AN APPRAISAL OF NIGERIA'S POST-CONFLICT DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION, AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME IN THE MINERAL-RICH NIGER DELTA

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BY

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ATTESTATION

I do hereby attest that I am the sole author of this thesis and that its contents are only the result of the readings and research I have done.

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ABSTRACT

The study is essentially an interrogation of a Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DDR) programme executed by the Federal Government of Nigeria between the period 2009 to 2015 to restore peace and stability to the oil-rich Niger Delta region of the country after a protracted violent agitation by youths of the region. The methodology employed in the research entailed two basic components. They are, one, Participant Observation, because the researcher was involved in the entire gamut of the DDR from conception to implementation; and Literature Review, which entailed a critical perusal of varieties of literature covering books, journal articles, official documents, and internet materials. A neo-Marxian theoretical framework undergirded analysis in the study because two antagonistic classes were identified as the warring parties in the violent agitations which the DDR in view sought to bring to an end. The study identified causative factors of violent agitations in the Niger Delta to provide a background to understanding the nature of conflict in the region. Importantly, the study furnished detailed, insider perspective on the implementation of the DDR. It identified the achievements of the DDR programme, as well as highlighted its challenges. Importantly, the study evaluates the efficacy of the DDR vis-à-vis its mandate. Finally, the study furnishes recommendations for improved implementation of the DDR programme.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The conflict for interrogation in this study is essentially an environmental conflict. The location of the conflict is the Niger Delta region of Nigeria that hosts the bulk of the country's oil and gas resources. The Niger Delta region is one of the world's largest wetlands, and the largest in Africa**.** The zone spans four main ecological zones - coastal barrier islands, mangroves, fresh water swamp forests, and lowland rainforests -whose boundaries vary according to the patterns of seasonal flooding.

The mangrove forest of Nigeria is the third largest in the world and the largest in Africa; over 60 percent of the space it covers, amounting to 6,000 square kilometers, is found in the Niger Delta. It encompasses over 20,000 square kilometers of vast floodplain built up by the accumulation of centuries of silt washed down the Niger and Benue Rivers.

The freshwater swamp forests of the Niger Delta reach 11,700 square kilometers and are the most extensive in west and central Africa. The

Niger Delta region has the high biodiversity characteristic of extensive swamp and forest areas, with many unique species of plants and animals. It covers an area of 70,000 square kilometers, in addition to the 200 nautical miles, which the United Nations General Assembly added in 1995. The Niger Delta is by far, the richest geo-political zone of Nigeria in terms of natural endowments like oil and gas, vast forest and arable land. It is also reputedly the wealthiest region in West Africa being home to Nigeria's oil and gas resources. Oil and gas extracted from the Niger Delta account for 90% of Nigeria's export earnings. 13 Oil Producing Companies are currently operating in the Niger Delta with 159 Oil Fields and 1,481 Oil wells. There are more than 7,000km of pipelines & flowlines, and 275 flow stations in the region (NNPC & AAPW 2004).

In April 2005, Nigeria was reported to be the eleventh-largest producer of oil in the world and the largest oil producer in Africa. It is a major oil supplier to the United States and Western Europe. Nigeria is also a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). By January 2005, the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) estimated that Nigeria had proven oil reserves of 35.5 billion barrels, according to the *Oil and Gas Journal*. In 2004, the country

produced an estimated 2.5 million barrels of oil per day, of which crude oil accounted for 2.3 million barrels per day. In that same year, net exports and domestic consumption of oil were estimated at 2.2 million barrels per day and 321,000 barrels per day, respectively. According to the Oil and Gas Journal, crude oil refining capacity was estimated at 438,750 barrels per day, as of 1 January 2005. As a member of OPEC, Nigeria is subject to a crude oil production quota. As of August 2004, that quota was set at 2.6 million barrels per day.

Nigeria's proven reserves of natural gas makes the country one of the world's top 10 countries so endowed, and the largest in Africa. According to the Oil and Gas Journal, Nigeria's natural gas reserves were estimated at 176 trillion cu ft as of 1 January 2005. Although the Nigerian government plans to raise its earnings from natural gas exports to 50% of the country's revenues from oil by 2015, about 75% of the natural gas currently produced is flared-off due to a lack of infrastructure, according to a November 2004 estimate by the World Bank. In 2002, Nigeria produced an estimated 501 billion cu ft of natural gas, with domestic demand for that year at 225 billion cu ft and exports estimated at 225 billion cu ft. (*Oyewole, Anthony, and John Lucas. Historical Dictionary of Nigeria. 2nd ed. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow*

Press, 2000).

Despite the fact that effectively from the early 1970s revenues from the exportation of crude oil rose steadily to assume as high as 90 percent of Nigeria's total foreign receipts, the region producing the oil has suffered serious neglect in terms of development. The oil producing communities in the region are, particularly, the most neglected, lacking basic infrastructure as electric power, portable water, good roads, health centers et cetera. To compound the neglect, most of the communities are subjected to environmental degradation on a scale that is unparalleled in any oil producing country in the world. Oil spillages were a regular occurrence and have led to the destruction of the traditional occupation of the people of the Niger Delta, namely, fishing and farming.

It is against this background that, at the turn of the 21st century, agitations for a fair deal for the impoverished people of the Niger Delta began. It began with the blowing up of crude oil pipelines by Niger Delta youths labelled as agitators but gradually escalated to more violent proportions, including kidnapping of oil workers, expatriates in particular, destruction of oil installations, and, ultimately, full-blown hostilities with the Nigerian military. The hostilities led to huge

casualties among the agitators and the government troops, while destruction of oil facilities continued unabated to the point that Nigeria's oil production capacity which used to be over two million barrels per day plummeted to below one million.

An end to militancy and attendant violence and disruption of oil business came when peace was brokered between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta agitators in 2009 at the instance of the then Nigeria's leader, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, who proclaimed unconditional amnesty for all Niger Delta people who had been involved in militant agitation. The terms of the amnesty included the willingness and readiness of the agitators to surrender their arms on or before October 4, 2009, unconditionally renounce militancy and sign an undertaking to this effect. In return, the government pledged its commitment to institute programmes to assist the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of the former combatants.

1.2. Statement Of The Problem

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of erstwhile combatants as part of peacebuilding strategies in a post-conflict context is an exercise that produce mixed results. There are cases

when it succeeds and there are instances when it fails woefully with the return of hostilities. The year 2015, in which my tenure as the official in-charge of the DDR's implementation ended, made it six years since the commencement of the programme. It is thus ample time to assess the performance of the programme and project its impact of sustainability of peace in the Niger Delta. In this regard, the following research questions will guide research and analysis:

- What is the historical causation of militancy in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria?
- How was peace negotiated between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta agitators?
- What were the terms of the peace deal between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta agitators?
- How effective were the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration phases of the presidential amnesty deal between the Nigerian Government and the Niger delta agitators?
- How can the achievements of the Amnesty Programme and the DDR it entailed be consolidated and sustained.

1.3. Objectives Of The Study

The study is guided by five clear research objectives in synergy with above-stated research questions:

- To highlight the historical causation of militancy in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.
- To discover how peace was negotiated between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta agitators.
- To highlight the terms of the peace deal between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta agitators.
- To appraise the effectiveness of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration phases of the presidential amnesty deal between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta agitators?
- To identify how the achievements of the Amnesty Programme can be consolidated and sustained.

1.4. Scope Of The Study

In terms of time-scope of the study, the period 2009 when the Presidential Amnesty Programme commenced and 2015, six years after it began, remains the focus. In a nutshell, it is a 10-year period.

Regarding the geographical scope, the study is limited to the territory of Nigeria, with special focus on its Niger Delta region.

1.5. Methodology Of The Study

The research methodology employed in the study has two basic elements. The first is ***Participant Observation,*** in which case, the researcher is actually interrogating a subject in which he was an active participant. He was a critical part in the implementation of Nigeria's Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), of which the DDR programme is the core element, as Special Adviser to Nigeria's President on Niger Delta Affairs/ Chairman, Presidential Amnesty Programme from 2011 to 2015.

The second element of the methodology is ***Literature Review***, in which case secondary data comprising books, academic journal articles, newspaper reports, official documents, and internet materials are carefully perused and subjected to critical analysis.

1.6. Justification Of The Study

This study is a worthwhile academic endeavor because it delves into a conflict with potentials for negative impact on the global oil market, Nigeria being the sixth largest oil producing nation with over 2 million barrels per day. The topic fits well with the academic field of International Relations in which the researcher has a MSc degree because all the major oil companies in the world (Shell, ExxonMobil, Agip, Texaco etc) are doing business in the Niger Delta region that is the focus of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION, LITERATURE REVIEW, AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter opens with clarification of some salient concepts employed in the study, followed by literature review, which relies heavily on documents detailing the implementation trajectory of the Presidential Amnesty Programme, the umbrella programme of the DDR in focus in this study. It, finally, furnishes the theoretical framework on which the whole study is grounded.

2.1. **Clarification of Concepts**

This thesis seeks to evaluate the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Niger Delta Agitators under Nigeria's Amnesty Programme. In this section we shall furnish the operational or working definitions of key concepts featured in the study, namely: Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Militant (or Militancy), and Niger Delta. Indeed, DDR programmes have featured in post-conflict reconstruction from Afghanistan to Haiti. But United Nations records have shown that the bulk of DDR interventions — twenty-five

since 1992 — have occurred in Africa. The failure of early DDR programs in Somalia and Liberia, partly attributed to their vague mandates, prompted a shift in recent years toward more focused interventions, now codified in a new set of policy guidelines developed in 2005. Newer DDR programs in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of Congo, and now Nigeria have disarmed hundreds of thousands of combatants, but experts say these programs remain poorly funded, and a lack of research has prevented practitioners from developing better reintegration programmes. (*DDR in Africa* by Stephanie Hanson February 16, 2007)

2.1.1. **Disarmament**

Though Nigeria's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) efforts as enshrined in the Presidential Amnesty Programme is not a classical case given that strictly speaking, Nigeria as a nation was not in any war per se with the Niger Delta agitators hence there was no peace treaty or agreement. However, DDR experts insist that the offer of Amnesty by President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua to the Niger Delta ex-agitators on the 25th June 2009, after a long-drawn negotiation, and the acceptance of same by the ex-agitators fit the definition of a peace

agreement. WordIQ.Com defines A peace treaty as an agreement between two hostile parties, usually countries or governments, that formally ends a war or armed conflict. One of the earliest recorded peace treaties was between the Hittite and Egyptian empires after the Battle of Kadesh c. 1280 BC. The battle took place in what is now modern day Syria and that entire area of the Levant was at that time a contested area between the two empires. After an extremely costly four-day battle in which neither side gained any significant advantage, both sides claimed victory. The lack of resolution in the situation meant that just a few years later an almost identical battle was looking imminent. Neither side could afford another war at that time as each were being threatened by other enemies, a peace treaty was concluded. The peace treaty was recorded in two versions, one in Egyptian hieroglyphs and the other in Akkadian using Cuneiform script.

There are many possible issues which may be included in a peace treaty and a treaty's content usually depends heavily on the nature of the conflict being concluded. Some of these may be:

- Formal designation of borders.
- Processes for resolving future disputes

- Access to and apportioning of natural resources
- Status of prisoners
- Status of refugees
- Settling of existing debts
- Settling of ownership claims
- Defining of proscribed behaviour
- The re-application of existing treaties

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua premised the offer of amnesty to agitators in the Niger Delta on their willingness to renounce violence, disarm and surrender their weapons to the Armed Forces of Nigeria, on or before October 4th 2009. At the expiration of this deadline, 20, 192 agitators in the Niger Delta accepted this demand of the government and yielded their weapons to the Federal Government. This process of surrendering illegally acquired weapons (guns, rifles, bombs, gunboats, dynamites machine guns and assortment of ammunitions) is known as Disarmament.

