

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Niger Delta youth restiveness and socio-economic development of Nigeria**

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Accepted 28 April, 2010

**This paper examines youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, and the challenges it posed to Nigeria democracy and foreign investment. Non-parametric statistical and content analyses were essentially used as tools of analysis. The results showed that dissatisfaction of the people of Niger Delta especially the youths on the level of attention given to the development of their region and the damages to their ecology by oil spillage are the major causes of the alarming youth restiveness. Surprisingly, the Niger Delta region constitutes about 80% to the revenue of Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the paper suggests an immediate review of the current revenue sharing formula. The new formula should be made to address poverty, and neglect of the Niger Delta region. Oil companies operating in the region should pay a greater percentage of their royalty directly to the host communities in the Niger Delta region.**

**Key words:** Youth, restiveness, marginalisation

## **INTRODUCTION**

The assertion by the then Governor of Akwa Ibom State Victor Attah that his people were ready for war with the Federal Government of Nigeria over resource control, particularly the on-shore/off-shore, controversy, between the Federal Government and the state governments that had since been taken to supreme court for a declaration of the constitutionality or otherwise of the contending claims was not simply the latest indication of the bitter relationship between the government and the people, but a clear manifestation of the endemic nature of restiveness both among the adults and youths (Nweke, 2002).

It is important to state that the human society, and in fact, the entire universe is simply and squarely a complex entity. To that extent, individuals and groups have their own complexities, needs, aspirations, hopes, goals, opinions, views, and values which could be social, economic, religious, psychological or political (Anioke, 2002).

Consequently, restiveness is bound to occur. It therefore presupposes that since conflict is a situation that is natural to man, our social life revolves and grows in con-

flict and restiveness.

Contributing to the dialogue on the Niger Delta, Elaigwu (2008) said that despite being the goose that lays the golden eggs for the nation, the Niger Delta is widely regarded as a region wounded by youth militancy, fragmented by internal strife, bruised by incessant conflicts between local communities and oil producing multinationals, and glamorized by series of high-profile kidnapping incidents. Continuing, he said, that obviously what makes Nigeria what it is today is oil; what makes Nigeria comfortable comes from the Niger Delta; but unfortunately, the Niger Deltans are not comfortable at all. A lot of people, especially at the grassroots, are suffering in the midst of plenty, and unless they are made comfortable to some extent, this crisis will keep escalating and possibly degenerate to a full blown war that might engender the possible break-up of the country. He added that re-branding the Niger Delta is a brilliant idea and it is the best thing that can happen to Nigeria and Nigerians as a whole. This is because anytime the Niger Delta is mentioned, what immediately comes to mind is violence. However the point remains that you cannot re-brand the Niger Delta in isolation of the larger entity Nigeria.

The EGBESU, OPC, MASSOB, MOSOP, MEND and

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other ethnic cleavages abound and are getting out of proportion. The invasion of the multinational oil companies by restive youths in the Niger Delta, the abduction and kidnapping of foreign nationals working in oil companies, the incessant harassment of traders in Lagos and the every-day-clash in Jos, Nigeria pose a lot of questions to the very ideal of a sustainable democratic government in Nigeria. The composite unemployment in Nigeria increased from 3.8% in December, 2001 to 4.2% in the first half of 2006 (Chukwuemeka, 2003). The rate is still high, and when it is realised that an average figure has been given, indications are that it could be higher in some places like Bayelsa one of the states in the Niger Delta region. Structural unemployment results in talents not being used where they are available, idle mind definitely is the devil's workshop.

The people of the Niger Delta region where the nation derive greater percentage of her natural resources has persistently complained that adequate attention has not been given to them as regards development, employment, social amenities etc, despite, the environmental devastation resulting from oil, which cause them untold hardship. The situation has degenerated to a lot of controversies and conflicts which has resulted in loss of lives, personal and public properties as well as the kidnapping of foreign oil workers.

The situation worsened between the period 1999 and 2007 and has resulted in the declaration of curfew in some states in the Niger Delta. It is against this backdrop that one wonders the ideal and survival of the present nascent democratic dispensation in Nigeria. Also worrisome is the safety of the foreign nationals and their investment.

It is therefore the objective of this study to make a critical examination of youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region and how it affects socio-economic development in Nigeria.

