

## Statement at the Opening Session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the High Level Political Forum

30 June, 2014

### *Troika of the Major Groups of Indigenous Peoples, Workers and Trade Unions, and Women*

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Caroline Usikpedo from Niger Delta Women's Movement for Peace and Development, representing the Major Groups of Indigenous Peoples, Workers and Trade Unions and Women.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide expertise that Major Groups and Other Stakeholders bring to this process as intended by paragraphs 14, 15, and 16 of the UN GA Resolution 67/290. We regret that we have not yet seen the full rights of Major Groups to participate in agenda setting, providing input to meetings, having access to documents and opportunities to make submissions and interventions, as well as implementation, and setting up transparent and accountable mechanisms for review of the Sustainable Development Goals and post-2015 development agenda.

We draw attention to the regional consultation on HLPF in Asia and the Pacific this month in Pataya, which had strong participation from civil society organizations and Major Groups. Civil Society and Major Group participation in the Open Working Group on SDGs has been equally strong and inclusive. This sets a useful precedent and example for the HLPF, to develop in a spirit of openness and inclusivity.

We wish to state that social, economic and ecological justice for all must be at the heart of sustainable development, and collectively, we seek a transformative human rights and eco-sphere based sustainable development agenda that addresses all forms of discrimination, inequalities, mal-distribution of resources including unpaid care work, poverty eradication through access to services, decent work, and social protection, and addressing challenges exacerbated by conflict, climate change and disasters.

This can only be achieved through an agenda that places gender equality and human rights for all, including women and girls, Indigenous Peoples and workers, at its centre.

We call on States to commit to the following,

1. Respect for the principles of non-regression, progressive realisation, and indivisibility of all human rights, including but not limited to normative frameworks on gender equality and women's human rights, workers' rights, and Indigenous Peoples' rights; equity and participation and guarantee the full implementation of CEDAW and its optional protocol;
2. Strong and transparent governance and accountability through establishment of robust national, regional and global accountability mechanisms, with full participation of civil society at all

levels, including an open-ended intergovernmental working group toward a legally binding human rights instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises;

3. Gender-disaggregated data, indicators and analysis that are used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of all proposed goals and targets in the Post 2015 development agenda, to enhance periodic reviews and increased capacity of women's rights organisations, Indigenous Peoples and trade unions, among others, to be involved in monitoring efforts at all levels.

To conclude, I come from an indigenous community in the Niger Delta, Nigeria, a region which has not profited from the country's oil richness, but has suffered from the pollution and mismanagement of the extractives sector.

As a rural woman, I know far too many families whose livelihoods have been destroyed by the pollution, whose wells have become undrinkable, whose soils unfertile but who have been waiting for compensation and support from the international and national corporations who caused the damage, but this redress has not come.

The HLPF task is to help create the global monitoring and accountability mechanisms which will ensure that development is sustainable and inclusive and enforces the rights of those who have been impacted by the unsustainable development paradigm of the last half century, and who have also been leading in proposing and implementing solutions at community and other levels.

Finally, a transformative change requires the full participation of women, Indigenous Peoples and workers! We stand here to work with you on this.

Thank you.