During disarmament, weapons belonging to combatants are collected, documented, and disposed of (in most cases, destroyed). This process includes the assembly of combatants, often in an area guarded by external forces; collection of personal information; collection of

weapons; certification of eligibility for benefits; and transportation to a demobilization center. Disarmament can also include the development of arms-management programmes. Problems in this phase can include combatants who try to disarm multiple times to reap financial benefits, as well as commanders keeping back the best weapons. (*United Nations DDR facts file, Nigeria's Amnesty Office Records*, *DDR in Africa* by Stephanie Hanson February 16, 2007)

2.1.2. **Demobilisation**

In classical DDR Programmes, during demobilization, armed groups are formally disbanded. At this stage, combatants are generally separated from their commanders and transported to cantonments, or temporary quarters, where they receive basic necessities and counseling. Eventually, they are transported to a local community where they have chosen to live permanently. However, in the Nigerian DDR Programme, Demobilization entailed the transportation of disarmed ex-agitators in batches of 1,500 each to a Camp (in Obubra, Cross River State) where they go through biometric documentation; wellness checks, counseling/peace building, non-violence transformational training; career guidance/classification as well as

mentoring and evaluation. The ex-agitators spend a total of two weeks in the camp and before being dispersed to await their placements in either formal education or vocational skills acquisition facilities both within the country and offshore. Shortly after this demobilization exercise, the ex-agitators were paid Reinsertion/Transition Safety Allowance of N150,000 each. The money, as prescribed by the United Nations is to meet the immediate needs of the ex-combatants during demobilization before longer-term reintegration begins. In most other DDR Programmes globally, this money was usually sourced from either the United Nations or donor countries. However, in the Nigerian situation, the Federal Government paid this money through the Amnesty Office. Experts say that this apparent funding from the Federal Government accounted for the resounding success of the Disarmament and Demobilization phases of Nigeria's DDR Programme. Renowned DDR Expert, Charles Achodo, who headed the UN's DDR programme in Liberia, says most DDR Programmes suffer huge set-backs at this stage. Most times, he recalls, funding often dries up at this phase in the process. "Donors forget that these people need assistance to become productive members of the community—psychological counseling, trauma healing support, access to employment," he says.

(United Nations' DDR Fact File, *DDR in Africa* by Stephanie Hanson February 16, 2007)

2.1.1.3. **Reintegration**

Of the three phases in a typical DDR Programme, the 'R' which is the final phase, is usually the most difficult and most expensive. It also usually stretches over several months or even years. In a nutshell, reintegration in a DDR Programme is defined as the processes of aiding the ex-militant acquire civilian status and sustainable employment and income. An Institute for Security Studies (ISS) paper calls it "the Achilles heel of DDR". Reintegration takes into cognizance the fact that a disarmed ex-militant needs a whole lot of support to become a "normal" human being again. Experts say Reintegration considers the fact that "You have to provide an economic alternative to living by the gun." This process of providing for the ex-agitators an economic alternative to living by the gun, laborious especially given that in most cases, the ex-agitators are without skills or formal education hence unemployable. Even in cases where a few of them have skills or education, they are usually stigmatized and denied employment opportunities. Reintegration processes are also often worsened by the

fact that in post-conflict countries, job opportunities are scarce.

In Nigeria's DDR, the Reintegration phase entails the meticulous processes of the Demobilization records of each ex-militant to ascertain age, qualification, career choice and health status with a view to facilitating the placement of the former combatant in either formal education or vocational training. The general idea is to prepare the ex-militant for seamless reinsertion into civil society. In the Nigerian DDR Programme, the time frame of five years was formulated for the reintegration phase. It is expected that during this period, all the 26, 358 persons enlisted in the Programme would either have acquired tertiary education or training in a preferred vocation. The reintegration framework in Nigeria provides for the continued payment of a monthly stipend of N65,000 ($180) to each ex-agitator until he/she secures gainful employment. The payment stops three months after the ex-militant begins earning income from his/her employers.

Another critical component of the reintegration phase in the DDR Programme is peace-building and reconciliation of several of the ex-agitators with communities where they had previously committed untoward acts. Usually, managers of DDR Programmes incorporate

local reconciliation customs. Unfortunately, analysts posit that little research exists on reintegration and its effects on nations recovering from conflict.

2.2. **Literature Review**

2.2.1. **Preamble**

The Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme approved by the Federal Government of Nigeria under the Amnesty proclamation was not conceived as a typical DDR programme as implemented under the framework of a peace agreement. This was so,given that, strictly speaking, Nigeria was not in a state of war per se with any section of the country. On the contrary, Nigeria's DDR was conceived as a national response to stabilize security conditions in the Niger Delta so that recovery and development can begin. However, in line with the principles of national ownership and minimum standards, the DDR programme in Nigeria was designed to draw from international standards and principles that are consistent with the national context.

Also, given the socio-political challenges of the Niger Delta, the DDR of

this category of ex-combatants was bound to be a complex process, with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions. The first problem the Presidential Committee on Amnesty encountered was how to convince the leaders of the several militant camps and groups in the creeks of the Niger Delta to trust Government to keep to its promises as enshrined in the proclamation document and lead out their teaming followers to disarm to officers and men of the Nigerian Armed Forces whom they have for several years engaged in fierce battle. Indeed, many of the leaders nursed the fear that the Amnesty Proclamation was merely a ploy by the Federal Government to lure then out of the creeks, arrest them and possibly kill them. It must be noted that this factor was foreseen by the Government prior to the proclamation of Amnesty. It was because of this reason that the Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan alongside a number of prominent political leaders in Niger Delta, notably, the highly respected Chief Edwin Kiagbodo Clark, toured the creeks of the Niger Delta to extract disarmament and peace commitment from key militant leaders. Against what seemed like the better judgments by security chiefs in the country, Dr. Jonathan even visited the dreaded Camp Five, the operational base in Delta State, of one of the key leaders of MEND,

Government Ekpumopolo (Tompolo). It was largely a successful trip as the largely reclusive Tompolo laid out his conditions for peace, acceptance of the offer of amnesty and disarmament.

However, in the aftermath of the proclamation of Amnesty, the Federal Government took a number of decisive steps to secure the confidence of the Niger Delta agitators in the disarmament process. The first was the appointment of Mr. Timi Alaibe, who had just been relieved of his position as the Managing Director of the NDDC, as the Honourary Adviser to the President on Niger Delta. Alaibe who is hugely popular among several of the agitators and their leaders, was primarily tasked to tour the creeks of the Niger Delta to preach the sincerity of the Federal Government and convince all leaders of the militant groups to disarm to the members of the Armed Forces led by the military coordinator of the Presidential Amnesty Committee, Air Vice Marshal Lucky Ararile. The other confidence-building step the government took was the inclusion of the nominees of the key militant leaders in the Presidential Committee on Amnesty. The role of these nominees was to liaise effectively between the Committee and the militant leaders to achieve and sustain conditions that would lead to hitch-free disarmament. These nominees were recognised in the Presidential

Committee on Amnesty as 'Stakeholders'. These persons were Mr. Kingsley Kuku (who was nominated by Government Ekpemupolo (Tompolo); Mr. Sele Victor-Ben (who was nominated by his elder brother and militant leader, Ebikabowei Victor-Ben, who was also known as Boyloaf); Mr Richard Akinaka (who was nominated by his Uncle, the militant leader, Chief Ateke Tom); Mr. Bright Peregba (who was nominated by militant leader, Farah Dagogo). Another nominee into the committee was the immensely popular Niger Delta activist who was one of the signatories to the famous Kaiama Declaration, Mr. Timi Kaiser-Wilhelm Ogoriba (Popularly known in the creeks of the Niger Delta and beyond, as German Papa or Elder T.K Ogoriba.

This crack team tortuously crisscrossed the creeks of the Niger Delta and successfully aided the disarmament of several of the militant groups. The Governors of the State in the region, particularly the then Governor of Bayelsa State, Timipre Sylva was also very instrumental to the successful disarmament of a number of the militant groups and camps in Bayelsa State, the most prominent being Mr. Ebikabowei Victor-Ben (General Boyloaf).

However the climax of the disarmament efforts came a day before last day of the 60-day grace period, when the dreaded leader of MEND, Mr.

Government Ekpemupolo (Tompolo) eventually disarmed after a protracted and energy-sapping negotiations between him, the PCE and even prominent leaders of the zone including Chief E.K Clark and the prominent politician, Chief Anthony Anenih. Prior to his disarming, Ekpemupolo, met President Umaru Yar'Adua in Abuja where the President personally received his renunciation of violence form after which Tompolo agreed to give up his weapons on the last day of the disarmament deadline 4th October 2009 at his camp in Oporoza, in Gbaramatu Kingdom near the southern city of Warri, a major base for the country's oil industry. The militant leader subsequently led hundreds of his followers to hand-in their weapons in his hometown and stronghold, Oporoza, in a ceremony that could best be described as a carnival. A day earlier, two other key militant leaders, Ateke Tom and Farah Dagogo, gave up their weapons in the main oil hub of Port Harcourt.

Initially, the Nigeria Federal Government said it expected more than 10,000 fighters in the region to disarm. But at the expiration of the 60-day grace period - by Sunday October 4, 2009, 20,192 Niger Delta ex-agitators had surrendered huge cache of arms and ammunitions to the Federal Government and accepted the offer of amnesty. The Arms and

ammunitions gathered were meticulously documented and stored at what the Armed Forces referred to as Inter-Agency Center which was located within the 82 Division of the Nigeria Army. The Amnesty Office's records show that 3,124 weapons, 18 gun-boats, 3,693 magazines, 297,056 rounds of ammunitions were recovered.

List of Arms and Ammunition Collected Agitators (6th Aug - 4th Oct. 2009)

State	Registered ex-militant	Weapons Collected	Ammunition	UXO, D-caps & Dynamite	Magazines
Bayelsa	6,961	951	130,877	54	1,585
Imo	300	149	7,758	0	299
NDDC Ex-militant	600	0	0	0	0
Delta	3,361	449	52,958	1,556	414
Rivers	6,997	1,009	82,406	102	1,048
Ondo	1,200	198	9,725	0	0

Edo	**450**	**82**	**772**	**77**	**29**
Akwa Ibom	**163**	**51**	**959**	**5**	**41**
Cross River	**160**	**20**	**9,748**	**59**	**38**
TOTAL	**20,192**	**2,909**	**295,203**	**1,853**	**3,454**

Post-Disarmament mop-up operation led to further disarmaments as shown below:

State	Listed Agitators (not registered)	Weapon Collected	Ammunition	UXO, D-Caps & Dynamite	Magazines
Bayelsa	**1,341**	**471**	**1,393**	**62**	**636**
Delta	**2,961**	**185**	**1,720**	**150**	**248**
Edo	**300**	**51**	**117**	**7**	**-**
Total	**4, 602**	**707**	**1,976**	**219**	**684**

2.2.2. **Post Disarmament Challenges**

Just when the world was applauding Nigeria for what seemed like the successful disarmament of the agitators of the Niger Delta, the country

sank into a far more damaging political crisis. President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua who had had a long history of ill-health became very ill and eventually relapsed into unconsciousness in a hospital in Saudi Arabia. In the absence of Yar'Adua, Nigeria was clearly without a political leader as the interplay of political forces had ensured that then Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan never assumed office as the Acting President as prescribed by Nigeria's constitution. This political crisis all but derailed the Amnesty Programme. The disarmed Niger Delta agitators were torn between their love for the sick Yar'Adua who they generally regarded as being sincere and forthright and their loyalty to their kinsman, the Vice President who was battling to be recognized as the Acting President of Nigeria. Predictably the implementation of the post-disarmament phases of the Amnesty Programme became stalled. In apparent bid to keep the disarmed agitators "occupied" while the nation sought a political direction, the PCA under the Defense Minister, Major-General Godwin Abbe perfected the act of inviting leaders of the Militant groups and camps to the nation's capital Abuja where they were usually quartered in hotels and given access to food. The meetings were usually under the pretext of fine-tuning the modalities for the Demobilization and Reintegration phases of the Programme.