## HYPOTHESIS

Dissatisfaction of the people of Niger Delta on the level of attention to the development of their area by the Federal Government of Nigeria and multinational corporations is one of the major causes of the alarming youth restiveness in the region.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

traced to Isaac Adaka Boro, a Niger Delta militant and radical youth. While in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, he organised secession. The primary aim was to liberate his people from oppression and consequently form the Republic of Niger Delta. This happened in the 1960s. The Federal Government frowned at his secession bid, and subsequently, Boro was arrested and punished accordingly. Marginalisation and utter neglect of the region did

not stop after that. Between 1980 and early 1990s, another radical environmental activist in the person of Ken-Saro Wiwa emerged. He organised some restive youths in the Ogoni land against the Federal Government because of marginalisation and utter neglect. In spite of the fact that the mineral that contribute 90% of Nigeria income is sourced from their region, their region is one of the most underdeveloped in Nigeria (Chukwuemeka, 2003).

During the reign of General Sani Abacha's military junta, Saro Wiwa and the members of his restive group were arrested, tortured and gruesomely murdered by hanging.

From 1999 youth restiveness in the Niger Delta took a new dimension. The new form of militancy and restiveness include, kidnapping of foreign oil workers, kidnapping of top notchers in government and those supporting government, arson, assassination, and other forms of gruesome murder.

Restiveness according to Abudah (2004) is self generating theory of conflict process within social groups. He further stated that any restive acts of groups whether inter or intra in nature in contemporary history of Nigeria is synonymous with conflict. Intra group restiveness or conflict occurs when there is a competition for an interest (Onah, 1999). The relative deprivation theory asserts that psychological variables and deprivation is the basic product for conflict and restiveness of any kind. The more widespread and intense deprivation is among members of a population, the greater is the magnitude of violence in one form or the other (Famham and Pilmot, 1998). Coleman (1966) argues that the unequal socio-economic development of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria led to inter ethnic and intra ethnic conflict. Once there is an uneven development in all or some facets of human existence within a given society, the different groups will definitely become immersed in the competition for the goods of modernity which invariably leads to a conflict situation.

Asobie (2004) says that there are approximately 300 spills per year in the Niger Delta region. And he blames the restiveness of the Niger Delta youths on the oil multinational corporations that operates in the region that is not committed to the plight of their host communities. Again, he argues that the oil multinational corporation and Federal Government of Nigeria are implicated in the collaboration of militarizing the Niger Delta region.

In the view of Saro-Wiwa (1985), the root causes of conflicts in the Niger Delta are inequitable distribution of revenue, uneven development among the Niger Delta region. He goes on to say that development in the centre has been given much attention than the other levels of government and that there is evident inequality in the developmental approach in Nigeria. He argues that the grassroots and the people of Ogoni land in particular and the people of Niger Delta in general are like goose that lays the golden egg. He argues further that the articulation of

**Table 1.** A list of seven major oil multinationals, their year of incorporation and oil production position as at 2001 and oil quota as at 2001.

S/N	Oil company	Year of incorporation	Oil production position (2001) (%)	Oil quota as at 2001 (bpd)
1	SPDC Ltd	1939	1 <sup>st</sup> (42)	950,000
2	EXXON/Mobil	1970	2 <sup>nd</sup> (21)	700,000
3	Chevron	1960	3 <sup>rd</sup> (19)	410,000
4	Agip Nigeria Ltd.	1962	4 <sup>th</sup> (7.5)	155,000
5	Pan Ocean Nigeria Corporation	N/A	5 <sup>th</sup> (6.6)	NA
6	ELF Petroleum Nigeria LTD.	1983	6 <sup>th</sup> (2.6)	NA
7	Texaco Nigeria Ltd.	1961	7 <sup>th</sup> (1.3)	83,769

Source: Asobie (2004) P. 53.

