

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Bodo community and SPDC agree on framework and modalities for clean up, remediation and restoration of polluted creeks**

Port Harcourt – 30 April 2015

*Members of the Bodo community (Gokana Local Government Area, Rivers State) and The Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Ltd (SPDC) operated Joint Venture have reached an agreement on the modalities and scope of the clean-up, remediation and restoration of the environment affected by oil spills in the Bodo area. This agreement is a result of a mediation effort headed by the former Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Nigeria and the National Coalition on Gas Flaring and Oil Spills in the Niger Delta (NACGOND). After a series of plenary meetings and thematic working groups, the Bodo community and SPDC have signed a Memorandum of Understanding and presented the achievement at a press conference in Port Harcourt today. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines in detail what has been achieved to date and underlines the firm commitment of both parties to see this important process through to the end.*

By signing a Memorandum of Understanding in Port Harcourt today, The Bodo community and SPDC have successfully concluded the first phase of this mediation process which has recorded a number of concrete results so far. The discussions aim to lay the ground for an operation which will be the world's largest cleanup and restoration effort ever undertaken in a tropical mangrove environment.

The shoreline of and the creeks in and around Bodo – an area of approximately 1000 hectares - are at this stage still heavily impacted by two oil spills in 2008, for which SPDC has acknowledged responsibility. The environmental damages as a result of these and other spills, including those caused by oil theft and illegal refining, negatively impacted the livelihoods of many members of the community which used to derive most of its income from fishing.

The Bodo community and SPDC had mutually agreed to take the clean-up, remediation and restoration out of the now concluded litigation process.

The discussions for the clean-up, remediation and restoration of the polluted area were initiated in the first half of 2013 by co-chairs Mr Bert Ronhaar, (at the time Ambassador of the Netherlands to Nigeria) and Mr Inemo Samiama (at the time coordinator of NACGOND, a coalition of environmental rights NGOs in the Niger Delta). The mediation process is financially supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Nigeria. Governmental agencies such as the Rivers State Ministry of Environment and the Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA), as well as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have provided full support to the talks and participated as observers in the meetings. The regulatory agencies Nigerian Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) and the



National Petroleum Investment Management Services (NAPIMS) provided valuable guidance during the process as well.

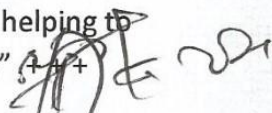
The main results achieved through the mediation process to date are:

- The formation of a Bodo Mediation plenary, steering committee, and three technical working groups, tasked to work on 1) clean-up and remediation; 2) pipeline infrastructure security; and 3) confidence building programmes aimed at sustainable community development initiatives, also in order to ensure that SPDC is given access to Bodo community to conduct the clean-up and remediation works. All of the mediation structures are centred around SPDC and Bodo community representatives.
- The contracting of a project director, Mr Kay Holtzmann, who has assumed his duties in April. Mr Holtzmann, who has vast technical experience, shall be responsible for the technical overview and approval of the clean-up and remediation work. Mr Holtzmann's selection is based on a joint approval by the Bodo community and SPDC.
- The selection of two reputable international contractors to execute the Free Phase oil clean-up of the polluted area. These two contractors emerged from a transparent and competitive technical bidding process which started in July 2014. It is expected that the Free Phase removal will start in July 2015. Approximately three hundred young members from the Bodo community will be trained and engaged during this first stage of the process.
- In addition, a scoping mission – which will follow the innovative 'Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Technique' (SCAT) - for the actual remediation and restoration will be deployed to map out the scope of these activities and the methodology to be adopted. An initial scoping mission has already started work in order to strengthen and guide the Free Phase works.
- The set-up of an administrative structure by the Bodo community, the 'Bodo Development Foundation', for the implementation of confidence building programmes aimed at the sustainable socio-economic development of the community. The Foundation was registered with the appropriate Nigerian authorities in April 2015 and it is expected that first interventions in this area will commence soon.
- As a sign of good will, SPDC Joint Venture will financially support these socioeconomic activities, over a period of three years, to be implemented by the Bodo Development Foundation.
- The partners acknowledged that addressing clean-up and remediation requires a comprehensive approach and sustained action to also address the serious risk of repollution - not only within the Bodo area but also from the neighbouring communities. To this end, the parties agreed to carry out a series of sensitisation campaigns for community members, security agencies, government officials and civil society. The Bodo community has agreed to provide surveillance to mitigate crude oil theft and illegal refining activities while SPDC has committed to do its utmost to ensure pipeline safety.



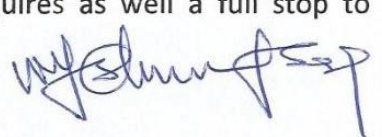
- The Bodo delegation will organise a Town Hall meeting on Saturday 2nd May 2015 to inform the wider community about the results achieved so far and the upcoming commencement of the works.

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Professor John Alawa, the team leader of the Bodo community commented: "The Bodo community is quite pleased to note that SPDC has agreed to clean up oil-polluted environments and the Bodo creeks. We are also grateful to the Dutch Embassy for helping to facilitate the entire process to date. We, the Bodo community, are indeed grateful." 

Mr Igo Weli, SPDC's General Manager, Sustainable Development and Community Relations said: "The MoU provides, amongst others, the framework for access to be given to SPDC and agreed contractors to commence the clean-up of the affected Bodo Creeks, something we have been keen to do. We will continue to play our role to ensure that the objectives of the agreement are achieved." 

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Mr Bert Ronhaar and Mr Inemo Samiama, co-chairs of the mediation process : "We are confident that this world's biggest oil-polluted mangrove ecosystem will be cleaned up, remediated and restored and that the people affected will benefit from the restoration of their common economic livelihood. All parties realise that this requires as well a full stop to repollution by mechanical failure, oil theft and illegal refineries." 

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Mr John Groffen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands comments: "We congratulate the parties on this important achievement. It has been a real pleasure to have witnessed over the past year and a half the growing trust between them, which now has led to this very concrete Memorandum of Understanding. I am sure this step will lead to visible results on the ground in a very short time. The Embassy is very happy with this accomplishment to which it has contributed with considerable financial support, time and efforts." 