At one of these several meetings, General Abbe announced that the Federal Government had decided to send the ex-agitators to camps in batches for demobilization. Several media sources quoted Abbe as telling the ex-agitators that with the successful implementation of the first phase of the amnesty programme by the Federal Government, the next stage is now the rehabilitation and the reintegration of the ex-agitators. According to him, "the essence of this meeting is for the amnesty committee to interact with you all and let you know the steps of government as affecting the next stage of the implementation of the amnesty programme, which has to do with rehabilitation and reintegration of all of us back into the society." He told them that "We are going to be discussing with you the plans we have and how we intend to implement the plans. We are also in this meeting to get your own contribution towards this programme so that together we can move on. After that, we will have someone who will be speaking to us on the process of law and order, so that we take the message back and get ourselves organized".

General Abbe told the former militant leaders that "between now and November 11, 2009, there will be a call up for our boys to start reporting to the camp. And because of the difficulties in

accommodation facilities, we are going to put together two camps. These two camps established are at Agbarho in Delta State and Alu in Rivers State. We have plans to establish another one in Bayelsa State the moment we finish further discussions with the Governor of Bayelsa State who will tell us his own plans. In the process, we are going to have the opportunities of discussing with every individual as to the type of training that individual will be interested in. When we have done that, and we are satisfied, we will move to the next stage of dispersing everyone who have been categorized into the various institutions of their choice".

General Abbe also disclosed to the former Niger Delta agitators that the Federal Executive Council, FEC, had approved the sum of N2 billion intervention fund for Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, for the construction of major roads in all the oil producing states. He explained that the Federal Government is also working towards the construction of the first phase of the railway project from Calabar to Uyo-Port Harcourt-Yenogoa and Warri, adding that the second phase of the project will be linked to Lagos. Abbe noted that President Yar'Adua has directed that work should commence on the Inland waterway project, adding that relevant government agencies have

started studying the East-West Coastal road project which will commence from Calabar. The minister further explained that government is also planning the construction of some houses in various communities across the region with a view to ensure re-integration of the ex-agitators and address the problem of shortage of houses for the residents of the region. The Federal Government, he said, through the National Poverty Eradication Programme, NAPEP, would provide revolving loan for some of the fishermen who embraced the amnesty offer.

Also at the meeting was the Minister of the newly created Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, Chief Ufot Ekaette, who told the militant leaders that what was needed was for "all to work together so that peace is restored to the region". Ekaette said his ministry had organized a job fair and trade expo earlier in the year and "we were able to identify job providers who were not only prepared to offer jobs but to ensure that jobs are given to the Niger Delta. I have also been privileged to hold discussions with some foreign investors and all they are saying is, if peace returns to the region, we will come and invest; so we are appealing that peace is sustained in the region."

In truth, both Abbe and Ekaette were merely stalling for time. There

really was no political or financial will at the time to take the Amnesty Programme to the next phase. Beyond the fact that Nigeria was without a clearly defined political leader at the time, off the N50 Billion that was supposed to take the Programme to the next level only about N8 Billion had been released. Even at that, General Abbe was skeptical about committing the money into any effort since there really was no clear direction. Meanwhile at this point several of the ex-agitators who were often invited to these meetings had begun accusing the Government of insincerity.

President of the Ijaw Youth Council, Dr. Chris Ekiyor, who spoke on behalf of the other ex-agitators at one of the meetings expressed doubts over the sincerity of the Federal Government to implement most of the programmes it enumerated prior to the amnesty deal. According to him, "Thirty days after our people surrendered our arms, we have not seen any progress. The fundamental question is what is government's plan for the pre-and post-amnesty programme. We are tired of having these meetings. We are beginning to ask the question if we actually took the right decision. Those at the helm of affairs already know the problem and we should not be at the planning phase at this time."

Ekiyor noted that, “We are tired of having these meetings. The way and manner we have been attending meetings, I am aware that from 2007 till date, we have exhausted whatever is needed to be said and we are beginning to wonder why we accepted having this meeting today. Today, you call this group, tomorrow you call another group and nothing is being said”.

The political impasse foisted on the country by the long absence of the ailing President Yar’Adua from office and from the country was eventually resolved when the National Assembly invoked the Doctrine of Necessity to unanimously vote for the recognition of the Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan as Nigeria’s Acting President pending Yar’Adua’s recovery and return to office. (Yar’Adua was eventually brought back to Nigeria from Saudi Arabia in air ambulance and he eventually died in the Presidential Villa, Abuja). On assuming office as Acting President, one of the promises Dr. Jonathan made in a nation-wide radio and television broadcast was to build on the Presidential Amnesty Programmme for the Niger Delta ex-agitators.

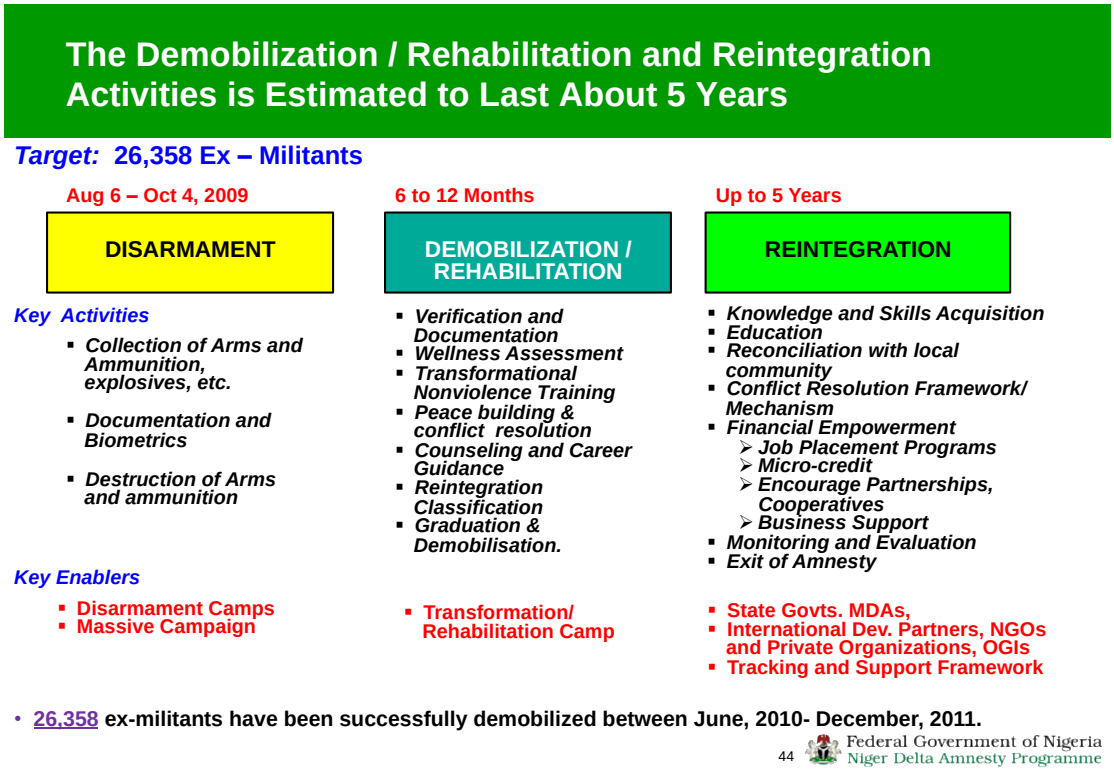
Experts concede that in the implementation of a Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) initiative, DD is usually a relatively straight forward logistical undertaking, ‘R’ requires careful

planning and a long implementation timeframe. In all DDR programmes, long waiting period before disarmed elements are given access to reintegration opportunities have led to unrest and episodes of violence among the disarmed groups.

In response to this fact, President Goodluck Jonathan in March 2010, approved far-reaching measures to facilitate swift and efficient realization of the Post-Amnesty objectives. These include the disbandment of the General Abbe-led Presidential Committee on Amnesty and the domiciliation of the Federal Government Amnesty programme in the office of the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta. To fill this position, the President elevated Mr. Timi Alaibe, who held the position of honourary Adviser to the President on Niger Delta as the substantive Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta and made him the Chairman of the Presidential Amnesty Programme.

Further, the President granted 'Self Accounting Status' to the office of the Special Adviser on Niger-Delta. This was approved to eliminate all bureacratic bottle-necks and ensure smooth and hitch-free running of the Amnesty Programme. Dr. Jonathan also approved a governance structure and frameworks for the management of the Amnesty Programme.

2.2.3. **The Amnesty Programme's Implementation Plan**



The Presidential Amnesty Programme's implementation plan as originally conceived was to cater for the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration needs of the 20,192 Niger Delta ex-agitators who accepted the Federal Government's offer of Amnesty on or before 4TH June 2012. However, in November 2010, several other ex-agitators who though accepted the offer but fearing that they were being tricked into being arrested (and even possible execution) shunned documentation or any form of contact with members of the Armed

forces saddled with that task were documented. Realizing this fact, the Federal Government eventually accepted them into the Programme in what is now referred to as the second phase of the Amnesty Programme. A total of 6,166 were brought into the programme following their identification by their leaders and using the ratio of one-gun-admits-three-persons. So the number increased to 26,358 Niger Delta ex-agitators enrolled in the Presidential Amnesty Programme. The number further accommodated another 3,642 Genius Kids from Violence-Impacted Communities of the Niger Delta Region for Special Educational Scholarship. The total number of Beneficiaries in the Presidential Amnesty to date remains 30,000 persons.

The implementation plan provides for three critical areas:

- **Disarmament**

The implementation plan was designed to have the ex-agitators disarmed in their natural habitats or camps/operational bases and the arms and ammunitions so collected meticulously documented and encased in boxes and transported by men of the Armed Forces to the central collating centre, the Inter-Agency Centre, which was located within the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army in Enugu for storage prior

to public destruction. Also, at this disarmament point Militant Camp or Group's leaders were expected to present for documentation the 'soldiers' or agitators under their command. The Federal Government anticipated that given that it had already reached an agreement with the leaders of the militant groups to pay out on a monthly basis a total sum N65,000 to each of the ex-militants enlisted in the Programme, there was the possibility that the leaders would want to inflate the figures of their 'boys'. It was against this background that a formula of one-gun-admits three persons was adopted. Using this formula, persons brought in by the disarmed leaders were immediately documented and their biometric data taken. In the classical DDR modus (please see subsequent chapter) the disarmed ex-combatants would have been immediately taken out of their natural habitat or operational base and sent to demobilization camps. But in the Nigerian situation, given the haste and rather uncoordinated way the disarmament exercise was carried out, the disarmed ex-combatants remained in their natural habitats (though this time not with their guns). This clearly was very terrible risk as it unduly exposed the ex-combatants to reprisal from rival groups or even communities where they had committed heinous crime(s) during the period of militant

agitation.

