



URHOBO UNITY SUMMIT, 2009

A Communique

1. **WHEREAS:** An assembly of the Urhobo People met under the banner of Urhobo Unity Summit on July 30 and 31, 2009 at the Petroleum Training Institute, Effurun, Delta State, Nigeria
2. Whereas: The Opening Session of the Summit under the chairmanship of Deacon Gamaliel Onosode, OFR:
 - a. Received a Welcome Address from the chief host of the Summit, Olorogun Senator Felix Ibru, President-General of Urhobo Progress Union, in which he outlined the historic ties and the cordial relationships that bond the Urhobo people to the people of Western Niger Delta and the rest of Nigeria.
 - b. Received goodwill messages from:
 - i. Chief E. K. Clark, OFR, CON, Ijaw Leader, who is also widely accepted by the Urhobo people as one of their leaders.
 - ii. Elder Peter Erebi, President General of Isoko Development Union
 - iii. Prof. B. I. Ijomah, on behalf of the Ukwuani people.
 - iv. Chief Samuel Ogbemudia, OFR, CON, two-time Governor of former Bendel State.
 - v. Ambassador Raph Uwechue, OFR, President-General, Ohaneze Ndi Igbo.

- c. Received an address by His Excellency, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, Governor of Delta State.
3. Whereas the Summit reconvened in Business Session 1 comprising delegates from Urhoboland and the Urhobo Diaspora in which:
 - a. The Summit received an address by Olorogun (Senator) Felix O. Ibru, President-General, Urhobo Progress Union in which he outlined the challenges facing the Urhobo People in the 21st Century and recommended two gateway projects, namely, Urhobo State and an Urhobo University.
 - b. Members discussed the President-General's views on state creation and the establishment of an Urhobo University.
4. Whereas: the Summit reconvened on Friday, July 31, 2009 in Business Session II, under the chairmanship of His Excellency, Professor Amos Utuama, SAN, Deputy Governor, Delta State in which:
 - a. A presentation titled "The Challenges of the Urhobo Nation" was made by Professor (Chief) Sam W. E. Ibodje, former Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Port Harcourt.
 - b. A presentation titled "Strategies for Achieving the Goals of Urhobo Unity Summit, 2009" was made by Professor Peter Ekeh, Chairman, Urhobo Historical Society.
 - c. Discussions on the said challenges and strategies were held by members of the Summit.
5. Whereas: the Summit continued in Business Session III under the chairmanship of Chief (Gen.) Patrick Aziza, CFR, 1st Deputy President-General, Urhobo Progress Union, on the theme "Items of Strategic Issues/Interests of Urhobo Nation and Plans of Action", in

which various distinguished leaders and scholars analyzed issues of importance to Urhobo survival and progress.

THEREFORE:

Urhobo Unity Summit resolves as follows:

1. To strengthen the existing cordial relationships between the Urhobo people and their ethnic neighbours, namely: Benin, Itsekiri, Isoko, Ijaw and Ukwuani as well as other ethnic nationalities of Nigeria.
2. To strengthen Urhobo Progress Union, the cultural organ of the Urhobo people, in order to enable it to meet the increasing and slippery challenges of the 21st Century.
3. To work to insulate Urhobo Progress Union from partisan party politics in order:
 - a. To ensure its survival
 - b. To enable it to serve all Urhobo people more equitably.
4. To encourage Urhobo people not to abandon the principle of self-reliance which has served them so well in the past and not to be overly dependent on government largesse.
5. To call on the Executive Council of Urhobo Progress Union and Urhobo traditional rulers to put in place a machinery for the revitalization and retention of Urhobo language in order to avoid the risk of its extinction, a danger that threatens most minority Nigerian languages.
6. To oppose the overt and covert attempts being made by the Minister of Petroleum Resources to dispossess the Urhobo nation of both the University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun, and the Petroleum Training Institute, Effurun, recalling that the same person

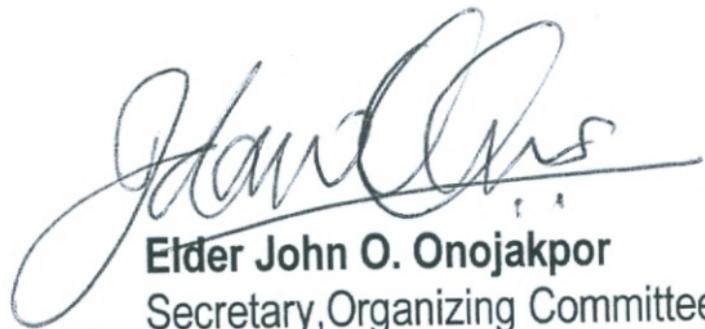
reversed the Independent Power Project for the Delta Steel Company, Ovwian-Aladja, when he was Minister of Power.

7. To recommend to the President-General, Urhobo Progress Union, to set up a planning committee that will work out the modalities for the establishment of an Urhobo University, which will follow in the historic tradition of Urhobo College, a secondary school built by the Urhobo people in the 1940s.
8. To call on the President-General, Urhobo Progress Union and his Executive Council to set up a Security Committee in order to stem the tide of growing insecurity in Urhoboland, a problem that has flowed from Nigeria's national trend of increasing violence.
9. To call on the President-General and the Executive Council of Urhobo Progress Union to end electoral malpractices in Urhoboland and to ensure that Urhobo people do not lose their right to vote.
10. To oppose the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill as submitted by the President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, to the National Assembly, stating that its passage is not in the national interest.
11. To call on the President-General, Urhobo Progress Union, and his Executive Council to set up a machinery, including appropriate committees, for the campaign for an Urhobo State in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, understanding that Urhobo deserves such consideration on the grounds of its population and resources (human and material) and further understanding that there are states in the Nigerian Federation and a number of independent nations in the world that are smaller in size and have less resources than Urhoboland.

12. To call on Urhobo political leaders to reach out to those who feel aggrieved as a result of the 2007 general elections and to appeal to those so aggrieved to reciprocate, hoping that such accommodation and the spirit of reconciliation will facilitate the on-going process of reinforcing unity among Urhobo people.



Deacon Gamaliel O. Onosode, OFR
Chairman, Organizing Committee
Urhobo Unity Summit 2009



Elder John O. Onojakpor
Secretary, Organizing Committee
Urhobo Unity Summit 2009