fundamentally different development paradigms had resulted in controversies to peace in the Niger Delta conflicts. Wiwa (1985) further argues that the proximate causes of most of the conflicts in the Niger Delta can easily be identified as the dominance of leaders of specific groups to gain office and use such states and institutions to distribute economic and political benefits preferentially to their interest groups. Discrimination against subordinate groups, often portrayed as less deserving human beings accompanies this preferential treatment. The Niger Delta citizens are in such a very pitiable circumstance. It is based on the above view that Wiwa contends that "... the protection and promotion of the rights of the Niger Delta citizens as well as other disadvantaged groups are essential for a conflict free Nigeria". Pinning it down to the Ogoni people, Wiwa (1985) holds the view that his people Ogoni citizens are people who are internally colonised in the Nigerian Federation. According to him, during the first oil boom, Ogoni land's fifty six oil wells accounted for almost 15% of Nigerian oil production. And in the past three decades as estimated, 30 billion petroleum revenue was realised from Ogoni land. Yet Oloibiun where the first oil was pumped in 1958 had no single motorable road all round season. Ogoni land argues Wiwa (1985) is wrecked by unthinkable misery and deprivation. Only few Ogoni communities have electricity, there is one medical doctor per one thousand people, child mortality rates are the highest in Nigeria Nation, unemployment is 85% of the population and a greater percentage of the population are illiterates and close to half of the Ogoni youths have left the Niger Delta region in search of work. Life expectancy is barely fifty years (Eghosa, 1996).

In the words of Saro Wiwa (1985):

*Economic conditions have deteriorated in the Niger Delta region, especially in Ogoni land since the onset of oil production. That is to say, no progress in local development since 1960...and he finally summed up that systematic reduction of Federal allocation and lack of concern by the Federal and Government of the various states in the Niger Delta region. Part of a long history of the politics of minority suffocation.*

Omoku (2003) argues that the first issue to be addressed is how the pursuit of oil wealth underlies persistent national policy failures in Nigeria. Since 1970, the Country's political, economic, and policy elites have established an authoritarian power structure to enable them to centralise control of strategic resources including the Country's substantial oil deposits. Such auricle has not only banished the great majority of ordinary Nigerians from the policy making process, but it has also led the power elites to pursue social and economic strategies that are short sighted, self-serving, and not driven by the needs of the people. The consequences have been material scarcity, deep frustration, and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

### **The role of the multinational oil corporations (MNCs) in the Niger Delta conflicts**

Exploration and production of oil in the Niger Delta region are done by various oil multinational corporations. It all began in 1938 when the colonial government granted Shell and Amay Petroleum the first mineral oil concession. The Company immediately began geological mitigation. The Shell British Petroleum's monopoly came to an end in 1955, when Mobil Exploration Nigeria Ltd., a subsidiary of the American colony, Mobil Oil Company joined the exploration search. Since then other multinational corporations have joined the oil business in the Niger Delta region. The table below (Table 1) is a list of seven major oil multinationals, their year of incorporation and oil production position as at 2001 and oil quota as at 2001.

The table shows that oil sector is in the hands of foreign multinational corporations. Their operational base is in the Niger Delta region where the oil is exploited. The oil rich Niger Delta has been visited with the worst form of environmental pollution and degradation from the activities of these oil multinationals. Despite this, all multinational corporations do not live up to their billings in terms of performing their social responsibilities to the oil producing host communities, rather they collaborated with Federal Government to perpetrate the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region.

Though in a few cases social infrastructures like pipe borne water, electricity, motorable roads, school buildings, scholarship programmes and job opportunities among other things are provided for the oil producing communities, but such facilities are not commensurate with the impact of environmental pollution and degradation suffered by the oil producing communities, neither is it commensurate with the high profit they made from the activities in the region. The most painful of all activities of the oil multinational corporations is that they have been implicated in the act of collusion with the Federal Government in the militarization of the Niger Delta region. They invariably divert the resources they should have used in the development of the Niger Delta region to security.

As to youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region, the oil multinationals are the worse off as the militant groups destroy their industries, installations, their workers are either kidnapped or taken hostage by the militant groups, Pipelines and other equipment are also vandalized. Work normally stops in such circumstances leading to the loss of some 12 million barrels of crude oil worth billions of naira. In Ogoni land alone, Shell has been loosing about 8,000 barrels of crude oil per day since the Ogoni rally of January 1993 (Chukwuemeka, 2007). Even as at today, SPDC has not fully resumed exploration activity in Ogoni land. In all, the Company estimates that over 60% of spills and leakages affecting its installation are caused by acts of sabotage by aggrieved oil producing communities of the Niger Delta (Chukwuemeka, 2007).

One of the major grievances of the Niger Delta people is that all laws relating to oil exploration and land ownership be abrogated. Having in mind that decrees and laws were schemed to keep the Niger Delta people in total penury and nothing short of the restructuring of the Nigerian Federal structure and abrogation of such obnoxious laws will be capable of restoring and maintaining peace in the region. All conflicts in the Niger Delta region is as a result of the injustice meted out on them by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

### **Re-branding as a Way of Polishing the Image of the Niger Delta**

From the marketing perspective, Berkowitz, Kenn, Hartley and Rudelius define branding as an activity in which an organization uses a name, phrase, design or symbol, or a combination of these, to identify its products and distinguish them from those of a competitor. However, re-branding becomes necessary when that product/brand starts losing its image or essence of existence. Hence the need for re-branding, re-packaging, etc becomes necessary.

Coincidentally, we are in the process of re-branding Nigeria as a nation and by extension a brand that has started losing its image or essence of existence. So invariably, the Niger Delta being a sub-system of Nigeria, what is

happening in the Niger Delta is not entirely different from happenings in the rest of the country. The only difference however, is that about 90% of the resources that sustains Nigeria comes from the Niger Delta. If these resources come from any other region and given the same posture of the Federal Government, that region's reaction will not be different from that of the Niger Delta. Take the issue of employment, the best any other state will give a Niger Deltan is a contract employment (not minding that the Niger Delta region provides the bulk of the resources that drives that home state and Nigeria).

Giving further insight into the re-branding process, Elaigwu and Isichei (2009) said that techniques of nation branding need to be employed in the repackaging process of the Niger Delta. They emphasize that nation branding is both a theoretical and practice-oriented process which seeks to measure, build and manage a nation's reputation, with a view to making the nation more appealing and marketable to the international community and pave the way for more trade tourism and socio-political interactions.

A British branding expert, Olins (1999) listed a seven-step plan to brand a country which includes:

- (i) Set up working party with representatives of government, industry, media, etc to start the program.
- (ii) Find out how the nation is perceived both by its people and other nations through qualitative and quantitative research (2-way communication).
- (iii) Develop a process of consultation with opinion leaders to look at national strengths and weaknesses.
- (iv) Create the central idea on which the strategy is based with professional advisors.
- (v) Develop ways of articulating the central area visually, including logos.
- (vi) Look at how the messages required for tourism, export, etc are appropriate for each audience.
- (vii) Create a liaison system through the working party to launch and sustain the program and encourage supportive action from appropriate organizations in industry, media, etc.

The above steps were amplified by Tench and Yeomans (2006) who view nation branding from the perspective of International Public Relations (IPR), for countries in terms of destination branding, country branding, cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy and perception management. Drawing a reference, they said that another driving force behind International government PR was the deadly attack on the World Trade Centre on September 11, 2001, which made the US government realize that its foreign policy objectives and values are not understood by many nations. After the attack, different task forces and think-tanks were set up to communicate US values, policies, images etc, to the world, but mostly as a one-way communication. 'Branding US', was one of the responses, which involved the failed advertising efforts in Arab countries. The failure demonstrated that branding in itself is not sufficient, especially if the 'product' itself is pro-

blematic. The other reason for failure was the lack of systematic research into Arab cultures at the planning stage. The US government has to realize that it was not engaging in two-way systematic communication at all.

Comparing the above with the efforts of the Federal Government in re-branding Nigeria, one sees a lot of inconsistencies, when viewed from the perspective of Olins seven-step plan to brand a country. To start with, the average Nigerian does not believe in the re-branding. They see the country's leadership as inept and corrupt which rubs-off on the international community, where holding the Nigerian passport is simply repulsive. So to re-brand Nigeria is problematic. The leadership has not taken into account the internal dynamics of the citizenry before embarking on the re-branding. Take the issue of the \$180m (USD) bribe money collected by top and high ranking government officials from Halliburton corporation of the US, to get a \$6bn (USD) oil service contract in the Niger Delta. While Halliburton and their other US associate companies have since been punished according to US law, the Federal Government of Nigeria has not bothered to bring the officials named in the bribe scandal to book. One can then imagine how the average Niger Deltan will feel when he reads in the pages of newspapers the level of recklessness with which government officials mismanage their natural resources. So a re-branding of the Niger Delta and indeed Nigeria should start with the President and the governors of the Niger Delta states.