Highlight of Major Militant Groups Disarmed - August 6th to October 4th, 2009

S/N	Militant Group	Location	Date Disarmed
1.	• Soboma George	Port Harcourt, Rivers State	August 13, 2009
2.	• Kenneth Opusinji *(kula Community)*	Port Harcourt, Rivers State	August 22, 2009
3.	• Kile Selky Torughedi *(a.k.a. Gen.Young Shall Grow)*	Azuzuama, Bayelsa State	September 6, 2009
4.	• Ezekiel Akpasibewei (Deadly Underdogs)	Warri, Delta State	September 28, 2009
5.	• Franklin Duduku *(a.k.a. Gen Franklin)*	Bakassi, Cross River State	September 25, 2009
6.	• Ebikabowei Victor Ben *(aka Gen. Boyloaf)* • Africa Ukparasia • Paul Ezizi *(a.k.a.Comdr. Ogunbos)* • Pastor Reuben Wilson • Joshua Macaiver	Yenagoa, Bayelsa State	August 22, 2009
7.	• Chief Ateke Tom • Farah Dagogo • Ferdinand Amaibi *(a.k.a. Busta rymes)* • Tamunegiyeifori Proby *(a.k.a. Egbele)*	Port Harcourt, Rivers State	October 3, 2009
8.	• Bonny Gawei • Aboy Muturu • Nabena John	Ogbotobo, Delta State	August 15, 2009
9.	• Government Ekpemupolo *(a.k.a. Gen. Tompolo)* • Chief Bibopre Ajube (a.k.a. Shoot Aside)	Gbaramatu, Delta State Arogbo, Ondo State	October 4, 2009
10.	• Henry Binidodogha *(Egbema 1)*	Ofiniama, Edo State	August 28, 2009

Similarly, in some other DDR Programmes across the world, the guns submitted had been destroyed almost immediately. Again, given the rather peculiar nature of the Disarmamnet Phase of Nigeria's DDR, the collected guns were stored at the Inter-agency Centre in the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army for about a year. Following the approval of President Goodluck Jonathan the Armed Forces collaborated with the Nigerian Presidential Amnesty Office destroyed (also called demolished) all arms and ammunitions collected from the Niger Delta

ex-agitators on Wednesday 25th May 2011 under the stewardship of Hon. Kingsley Kuku. The Historic event took place in Lokpanta, a boundary town between Enugu and Abia States. The destruction of the arms and ammunition brought to a successful closure the Disarmament Phase of the Presidential Amnesty Programme for former agitators in the Niger Delta. (*Facts sourced from the records of the Federal Ministry of Defence; Presidential Amnesty Office, Abuja, Report of the United Nations Conference on DDR held in Sierra Leone between 21-23 June 2005*)

- **Demobilization**

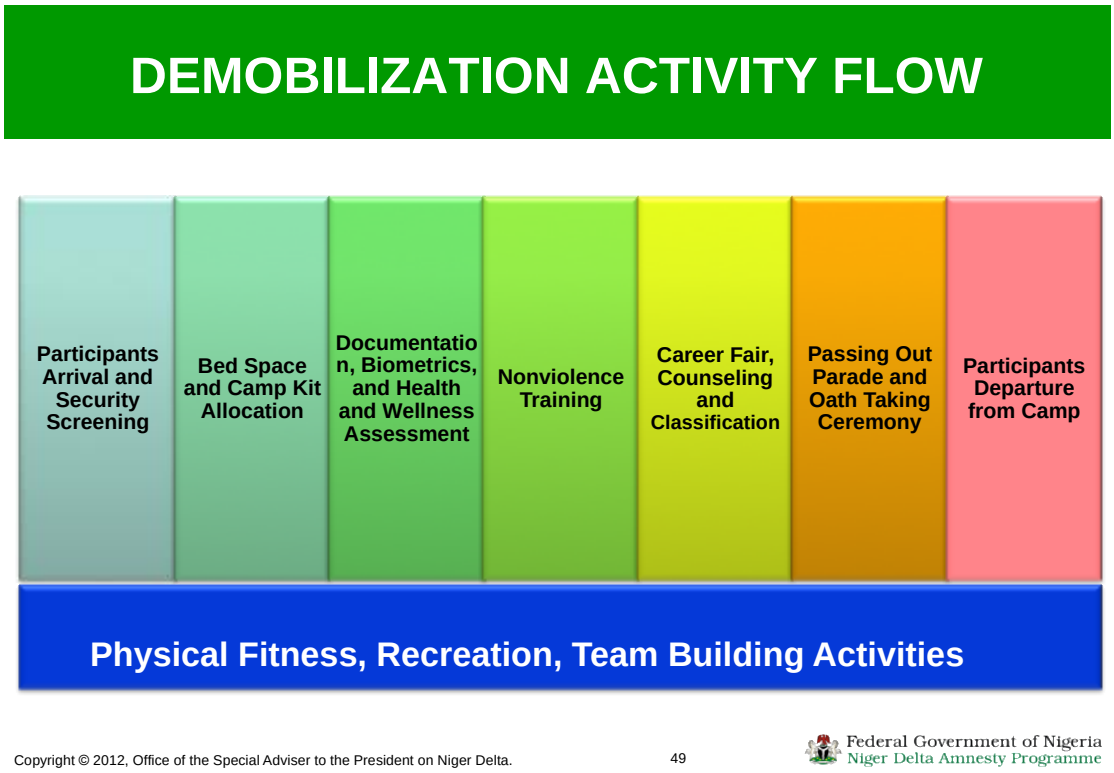
In a classical DDR Programme, Demobilization is aimed at preparing disarmed ex-combatants for reinsertion on reintegration into civil society. The implementation plan of the Nigeria's DDR took this fact into full cognizance. The original plan as designed, was to send the ex-agitators to several camps across the States in the Niger Delta during the demobilization exercise but it was discovered that spreading out the ex-agitators in several camps across the states in the Niger Delta was going to pose huge administrative, political, financial and logistic challenges. A reworked version of the implementation plan provided for just one Demobilization Camp in a State in the Niger Delta. But a

further challenge cropped up: No State was ready to host the camp especially after the ex-agitators who were temporarily quartered at a Camp in Alu, in Rivers State reportedly crossed over to the neighbouring Rivers State University and molested (some accounts said raped) a number of female students. However, following staunch persuasion Mr. Timi Alaibe, the then Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta and the Chairman of the Presidential Amnesty Programme, the Governor of Cross River State, Senator Liyel Imoke yielded the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Orientation Camp in Cross River State to the Amnesty Office for the Demobilization exercise. Fittingly, the camp is located in the serene but far-flung community of Obubra. "There could not have been a better place. The large expanse of land was impressive but above all, the major attraction for us was that the NYSC camp in Obubra was far removed from the main town. Its like, the camp is in the middle of nowhere," Alaibe recalled. He was also quick to point out that Governor Liyel Imoke yielded the camp to the Amnesty Office even in the face of stiff opposition even from members of his cabinet. "I think they were just afraid that we were going to flood their peaceful State with ex-agitators. You would not blame them given the fiery record of some of

the persons we were planning to take there for demobilization," added Alaibe. The Amnesty Office was however confident that the ex-militant would not constitute a problem to the either the inhabitants of Obubra or elsewhere in Cross River State. This confidence, as Alaibe pointed out stemmed from the sheer volume of demobilzation activities that had been earmarked for the ex-combatants.

As designed, the demobilization activities in the camp which spans two weeks, included the following:

- Verification and Documentation
- Wellness Assessment
- Transformational Nonviolence Training
- Peace building & conflict resolution training
- Counseling and Career Guidance
- Reintegration Classification (To ascertain career preference of each ex-militant)
- Graduation & Demobilization



The Demobilization objectives of the Nonviolence Transformation Training is to achieve the following:

- To extinguish the belief of the ex-militant in violence and provide him a more powerful alternative – nonviolence
- To liberate the pardoned from the burden of violence.
- To promote nonviolent method in bringing about a better Niger Delta.
- That Nonviolence method is not a method for cowards though it is physically nonaggressive
- That nonviolence is based on the conviction that the universe is

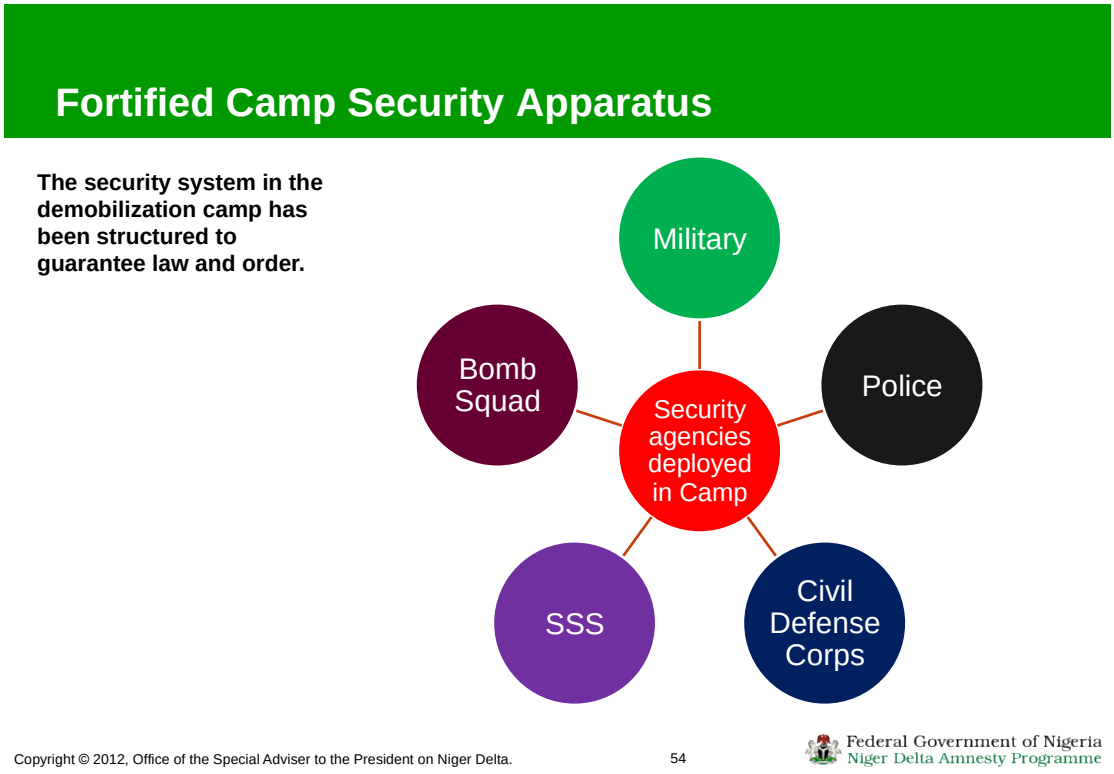
on the side of justice.

- That non-violence directs the “attack” at the issues of injustice, evil et cetera NOT the persons and institutions through which the unjust or evil acts are perpetuated
- That a nonviolence practitioner avoids not only external physical violence but also internal violence of the spirit. But uses the power of love.
- That a nonviolence practitioner does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his understanding and friendship.
- The training begins the process of making the transformed ex-militant a Change Agent.

The ex-agitators were admitted into camp in batches of not more than 1,500 at a time. The names of persons invited to camp were usually published in selected newspapers. This newspaper advertorials usually bear the exact date and time for the commencement of camping for each batch. Ex-agitators invited to the demobilization camp were usually transported in several branded Amnesty buses from the various States in the Niger Delta where they reside to the Obubra Camp in Cross River State. This coordinated movement was to ensure that

only persons identified at the boarding point by either a camp leader or his representative made it to the camp. According to records at the Amnesty Office, this method was adopted given the penchant for uninvited ex-agitators and even other youths who were not enrolled in the Amnesty Programme to invade the camp seeking to be admitted. Indeed tight security measures were critical component of the Demobilization Camp. The security arrangement had a mix of soldiers, Officers and Men of the Department of State Security Services (SSS), the Police and Civil Defense Corp.

