

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 19, 2009

His Excellency Umaru Yar'Adua
President, the Federal Republic of Nigeria
c/o Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
3519 International Court, NW
Washington, D.C. 20008

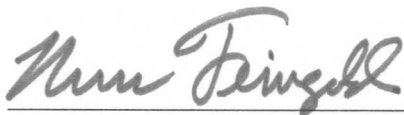
Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to recognize and applaud the attention you have given to the Niger Delta in recent months. In particular, we are heartened by the recent initiatives your government has announced to promote infrastructural development in the Delta and give communities a greater stake in oil ventures in the region. Addressing the marginalization and underdevelopment of the Delta is an essential step to bringing lasting peace and stability to this region.

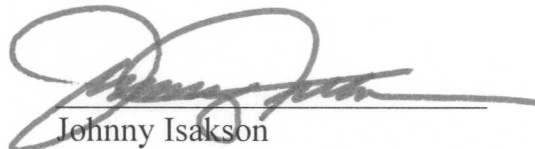
We encourage you to move forward with these development efforts in an accountable and transparent fashion, while simultaneously taking steps to improve governance and strengthen the rule of law in the Delta. The Technical Committee on the Niger Delta, which you appointed in September 2008, has provided a number of good recommendations to address the many challenges of the region together. At the same time, we strongly urge you to establish a regular dialogue with civil society groups and local community representatives from the Delta to ensure their concerns are addressed and they are fully involved in new programs.

As you know, we follow events in Nigeria closely and have long been concerned about violence in the Delta region. We were pleased that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pledged during her visit to Abuja in August that she would review how the United States might better assist efforts to bring peace to the Niger Delta. We would strongly support such assistance, especially if your government continues to take steps to address the fundamental issues of the Delta.

Sincerely,



Russell D. Feingold
Chairman, Africa Subcommittee
United States Senate



Johnny Isakson
Ranking Member, Africa Subcommittee
United States Senate

CC: The Honorable Hillary Clinton
U.S. Secretary of State

The Honorable Johnnie Carson
U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs

The Honorable Robin Renée Sanders
U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria