogoni is experiencing all forms of violations of their human rights that the declaration sought to address by a Nigeria state that has failed to live up to its obligations under the declaration. Today, the human dignity that the declaration sought to give to humanity is eluding the Ogoni people. Today, the political will to achieve the ideals and principles of the declaration are lacking in Nigeria and the Ogoni people unfortunately, had seen many setbacks and a number of tragic failures to prevent atrocities and safeguard their human rights.

Since the release of the UNEP report two years ago, despite the alarm bells that were raised with that report, the Federal Government of Nigeria have maintained a criminal silence towards the implementation of the report that has defied all human understanding. The Jonathan-led administration had only deceived the world and distracted all of us with the setting up of a befogged HYPREP. More than a year after its set up, HYPREP has no framework of intervention in Ogoni. Over two years after the release of the report, the harvest of violations of Ogoni peoples’ right to safe and satisfactory environment continues, the violations of their right to health, the violations of their right to safe drinking water, the violations of their right to food and the violations of their right to life continues as they live daily to face the continuous pollution of their ecosystem.

*MOSOP is therefore seizing the opportunity of this day to call on the Nigeria government to demonstrate goodwill by setting up a process for the full and effective implementation of the UNEP report for the cleanup of Ogoniland through*

1. *Establishment of an Ogoni Environmental Restoration Authority and the Ogoni Restoration Fund*
2. *Presentation of an Ogoni Clean Up and Restoration Blue Print*
3. *Set up a machinery for the socio-economic improvement of Ogoniland as recommended by the United Nations Fact Finding Team to Nigeria*

The Nigeria state must do its utmost to revive the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the country and relearn its messages whilst all of us must refocus on the amazing lucidity of purpose of the declaration to reaffirm the dignity and rights of us all.

I wish you all a happy International Human Rights Day Celebration!

Long live Ogoniland!

Thank you