CAMP SECURITY FORMAT



This formidable security arrangement was only put in place after the first batch of ex-agitators invited to camp viciously attacked camp management including Mr. Timi Alaibe, the Chairman of the Presidential Amnesty Programme at the time. Alaibe recalls the incident: " We did not have adequate security arrangement before we called the first batch to camp. This was partly the fault of the experts from the UN who advised us that at the Demobilization camp, we should downplay the role of soldiers; that instead security be handed

over to the police. We complied but this turned out to be a costly mistake. The fact that the Obubra Camp was not properly fenced compounded the security problem," Timi Alaibe further disclosed that because of this relaxed security arrangement, some of the former agitators even came to the camp with guns and other weapons. "They openly smoked marijuana and incessantly threatened camp staff." The Amnesty Office hurriedly dispersed the first batch of ex-agitators invited to the demobilization camp. Subsequently, very tight security measures were put in place after the job of securing the camp was fully handed over to the 13 Brigade of the Nigerian Army stationed in Calabar. The Army effectively collaborated with other security agencies to put the ex-agitators in check throughout the demobilization exercise. Similarly, the Obubra camp was totally reworked and a huge fence was raised round the camp. With the initial security challenges tackled, the Amnesty Office successfully demobilized the entire 26,358 persons enrolled in the programme. The Camp had a defined management led by a Camp Commandant. At different times, two retired military officers occupied the position: Lt. Col. Larry Perkins (Rtd) and later Major Fred Anesah (Rtd). The Commandant was usually assisted by a Deputy Commandant who was a serving Officer in the

Nigerian Army not below the rank of a Major. Officers who led the police and State Security Services team in the camp were not below the rank of Superintendent. The Camp also enjoyed the services of a DDR Consultant, Dr. Ferdinand Ikwang, a vastly knowledgeable expert who was engaged by the Amnesty Office as a Lead Consultant given his experience in DDR Programme in such places as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Afghanistan. During each batch, the invited ex-agitators go through the following on entering the camp:

- *Verification and Documentation*
- *Wellness Assessment*
- *Nonviolence Transformational Training*
- *Peace building & conflict resolution*
- *Counseling and Career Guidance*
- *Reintegration Classification*
- *Graduation & Demobilization*

Of these camp activities, the most profound was the Nonviolence Transformational Training. At the Obubra Demobilization Camp, this

training was coordinated by a Nigerian Non-Governmental Organization, the Foundation for Ethnic Harmony in Nigeria (FEHN). The Foundation led by a Nigerian Lawyer, Barrister Allen Onyema, had as faculty members, trainers in nonviolence from the Martin Luther King Centre in Atlanta, Georgia, USA and also trainers from the Albert Luthuli Centre in South Africa. In spite of the fact that FEHN and its team members were given just about four(4), days to have sessions with the ex-agitators, the effect or impact of the training was usually very deep and instantly noticeable. Indeed, in most cases the ex-militants break down in tears while relieving their gory days in the creeks. In general, they became far tolerant and calmer persons just after four days of tutelage from the FEHN team. After a series of lectures on nonviolence and peace methods in conflict resolutions, written and oral examinations were usually administered by FEHN to measure the extent of the participant's assimilation. In most cases, several of the ex-agitators were said to have done well in the examinations while those who were adjudged to have done poorly were given the opportunity to re-take the exams during the time frame allotted to that particular branch in the camp. After this rigorous nonviolence and peace-building training, the ex-agitators were

attended to by religious and career counselors.

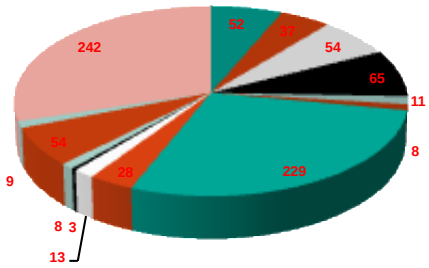
Given the commitment of the Federal Government in the Amnesty Proclamation to aid the reintegration of the ex-agitators into civil society, the Amnesty Office took very seriously the career preferences of the ex-agitators during this demobilization phase. In camp, beyond the efforts of the several career counselors that were engaged, the ex-agitators were exposed to Career Fair. The objective of the Career Fair was to provide information to the participants on the opportunities in the various vocations and career areas. During this Fairs in Camp, Practitioners from Training Partners engaged the participants and respond to all their questions. The result was that the ex-militant became better informed on career/vocational choices aligned to their natural abilities and preferences. Thereafter experts led them through the career classification processes. During this classification exercise, each of the ex-agitators was interviewed by the experts with a view to ascertaining the career path he or she would wish to toe after demobilization. Was this commitment was secured, the participant was usually given a form to fill indicating his/her qualification, age and career choice.

2.2.4. **Demobilization of Female Ex-Agitators**

The Amnesty Office was sensitive to the fact that over one thousand women were enlisted in the Presidential Amnesty Programme. Some of them were actual combatants while several were either girl- friends, wives, informants or cooks of the male combatants. Special arrangements were therefore made for the demobilization of these female delegation at the Obubra Camp.

A total of 822 women were registered participants under the first phase of the Amnesty Programme. At the demobilization camp some of the women came in with their children just as there were a few childbirths during their participation in camp. Their attendance of the Demobilization camp was restricted to batches 1, 11 and 12. This was to allow for the special attention their gender type command. Their career aspirations were also effectively captured and classified for processing for the purposes of reintegration into civil society.

Classification Analysis of the Women in Demobilization



BOUTIQUE
ENTREPRENEUR
CATERING & HOTEL MANAGEMENT
FASHION DESIGN AND DRESS MAKING
FILLING STATION OPERATOR
FISH FARMING
FURTHER EDUCATION
HAIRDRESSING/BARBING AND COSMETOLOGY
ICT
INTERIOR DECORATION
MARINE
OUTDOOR CATERING SERVICES

CATEGORY	TOTAL
BOUTIQUE	52
ENTREPRENEUR	37
CATERING & HOTEL MANAGEMENT	54
FASHION DESIGN AND DRESS MAKING	65
FILLING STATION OPERATOR	11
FISH FARMING	8
FURTHER EDUCATION	229
HAIRDRESSING/BARBING AND COSMETOLOGY	28
ICT	13
INTERIOR DECORATION	3
MARINE	8
OUTDOOR CATERING SERVICES	54
PIPELINE WELDING	9
SUPERMARKET/PROVISION/COSMETICS STORE	242
TOTAL	813

Federal Government of Nigeria
Niger Delta Amnesty Programme

2.2.5. **Graduation and Passing Out Parade**

In the Demobilization Camp, each of the transformed ex-agitators was issued two certificates. The first certificate was issued by FEHN indicating that the participants had gone through nonviolence transformational training. The second one was issued by the Amnesty Office certifying that the ex-militant had gone through all the camp processes and had therefore been fully demobilized. On their last day in camp, a passing-out parade was usually mounted and a Special Guest, most times the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta

or his Representatives, inspects the Guard of Honour and mounts the dais to take the salute. It was usually a very colourful event and was often thoroughly enjoyed by the former militant agitators. Prior to their exiting the camp, a bonfire party was usually organized for the batch by the camp management. Fully demobilized ex-combatants were usually returned to their preferred destinations in the States in the Niger Delta by branded Amnesty Buses escorted by armed soldiers and other security agents

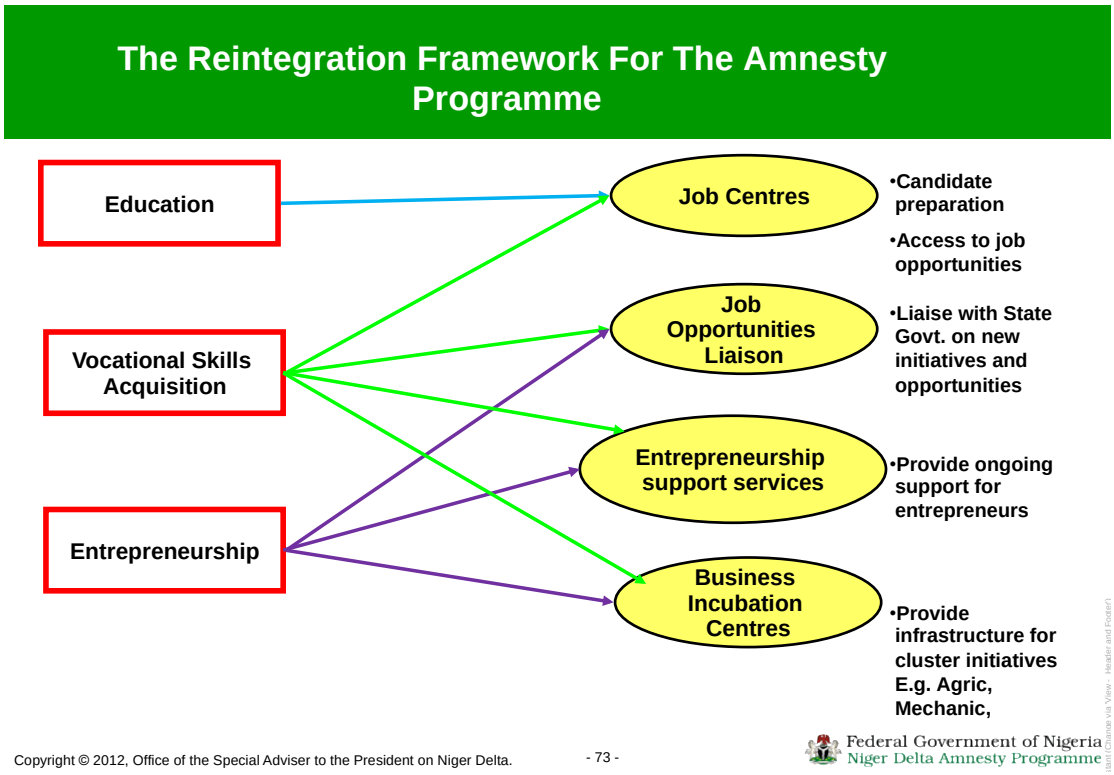
Demobilization Details of the 26,358 Ex-agitators Enrolled in the First & Second Phases of the Amnesty Programme.

Amnesty Demobilisation Details (Phase 1) - Batch 1-17

Batch	States	Duration	Classification Data
Batch 1	All 9 states from the Niger delta region	28th June 2010 to 10th July 2010	1785
Batch 2	Delta, Edo, Ondo and Imo states	1st August 2010 to 10th August 2010	687
Batch 3	Bayelsa state	14th August 2010 to 25th August 2010	1003
Batch 4	Rivers state	1st September 2010 to 12th September 2010	999
Batch 5	Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, Edo and Ondo States	15th September 2010 to 27th September 2010	1045
Batch 6	Delta State	4TH October 2010 to 17th October 2010	1200
Batch 7	Bayelsa and Ondo States	19th October 2010 to 31st October 2010	1199
Batch 8	Rivers State	2ND November 2010 to 12th November 2010	1196
Batch9	Bayelsa State	14th November 2010 to 24th November 2010	1200
Batch 10	Delta State	28th November 2010 to 8th December 2010	1299
Batch 11	Females (Niger delta states and NDDC)and Males	11th December 2010 to 21th December 2010	1344
Batch 12	Rivers State and NDDC	26 February 2011 to 11 March, 2011	1219
Batch 13	Bayelsa State	3rd May 2011 to 16th May, 2011	1200
Batch 14	Rivers State	23rd June,2011 to 5th July, 2011	1200
Batch 15	Bayelsa State	30th July 2011 to 12th August 2011	1500
Batch 16	Rivers State	15th August 2011 to 27th August 2011	1500
Batch 17	Bayelsa State and Females	18th September 2011 to 25th September 2011	616
			20,192