Kalawole (2009) aptly described Nigeria thus: "...may be Yar'Adua wants to redeem the image of his administration and show the world that he means business. Let's wait and see". He did nothing about the Siemens and Wilbros scandals. Has he repented? If those untouchable Halliburton bribe takes (and not just their fronts) are actually brought to book, there is no way the world would not take Yar'Adua seriously. In fact, he would be invited to the next G20 and G7 meetings. Yar'Adua needs to re-brand himself urgently.' Also equally important is that for this re-branding to be effective and worth its while, Olins seven-steps plan to brand a country must be fully taken into consideration.

### **The role of the environmental activists and the international community in the Niger Delta conflicts**

Environmental activists such as Ken Saro-Wiwa did a lot to ignite environmental consciousnesses among the Niger Delta people and that has been the order of the day. The Niger Deltans are now aware of the damage, which the oil exploration and production has done to their environment, and now make bold request for compensation because of the environmental degradation and pollution caused by the activities of the oil companies for the region. Through this environmentalist, the course of the Niger Deltans became an international issue. When in 1994/1995 the movement for the survival of Ogoni

people (MASSO), an ethnic militant organisation aimed at protecting the environment and economic rights of the Ogoni people against pollution and, exploitation, found itself at a head on collusion with the military government and oil companies. MASSOP leaders were rounded up and accused of complicity in the killing of several Ogoni chiefs and leaders who were regarded as sympathetic to the oil companies and the Nigeria Military Government. The incident led to the execution of the members of the movement and several leaders under that usual judicial circumstance, which led to serious international anger against the then Military Government of Sani Abacha.

Recently, the European Union (EU) has announced its intention to execute 12,000 projects in the Niger Delta region. According to Pratt EU's Programme Manager in charge of the micro projects 6 (MPP6), the Commission chose the Niger Delta region because, the region is characterized by very complex web of conflicting interests around environment and development. The project is aimed at improving basic physical and social infrastructure to reduce tension in the region. The project is in line with recognition of tension and conflicts in the Niger Delta region by the international community.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Method of data collection**

Questionnaire, oral interview and personal observation were used as major instrument for data collection.

### **Target population/sample selection**

The population of the study is an infinite one (about 40,000) made up of adults between the ages of 30 and 70 and youths between the ages of 20 and 30. Therefore 350 respondents were selected using quota purposive sampling technique.

### **Questionnaire return rate**

On the whole 350 copies of questionnaire were distributed, but a total of 320 were returned duly filled.

### **Validation of research instrument**

#### **Pilot test**

The questionnaire were administered to a proportion of the sample and others not included in the sample. The aim was to find out whether the questionnaire and interview guide meant the same thing to all the respondents and to find out whether the questions would be easily understood by the respondents.

#### **Content validity**

Content validation was used to ensure that the two instrument measure what they suppose to measure to ensure that reliable data were collected from the respondents.

**Table 2.** Respondents opinion on the major causes of youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

Response	Youth	Adult	Total
Yes	140	20	160
No	125	35	160
Total	265	55	320

Source: Field survey (2007).

**Table 3.** Respondents' opinion on inordinate pursuit of wealth by some members of the Niger Delta region.

Response	Youth	Adult	Total
Yes	50	10	60
No	215	35	250
Total	265	55	320

Source: Field survey (2007).

**Table 4.** Respondents' opinion on increment in fund allocation to the Niger Delta.

Response	Youth	Adult	Total
Yes	135	30	165
No	130	25	155
Total	265	55	320

Source: Field survey, (2007).

### Criterion related validity

This was employed to compare tests and scale scores with external variables known to measure the attribute under study.

### Method of data analysis

The main statistical tool used for analysis is Chi-square. The exercise essentially involved data that were discrete, categorical and non-parametric in nature.

### Data presentation

Question 1: Youth restiveness in the Niger Delta is as a result of utter neglect by Government and oil multinationals, oppression, internal colonisation and political suffocation (Table 2).

Question 2: Do you think that the restiveness in the Niger Delta region is not a function of marginalisation but inordinate pursuit of wealth by some overzealous members of the region? (Table 3).

Question 3: Do you think that the restiveness in the Niger Delta would stop if the government increases the fund allocation to the region? (Table 4).

Question 4: Do you think that if youth unemployment and poverty is controlled, restiveness would cease in the Niger Delta region? (Table 5).

