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Minority Rights Echoes at Nigeria's United Nations Review

Several member and observer states of the United Nations Human Rights Council during today's Review of Nigeria raised concerns about the growing depreciation in the protection of the rights of minorities and indigenous issues in the country

Contributing to the interactive dialogue on the presentation of Nigeria's reports to the Universal Periodic Review, several governments, including the Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, Slovenia, Denmark, and the Vatican urged the Nigerian government to take specific steps to address the issues of minorities, including a recommendation that Nigeria establishes the National Commission on Minorities to deal with the vulnerable situation of minority communities.

Many governments also highlighted the issues of extrajudicial executions, torture and impunity that surround the operation of security forces. The government of Pakistan decried the environmental situation in the Niger Delta which had resulted from the unsustainable oil exploitation.

In its presentation, the Nigerian government delegation, which was lead by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ojo Uma Maduekwe, stated that there was no policy of discrimination against any ethnic community. He also promised to consult with civil society about human rights annually. Responding on behalf of the Federal Government to questions from the Human Rights Council, Senator Ekaete reported that the issue of the Niger Delta is not an issue of marginalization, but an issue of corporate neglect by the oil companies.

Representatives of nationality groups and non governmental organizations from the Niger Delta attending the 4th session of the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council had earlier called on the United Nations Human Rights Council to take Nigeria to task on the issues of minority and indigenous rights, including concerns about the current militarization with impunity and unaccountability that is going on in the Niger Delta.

For further information

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