- **Reintegration**

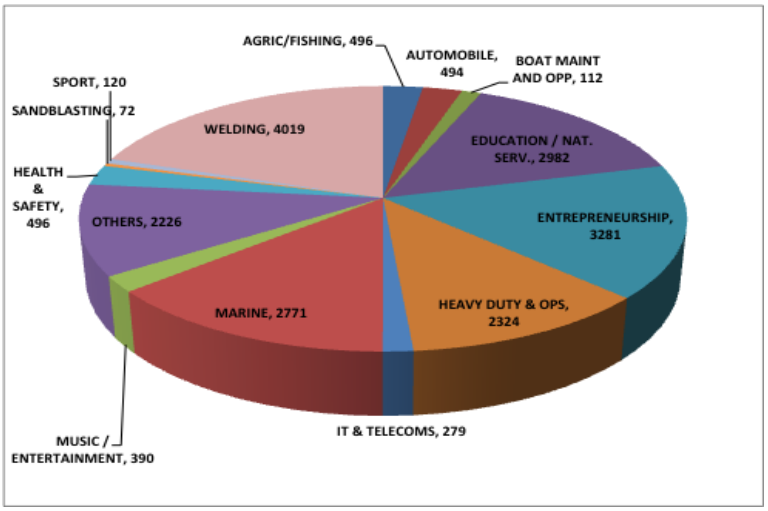
The United Nations and other experts have since affirmed the fact that in DDR Programmes, the most difficult phase is the 'R' (Reintegration). This is so because reintegrating former combatants into civil society takes several months or even years of careful planning not to mention huge funding and political support. This has clearly been the case in the Nigerian situation. Even while several of the ex-agitators were being demobilized, the Federal Government through the Amnesty Office, pursuant to the reintegration commitment as espoused in the Amnesty Proclamation, resolved to make yearly budgetary provisions for the Amnesty Programme, particularly for the reintegration component. Given this governmental support, the Amnesty Office secured approval to proceed to invite training partners to offer skills training and formal education to the demobilized ex-agitators. The Nigerian Government adopted a three-pronged reintegration framework that emphasizes formal education, vocational skills acquisition and Entrepreneurship training as illustrated below:



The Demobilization records of the Presidential Amnesty Office indicated that the ex-agitators were largely youths whose average ages ranged from 16 – 48 years. Given this youthful population, the Government resolved to return as many of the ex-agitators as possible to formal education given that many of them dropped out of school to take up arms in the creeks. But this preference for formal education posed its peculiar challenges: many of the ex-combatants in their classification records preferred vocational training which took shorter time and seemed to present them the opportunity of securing

'lucrative' jobs in the several oil multinational companies in the Niger Delta. A thorough analysis of the classification records of the 20,192 ex-agitators demobilized in the first phase of the Amnesty Programme indicated that only 2,982 ex-agitators indicated their desire to return to formal education. The entire career classification breakdown is offered below:

Classification Analysis – Batch 1 - 17



CAREER COURSE	NO
AGRIC/FISHING	496
AUTOMOBILE	494
BOAT MAINT & OPP	242
EDUCATION	2982
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	3281
HEAVY DUTY & OPS	2324
IT & TELECOMS	279
MARINE	2771
MUSIC / ENTERTAINMENT	390
OTHERS	2226
HEALTH & SAFETY	496
SANDBLASTING	72
SPORT	120
WELDING	4019

Federal Government of Nigeria
Niger Delta Amnesty Programme

As shown in the chart above, the ex-agitators preferred training in such oil and gas fields as Welding (4,019); Marine i.e Seafaring, underwater diving, marine mechanic etc (2,771); Heavy Duty Operations including

Crane Operations (2,324). One of the acclaimed pitfalls of DDR Programmes is the difficulty in getting ex-combatants undertake training in areas other than the ones they indicated interest in during the career classification exercise in the Demobilization Camp. It will be right to aver that the Nigerian Programme is equally a victim of this challenge as training needs of the persons enlisted in the Amnesty Programme was largely tailored to suit the stated preferences of the ex-combatants. By February 2011, the Amnesty Office commenced the placement of demobilized Niger Delta ex-agitators in vocational skills acquisition institutions both in the country and offshore. As at August 2012, the Amnesty Office's record showed that a total of 11,525 fully demobilized former Niger Delta agitators had been placed in skills acquisition centres as well as in formal education within the country and offshore. Of this number, 4,929 were listed as either been trained or have graduated from training facilities or Universities offshore while the balance of 6,382 were either been trained or had graduated from training centres or Universities within the country. Similarly, by September 2012, 6,067 transformed ex-combatants were being processed for deployment during the 2012 fiscal year, to vocational training centres as well as universities (both within the country and

offshore).

The Amnesty Office's records further showed that the Amnesty Programme's beneficiaries were as at September 2012 in 39 local training centres in 12 States of the Federation; while the ex-combatants placed in offshore educational and skill acquisition centres were in the United States of America, Italy, Russia, South Africa, Malaysia, England, Israel, Sri Lanka, India, Benin Republic, Cyprus, Poland, Ghana, Turkey, Romania, Belarus, United Arab Emirates, The Philippines as well as Trinidad and Tobago. More of the trainees are due to be deployed to skill acquisition facilities in Greece, Germany and Canada.

List of Local Training centres
As At August 2012

S/N	Training Centre	Number of Trainees	Duration	Course	Location
1	AMAEBI INTEGRATED SERVICES	50	6	Fashion Design	Lagos
2	BALAMERE INVESTMENTS LTD	50	6	Basic Literacy & Fashion Design	Lagos
3	BEBECO PEACE CNF GLOBAL NIG LTD	97	9	Welding & Fabrication	Warri
4	BROAD EQUIP LTD	47	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
5	CAD CONSULTING LTD	50	4	Entrepreneurship	Port Harcourt
6	CENTRE FOR CREATIVE ART	50	6	Acting & Interior Decoration	Port Harcourt
7	CHARLTON 2GO	80	9	Welding & Fabrication	Port Harcourt
8	COG GLOBAL LTD	96	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
9	CREEKNET GLOBAL SERVICES	84	4	Entrepreneurship	Akure
10	EAGLE 8 CONSULTING	50	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
11	EBIDIESE	77	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
12	EBIKEDOUMENE NIGERIA LTD	50	6	Catering & Hotel Management	Lagos
13	ELOFABIO	50	9	Welding & Fabrication	Oleh
14	GENERIC TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE	50	12	Maritime	Warri
15	GLASSFA CONTINENTAL LIMITED	100	9	Welding & Fabrication	Warri
16	GUARANTY TURNKEY SYSTEMS	91	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
17	H VILLE LTD	31	12	Sports and Football Administration	Ilorin
18	HIMS ACADEMY LTD	48	4	Entrepreneurship	Enugu
19	HOK CONSULTING	40	6	Catering & Hotel Management	Lagos
20	IK ENGINEERING LTD	40	9	Welding & Fabrication	Port-Harcourt
21	IXIA INTEGRATED SERVICES	20	9	Welding & Fabrication	Port Harcourt
22	KOMIXCO NIGERIA LTD	60	6	Heavy Duty Operations	Warri
23	LYTE CONCEPT LTD	100	9	Welding & Fabrication	Port-Harcourt
24	MANIC CONSULTING	50	4	Entrepreneurship	Abeokuta
25	MASTERMINDS HRSG LTD	50	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
26	OMAB JOSAB GLOBAL LTD	50	4	Entrepreneurship	Lagos
27	POLAR AFRIQUE CONSULTING	100	4	Entrepreneurship	Benin
28	RDK EXCEPTIONALS LTD	30	6	Crane Operations	Akure
29	SCOTCHVILLE INDUSTRIAL CONSORTIUM	76	9	Under Water Welding	Warri
30	SKY STRENGTH SERVICES LTD	17	9	Welding & Fabrication	Yenagoa
31	TECHNO DIFFUSION LTD	45	9	Welding & Fabrication	Oshogbo
32	TUBOS INTERNATIONAL	50	6	Information & Communications Technology	Ondo
33	UBAGA CONSTRUCTION	40	9	Welding & Fabrication	Warri
34	VESTED VENTURES LTD	50	4	Entrepreneurship	Ogun
35	WAD EMPERORS SECURTIY SERVICES LTD	40	9	Intelligence and Security Operations	Lagos
36	WESTLANTO COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL LTD	50	9	Entrepreneurship	Port-Harcourt
		2059			

List of Offshore Vocational Training centres
As At August 2012

S/N	Training partners	Country	Training Centre	Training Course(s)	Total No. In Offshore Training
1	Alltime Peace Media Comm	Dubai	Sharjar Institute of Technology, Dubai	Sharja Institute of Technology	115
2	Ashland Investment Services	South Africa	Afrikaan Union Aviation Academy, Cleaveland Cranes, ITS, SAJ Competency	Aviation, Welding, Crane Operations and Marine	35
3	Brat Pack	India	PSG Technology College, Sri Ramakrishna Institute and PSN Training Institute	Welding & Diving, Pipe Fitting, Electrical Installation, Cranes & Heavy Duty Machinery	26
4	COCPED Nigeria	South Africa	S.A. Maritime School and Transport College	Marine & Port Logistics	48
5	Edy-Bo Investment Company	Ghana	Power Planet	Oil Spillage and Remediation	39
6	Esplora	India	B Inspection T and Eurotech	Welding and Non Destructive Testing	86
7	Fa-alas	Ghana	Ghana Oil Drilling Academy Consultancy	Drilling Technology	77
8	GLOBAL OIL	Poland	Gydnia Maritime Academy	Marine	17
9	ICNPD	Dubai	Proclad Academy	Pipeline welding, Crane operation, HSE and Electrical Installation	157
10	KAR	Benin Republic	KAR Automobile	Automobile	98
11	KDI Oil & Gas	Dubai	Middle East Industrial Training Institute	Oil Drilling, Well Head Operation and Rigging	36
12	Learning Resources	Ghana	National Vocational Training Institute	Pipeline Welding	200
13	Main Global Logistics	Isreal	ATID College	Crane, welding, automobile & electrical	68
14	Marine Graphic	Dubai	Fujera Aviation Academy	Drilling and Avation	65
15	Markeason Holdings Limited	Phillipines	John Hope College	Welding and Electrical installation	52
16	MDY & Sons Global Limited	Romania	Grigore Loachim Training Center	Oil and Gas drilling	47
17	Merryl Fynch	Namibia	Institute for Development and Empowerment In Africa	Agriculture	88
18	Omab Josab Global Ltd	Ghana	Ghana Ports & Harbour Authority, Tema	Crane Operations	50
19	Perry Solutions	Ghana	Kumar Farms, Kumasi	Advanced Fish Farming	30
20	Planes of Mamre	South Africa	Flight Training School, Midrand	Aviation	20
21	Qess Services Limited	Trinidad & Tobago	National Energy Skill Centre (NESC)	Heavy Equipment Technician, Automotive Services Technician, Instrumentation and Industrial Maintenance	59
22	Softwire Digital Solutions	India	PSG Technology College, Sri Ramakrishna Institute and PSN Training Institute	Welding & Diving, Pipe Fitting, Auto Mech, Rigger, Drilling, Cranes & Heavy Duty Machinery	89
23	Sunrise Management Company	USA	Commercial Diving Academy	Welding	13
24	Taval Nigeria Entreprises	Italy	Scuola Edile Genovese	Marine Mechanics	48
25	T-Rex Mab Global Services	Malaysia	Vocational Education Training Academy	Automation, Wedling	41
26	Tubos International	South Africa	Northlink College	Pipe fitting, welding, boiler making, sand blasting, auto mechanics	62
27	Water Mountain	USA	Wyotech (Daytona Beach, Florida)	Marine Mechanics	21
28	Wilbahi Investment Company	South Korea	Induk University	Electrical, Automobile, welding & Marine	84
					1771