Question 5: Ecological devastation and poor fund allocation, which one do you consider more serious? (Table 6).

### Test of hypothesis (calculation of $X^2$ )

Ho: Dissatisfaction of the people of the Niger Delta on the level of

attention to the development of the area by Federal Government and multinational companies is one of the major causes of the alarming youth restiveness in the region.

To test the hypothesis, Chi-square  $X^2$  non-parametric statistical measure was adopted.

### Degree of freedom

$$Df = (r-1) (c-)$$

$$df = (2-1) (2-1) = 1 \times 1 = 1$$

5% level of significance at 1 degree of freedom = 3.841.

From the Chi-square table, table value at 5% significance level and 1 degree of freedom is 3.841, computed value of  $X^2$ , 4.938 is greater than the table value. Therefore H1 is accepted and Ho rejected.

## DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

This study has made an overview of Niger Delta restiveness and social-economic development of Nigeria. The outcome of the empirical test supports the secondary data that we critically evaluated in the literature review.

The item-by-item analysis revealed that the Niger Delta people are actually oppressed, and politically marginalized. In spite of the fact that many respondents failed to agree that the restiveness is more of a function of inordinate pursuit of wealth and avarice, some of the people interviewed were of the view that restiveness is more or less a function of inordinate quest for materialism.

**Table 6.** Respondents' opinion on the preference between increased fund allocation and ecological devastation.

Response	Youth	Adult	Total
Yes	140	40	180
No	125	15	140
Total	265	55	320

Source: Field survey, (2007).

**Table 7.** Computation of  $X^2$ .

Cell	Fo	Fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup> /fe
1.1	140	132.5	56.25	0.424
1.2	20	27.5	-56.25	2.045
2.1	125	132.5	-56.25	0.424
2.2	35	27.5	56.25	2.045
				4.938

Source: Compiled from Table 2.

Inadequate distribution of revenue of the federation and poor revenue base of the Niger Delta region is also established to contribute largely to the restiveness. Many respondents were of the opinion that restiveness would cease if more fund is allocated to the region.

Youth unemployment, poverty and other related social maladies are discovered to be prevalent in the Niger Delta region, and therefore have heightened restiveness. Many of the people interviewed were of the opinion that if the youths in the region are gainfully employed, restiveness would die a natural death since, 'an idle mind is a devil's workshop'.

Environmental degradation and pollution of the region by oil companies make it almost impossible to breathe good air and drink clean and good water, which results to low level of life expectancy. The respondents were more critical on environmental degradation than fund. According to them they would prefer the preservation of their ecology than devastate it and pay for it.

### **Implications of this study for Nigeria nascent democracy, socio-economic development and foreign investment**

As already noted, the incidence of marginalisation, denial of social right, environmental degradation and economic devastation activities by the Government of Nigeria had triggered off the irate youths in the Niger Delta region to involve in all sorts of restiveness in demand of their right. This act had led to hijacking, abduction, hostage and kidnapping of oil expatriates in the Niger Delta region. The situation is now degenerating into other regions in Nigeria.

From all indications, this quagmire portends a serious threat to the new democratic dispensation which is at its

nadir stage. It cannot also allow any meaningful economic development to thrive in Nigeria.

Democracy will find it difficult to thrive in crises. The leaders would spend the time they would have used to formulate policies that would touch the life of the people to formulate conflict-control policies and sink fund that could be used for development to control restiveness. The situation would not also encourage international cooperation. No foreign investor would also like to invest in a vulnerable and crisis prone economy.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is therefore the position of this paper that the following should be done:

- a) Revenue sharing formula should be reviewed without further delay. The new formula must be made to address poverty and neglect in the Niger Delta.
- b) Oil companies operating in the Niger Delta region should pay a greater percentage of their royalty direct to the host communities.
- c) Nefarious activities of the governing elites who hijack special funds mapped out to address the problem of the Niger Delta citizens should be checked. Any culprit should be prosecuted, tried and jailed with hard labour.
- d) The nefarious practices of those who sponsor and spur the youths into restiveness for their own selfish ambition should be checked.

Unless these recommendations are urgently implemented, Nigeria in the near future would become a war-zone, a situation which would be most catastrophic to the indigenes and foreign nationals and investors. Most importantly, the situation if not checked and controlled could

degenerate to mar the “guided nascent democracy” in Nigeria.

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