Distribution of Education Programmes

SN	Institution	Category	Areas of Disciplines	Number of Delegates
1	**IGBINEDION UNIVERSITY, OKADA**	LOCAL	LAW, POLITICAL SCIENCE, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, MASS COMMUNICATIONS, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, ACCOUNTANCY, ICT	**205**
2	**LEAD CITY UNIVERSITY, IBADAN**	LOCAL	POLITICAL SCIENCE, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, ICT, MASS COMMUNICATIONS, ACCOUNTANCY	**43**
3	**NOVENA UNIVERSITY, KWALE**	LOCAL	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, ICT,POLTICAL SCIENCE, MASS COMMUNICATIONS, ACCOUNTANCY	**56**
4	**BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY, BENIN**	LOCAL	MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, ARTS, SCIENCES	**160**
5	**LINTON UNIVERSITY, MALAYSIA**	OFFSHORE	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION & SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY, , ACCOUNTANCY, BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	**76**
6	**INTERCOLLEGE LARNACA, CYPRUS**	OFFSHORE	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY.	**67**
7	**PEOPLES FRIENDSHIP UNIVERSITY, RUSSIA**	OFFSHORE	MEDICINE, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, ICT, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ACCOUNTANCY	**50**
8	**MURDOCH UNIVERSITY, UAE**	OFFSHORE	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION & SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY, , ACCOUNTANCY	**35**

Distribution of Education Programmes(cont'd)

SN	Institution	Category	Areas of Disciplines	Number of Delegates
9	**BELARUSIAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF INFORMATICS & RADIO-ELECTRONICS, BELARUS**	OFFSHORE	MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, RADIO ELECTRONICS, APPLIED SCIENCES	**27**
10	**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY , SOUTH AFRICA**	OFFSHORE	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY.	**60**
11	**UNIVERSITIES OF PLYMOUTH, SWANSEA, ANGLIA RUSKIN, WALES, PORTSMOUTH & COVENTRY, INTERNATIONAL COLLEGES OF PORTSMOUTH,LIVERPOOL & GLASGOW, UNITED KINGDOM**	OFFSHORE	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, ICT, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ACCOUNTANCY	**124**
12	**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF LEFKE, TURKEY**	OFFSHORE	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY.	**75**
13	**LIMKOWIMG UNIVERSITY OF CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY, MALAYSIA**	OFFSHORE	ACCOUNTING, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, COMPUTER SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMIN, ENGINEERING, BANKING & FINANCE	**81**

2.2.6. **Offshore Training for the Ex-agitators**

Like other DDR Programmes before it, questions (and even criticisms) have been raised about huge sums of money being expended to train former agitators in institutions and facilities outside the country. But experts and Nigerian Amnesty Office Officials have risen in staunch defense of this offshore training for several of the Niger Delta ex-agitators. Chief among the reasons often given are as follows:

- That there are very limited opportunities within Nigeria in both the educational and vocational training areas hence the need to seek training opportunities abroad. They argue that in 2010 alone over 50,000 qualified candidates were unable to secure admission in Nigeria's tertiary institution.

- That the United Nations DDR codes deliberately encourage the relocation of ex-combatants from their previous operational bases or natural habitats to expedite rehabilitation and reintegration processes. It was argued that it is usually easier to change the mindset of an ex-combatant once taken as far away from his natural habitat as possible.

- That certain kinds of specialized vocational training courses are more available offshore than in Nigeria.

- That the exposure and skill transfer will empower the ex-agitators to add value to the communities and the country at large when they return home.

- That vast opportunities for practical experience especially in the area of vocation/technical training exist in several other countries.

2.3. **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is neo-Marxian. Unlike the orthodox Marxian thesis that divides society into two antagonistic classes of the bourgeoisie or capitalist and the proletariat or workers, we see a different combination of two classes in Nigeria. On the one hand is the ruling class and its exploitative collaborators comprising oil company executives, rent-seeking elites of the Niger Delta itself, and the oppressive military officers usually deployed to forcefully suppress dissent and protest in the Niger Delta. On the other hand is the non-ruling, exploited masses of the Niger Delta, who, in spite of being

deprived of benefits of oil production in their ancestral communities, are existentially threatened through unmitigated and inhuman oil production activities marked by spillages that destroy the means of their subsistent livelihood: fishing and farming. Oil spillages destroy aquaculture ecology and makes the soil impotent for farming.

The existential threat posed by oil production in the Niger Delta is the springboard of antagonistic relations between the masses of the region, the youths in particular, and the Nigerian ruling class. The antagonism reached its apogee at the turn of the 21st century by assuming violence involving multiplicity of armed youth groups disrupting oil production activities, conscious of the dependence of the Nigerian state and its parasitic ruling elites on oil revenues.

CHAPTER THREE

CAUSATIVE FACTORS OF AGITATIONS IN THE NIGER DELTA

3.1. Preamble

Agitations and activism in the oil-rich communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta assumed very militant and violent character from the early 1990s, which ushered in the emergence of ethnic militias and the attendant violent protestations against economic and political marginalization by the Federal government. In the decade that followed, the agitations and activism became increasingly militant and radical, including calls for self-determination and outright secession, all of which had negative socio-political and economic effects on the country's unity, stability and progress. The Zone, in part because of its riverine/swamp topography, has historically been politically extremely fragmented, and subject to frequent and at times violent disputes over land and fishing rights, as well as over traditional leaders' political jurisdictions. These all lead to cycles of "revenge violence." As more powerful weapons became available in the Niger Delta in the mid and late 1990s, disputes became more violent. Youth gangs became more powerful who were willing and able to protect their villages and elders.

As democratic competition returned in 1998-1999, some of these same youths took up a new line of activity, paid disruption of campaign events, and/or provided candidates protection from such unwanted attentions. The situation in the zone has been worsened by the fact that traditional leaders have lost much credibility and respect as many of them are known to have been corrupted by payments from successive Nigerian Federal Governments, (especially during the long years of military rule) and the oil companies.

Experts and scholars have severally documented inevitable and serious conflict of interest between communities in the Niger Delta that bear the environmental damage of oil exploration and extraction and the rest of the nation for which oil money is essentially a free good. Studies have shown that over the years, Niger Delta populations, clearly a minority, regularly lose these struggles. Had they some authority over environmental issues, many current problems might be more manageable. Lacking this, and given the federal government's control over all subsurface resources as well as "ownership" of all land, all Delta issues inevitably become national issues. The Federal Government has over the years failed to resolve these. In their half-hearted bid to win over Niger Deltans and end discontent in the zone,

previous administrations frequently corrupted community leaders. There is a deep distrust in the Niger Delta concerning the federal government and a feeling among local populations that most other Nigerians care little for their problems, so long as the oil flows. Activists, youths and community leaders in Niger Delta constantly campaign for a larger share of the “federal cake”, most of which originates in their homelands.

As a result of these factors, and because oil companies did and do make tempting targets, many aggrieved youths in the Delta resort to direct action to extract compensation for their perceived losses. They invade oil company properties, take employees hostage, and shut down facilities. Oil companies typically negotiate release of captured personnel and properties with relative ease by paying the youths modest ransoms. This oil company strategy creates a "moral hazard": the willingness of companies to pay ransoms stimulates imitators of this lucrative "business," leading to sustained disruptions, at times to competition among youths, and to a general sense of anarchy in the Delta.

The International Study Groups on Africa’s 2007 report on the Niger Delta clearly held that another conflict closely linked to federal control

over the Niger Delta's oil wealth and the economy in general is the intense competition for political office. The report argued that for politicians in the Niger Delta, and for their communities, "control of federal office opens the high road to resources that can be diverted from public to private or community control. Competition is naturally intense for federal political offices and has historically turned violent in the second election in each of Nigeria's two previous republics". In summary, the report said federal control over oil and much of the rest of the economy tends to "federalize" many economic problems, particularly in the Niger Delta, and stimulates intense efforts to gain and hold office throughout Nigeria.

The report acknowledged the legendary mistrust of Federal Government by the Niger Delta communities: "In this culture of cynicism about government, economic stagnation and hopelessness, historical political fragmentation, and low-grade violent conflict, pre-existing political fragmentation became institutional disintegration. Small groups of youths with weapons went unchallenged and found oil companies easy targets for hold-up and ransom. As the oil companies paid off the first gangs, others were inspired and soon followed suit." Throughout the 1990s, incidents of youth gangs extorting payments

from oil companies and engaging in violence escalated, until they leveled off and began dropping in 1999.

But the climax of militant agitation in the Niger Delta came on 25 September 2004 when the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) led by Alhaji Mujahid Dokubo-Asari threatened to attack oil facilities and infrastructure in the Delta region. Royal Dutch Shell responded the next day by evacuating 235 personnel from its oil fields. The NDPVF threatened to declare an all-out war against Obasanjo's government on 1 October, 2004 and told all oil companies and their foreign workers to leave the Delta. Obasanjo entered into negotiations with the group and a ceasefire and disbarment plan were declared on 29 September 2004. By 5 October, Alhaji Mujahid Dokubo-Asari, withdrew from disarmament obligations. The rest of October was punctuated by a series of oil worker strikes and fluctuations in the global price of oil. On 28 October, the NDPVF began to turn its weapons over to the government.

In November, strikes continued and by the 15th, the government agreed to lower domestic oil prices. The unions suspended their strikes the next day. Unfortunately, fighting began anew when members of the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV) attacked the Okrika

region. The NDPVF responded by dropping out of disarmament plans. On 30 November, the Nigerian government revealed that over one million barrels of crude were lost each week during November. On 15 June 2005, six Shell workers (two Germans and two Nigerians) were kidnapped. A group calling itself the Iduwini National Movement for Peace and Development claimed responsibility. Three days later, all six workers were released but their kidnappers stated that Shell was still under threat as it had yet to follow through on promises of development in the region.

The situation between the government and the NDPVF worsened when Asari was arrested for treason on 20 September 2005. The next day 300 NDPVF turned out for a protest armed with machetes and promising revenge. On 22 September, over 100 agitators stormed an oil pumping station. Threats of more seizures led to another station being closed but government forces were able to reopen both stations by 26 September. Asari was formally charged with treason on 6 October. The charge bore death penalty, if conviction was secured. In what was probably a response to the charges, agitators blew up a pipeline and killed eight people in December, 2005. As a result of this attack Shell was forced to delay crude shipments out of Nigeria.

In January 2006, a new militant group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger River Delta (MEND), entered the fray. MEND which was closely linked to the NDPVF, demanded among other things, the release of Asari and $1.5 billion in compensation from Shell for the pollution they claim it caused. MEND's first significant act was an attack on Italy's Eni SPA petroleum company. The death of nine Eni officials forced the company to evacuate its staff and contractors from the area. Along with further kidnappings and another withdrawal of Shell workers , it was estimated that the instability had resulted in a 10% drop in Nigerian oil production. The violence spiraled on and on even as the Federal Government consistently adopted the military option to quell dissent in the Niger Delta.

It was against this backdrop of repressive militarization of the Delta region and the perpetration of sordid human rights abuses that several ethnic Environmental Movement Organizations (EMOs) and armed non-state youth organizations emerged in a bid to counter the continued harassment, intimidation, rape, oppression and repression of the Niger Deltans by the Nigerian state and its collaborative partners-the MNOCs, and to further internationalize and elevate the plight of the Delta minorities to a prime position in both internal and

international discourse. EMOs such as: MOSOP, Urhobo Youth Movement (UYOMO), Ikwerre Youth Movement (IYM), and Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) materialized. In addition, non-state ethno-cultural groups like: the Federated Niger Delta Izon Communities (FNDIC), the Meinbutu Boys, the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), the Coalition for Militant Action (COMA), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and the Martyrs Brigade, also sprouted in the region. Clearly, this scenario led to—the democratization of the means of violence as various non-state armed groups proliferated and wielded lethal weapons, Small and Light Weapons (SALW) with which they disrupted and destroyed the petroleum infrastructure of the MNOCs, attacked and inflicted severe damages on the state security forces in a bid to checkmate their wanton escapades in the region, and also wreaked havoc on numerous Niger Delta communities. (Ike Okonta, 2000).

Several Scholars estimate that by the end of 2004 for example, there were about 1 to 3 million SALW in Nigeria – predominantly in the Niger Delta (Ike Okonta, Agboton-Johnson, Ebo & Mazal, 2004). This of course may have increased in the subsequent years due to the proliferation of armed groups and upsurge in the tempo of oil violence

in the Delta region.

In a nutshell, violence in the Niger Delta region revolved (and still revolves) around some salient fundamental issues, which the Nigerian state, for several decades did not summon the much needed political will to tackle since crude oil was struck in Oloibiri (present day Bayelsa state) in 1956. These include:

3.2. Environmental Pollution and Despoliation

Multinational Oil companies (MNOCs) have been massively involved in the production of crude oil in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, since 1956 when Shell British Petroleum successfully discovered oil in commercial quantities at Oloibiri in present-day Bayelsa state of Nigeria. Ever since, Shell (Shell Petroleum Development Company, an affiliate of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group), which produces more than 40 percent of crude oil, Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited (MPNU), Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL), Nigerian Agip Oil Company Limited (NAOC), Elf Petroleum Nigeria Limited (EPNL), and Texaco Overseas Petroleum Company of Nigeria Unlimited (TOPCON), have been operating in the region on the basis of joint venture agreements with the Nigerian government through NNPC. After five consecutive

decades of oil exploration and production in the Niger Delta, it is estimated that these MNOCs have with the Nigerian state jointly earned well over $600 billion dollars (over 60 trillion naira) from the sale of crude oil between 1958 and 2008 (Gilbert, 2009).

However, massive oil wealth has not translated into development in the Niger Delta. Instead, it has caused large-scale environmental contamination, dilapidation, and outright desolation through dredging, construction of access canals to create paths to installations, oil spillages, gas flaring, oil well blowouts, improper disposal of drilling mud, and pipeline leakages and vandalization (Ojakorotu and Okeke-Uzodike, 2006: 96-97). For example, between 1976 and 1996, it was estimated that well over 60,000 oil spills occurred in the region, and about 2,369,471 barrels of crude oil leaked into the environment. In addition, Shell alone acknowledged that it spilled about 106,000 barrels from Jones creek between 1997 and 1998 (Eyinla and Ukpo, 2006). Similarly, statistics reveal that Shell, MPNU, NAOC, CNL, and EPNL are the worst offenders in the condemnable act of gas flaring which releases poisonous carbon dioxide and methane from not less than 275 flow stations in the Niger Delta. Moreover, statistics prove that these MNOCs flare not less than 75 % of the crude-associated gas,

which translates to about 2.5 billion cubic feet daily in the Niger Delta. This is valued at $2.5 billion annually and represents 40% of Africa‘s natural gas consumption (ICG, 2006; Watts, 2008).

Furthermore, oil prospecting and exploitation operations pollute the aquifer (underground water) and the environment, especially through the process of cuttings re-injection used for several years by some drilling waste management companies, in collaboration with the MNOCs. Several waste management companies deceitfully dumped the wastes in rivers, seas and the environment, while giving the impression that they were reinjected into old oil wells; this was before the introduction and use of the current method of filtration. Consequently, there is a high level of farmland and aquatic species destruction. The Niger Deltans, who were originally farmers and fishermen, have their means of livelihood destroyed; as there is loss of fertile farmland, decline in agricultural produce, migration, loss and destruction of aquatic resources, contamination of natural sources of drinking water, atmospheric pollution, rapid corrosion of roofing sheets (acid rain)

3.3. Political Domination and Over-centralization of the Federal Government

It is the view of many Niger Deltans that the orchestrated, skewed and superfluous centralization of the Nigerian federalism by consecutive military and civilian regimes directed mainly by the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo respectively, ensured the expropriation of valuable resources from the their region for the development of other parts of Nigeria. The principle of derivation, which was hitherto based on fifty percent resource allocation to region (state) of origin, was abrogated; rather, new variables suddenly sprang up as the bases for the allocation of resources to states; and this was obviously to the detriment of the socio-economic development of the delta region and its people, and would not have been practicable if crude oil were to be largely exploited from the geographical territory of any of the majority ethnic groups, especially the Hausa/Fulani. It was only after several years of peaceful and violent protests by Niger Deltans; and shedding of their innocent blood, that the Nigerian state agreed to the 13% derivation, which was enshrined in the 1999 constitution.

3.4. Pervasive Poverty and Underdevelopment

The perception among the people of the Niger Delta, particularly, oil activists is that over fifty years of ecological degradation and despoliation, the use of detestable legal instruments of subjugation and domination, and the intentional marginalization, denial and exclusion of the delta minorities, cumulatively foisted a specter of unemployment, poverty and massive underdevelopment on the Niger Delta region. Despite the substantial contribution of the region to the socio-economic development of Nigeria, it is indeed paradoxical when one juxtaposes the monumental poverty and underdevelopment in the region vis-à-vis its colossal input to national wealth.

These are some of the underlying issues on which militancy in the Niger Delta is predicated and unless they are realistically addressed, violence in the region will all too certainly return even in spite of the Presidential Amnesty Programme.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND APPRAISAL OF THE DDR PROGRAMME

4.1. Prelude to Peace

Whereas, we have previously furnished some background reviews of the situation that led to agitations in the Niger Delta as a precursor to peace efforts, it is apposite to give some graphical illustrations of the agitation as a prelude to peace. On May 29, 2007, a new President, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, who had won in the Presidential election of that year, was sworn-in to succeed President Olusegun Obasanjo. At this point escalated militancy in the Niger Delta was threatening seriously to crash the Nigerian economy. Instead of reducing militant activities immediately after the elections, MEND opted for a defiant show of strength. Agitators attacked pipelines supplying the Brass terminal, temporarily reducing Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC, a subsidiary of Eni of Italy) production by over 75 per cent. Once satisfied it had made its point and in deference to moderates who wished to test the new government's promise to address Niger Delta grievances, MEND released many of its hostages and declared a one-

month ceasefire. After its expiration on 3 July 2007, it threatened to renew attacks. On 12 November 2007, it attacked the Qua Iboe terminal in Akwa Ibom State.

However apart from the politically motivated hostage incidents for which MEND usually claimed responsibility, a surge in criminal hostage-taking in the region resulted in at least seventeen kidnappings involving 60 victims between 1 June and 10 October 2007. Most hostages were abducted in traffic, between homes and work places; others were taken after attacks, mostly on oil companies. At least two civilian workers – a Nigerian and a Colombian – and an unspecified number of police and military were killed in the process. Some kidnappers claim to be politically motivated agitators, demanding a better deal for the Niger Delta, but were known to be only interested in extorting ransom. Victims increasingly included elderly relatives of prominent persons as well as children. The most notable was Margaret Hill, a three-year-old Briton snatched on 5 July 2007 from the car taking her to school and released on 8 July. Others have included relatives of local politicians. (International Crisis Group's Africa Report).

Figures from the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC),

Federal Ministry of Finance and the Federal Office of Statistics indicated that owing to the perilous security situations in the Niger Delta, crude oil production in the first quarter of 2009 had nose-dived to an all-time low of about 800,000 barrels per day (bpd) from 2.4 million bpd just three months earlier. Clearly, by January 2009, militancy in the Niger Delta had virtually crippled Nigeria's economy. Investment inflow to the upstream sub-sector of the oil industry had dwindled remarkably. On 27 June, Ann Pickard, vice president for exploration and production, said Royal Dutch Shell Plc had dropped plans to resume operations in the western Niger Delta in 2007. On 8 July, Funsho Kupolokun, then managing director of the NNPC, disclosed the country was losing 600,000 barrels of oil daily because of conflict and insecurity in the Niger Delta Delta. The National Bureau of Statistics eventually confirmed everyone's fear: that, due to the unrest in the Niger Delta, merchandise trade for the second quarter of 2007 was 2.47 trillion ($19.8 billion), a decrease of N208.4 billion ($1.7 billion, 7.8 per cent) from the year's first quarter. Over the same period, the balance of trade declined 6.8 per cent, to N850.5 billion ($6.8 billion). In spite of soaring prices, the value of oil exports for the quarter was N1.61 trillion ($12.9 billion), a decrease of 5.8 percent

over the first quarter.

By the first quarter of 2009, exasperated foreign investors had begun redirecting their investments to Angola and Ghana as preferred destinations over Nigeria. At that point Angola surpassed Nigeria as Africa's highest crude oil producer. This dwindling investments in the critical oil and gas sector threatened Nigeria's capacity to grow its crude oil reserves as planned. Nigeria was targeting 40 billion barrels proven reserves by end of 2010. This target became unrealistic given the exodus of operators in the oil and gas sectors from the country. Insecurity in the Niger Delta was identified as key reason why investors were leaving for more stable business opportunities in Africa. Sabotage, oil siphoning rackets and kidnappings of oil workers by suspected agitators virtually crippled the operations of the oil companies and exerted immense pressure on the Nigerian economy. Worse still, citing insecurity, union officials all too often called strikes to protest insecure working environment. It was at this point that Nigeria's crude oil export dwindled to as low as between 700,000 and 800,000 bpd. By the first quarter of 2009, it was estimated that Nigeria had lost over 3 trillion Naira as a result of militancy in the Niger Delta. (NNPC Records; Presidential Amnesty Office's Records;

International Crisis Groups' Africa Report).

The activities of the Niger Delta agitators also had seriously hampered work on major projects in the zone – including multi-million dollar projects in the Niger Delta States of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers. Already paid contractors suspended work "due to the deteriorating level of insecurity of lives and property in the region as a result of kidnappings and other violent activities of the agitators and some communities." (*Confidential memo to President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua by the permanent secretary in the federal ministry of transportation, Nu'uman Barau Dambatta, dated June 12, 2007*).

Citing insecurity also, construction giant, Julius Berger Plc, withdrew from Port Harcourt International Airport and other projects in the zone. Most notable of the stalled projects were rehabilitation of the Port Harcourt International Airport; dualization of the East-West Road Sections I, II, III and IV; completion of dualization work on the Benin-Warri Road; construction of Eleme Junction flyover and dualization of access road to Onne Port; construction of Bodo-Bonny Road; and dualization of Owerri-Onitsha Road. Contractors who were willing to work in the now dreaded zone demanded additional payments under the "special risk" clause of the Standard Conditions of Contract. Those

demands made it even more difficult for governments to deliver on the major infrastructure projects needed to transform the region. On 17 October 2007, the Netherlands' ambassador, Arie van der Wiel, said the insecurity in the Delta is the major obstacle to Dutch efforts to improve infrastructure. Without better security, the region will not receive the capital it needs to sustain development. (Africa Confidential, 2007).

It was therefore not a surprise that the resolution of the seemingly intractable Niger Delta crisis was listed as one of the seven-point agenda of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. Barely weeks after his assumption of office, President Yar'Adua inaugurated a Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee for the Niger Delta. Chaired by Senator David Brigidi, a widely respected Ijaw from Bayelsa State, it had twenty members: two from each of the six core Niger Delta states, four from the oil firms in the region and one each from the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the Nigeria Police Force and the State Security Service. The members of the committee were: Senator David Brigidi (Chairman); Kingsley Kuku (secretary); George Timinimi and Godwin Ebosa (Delta State); Alhaji Hassan Douglas and Jerry Needam (Rivers

State); Chief James Jephtah and Joshua Benamesia (Bayelsa State); Esoetok Ikpong and Elder Bassey Ekpa (Akwa Ibom State); Chief Asaka Umeh and Barrister Bassey Okim (Cross River State); and Prince Francis Iyasere and Florence Gbinije Erhabor (Edo State). Charged with the onerous task of liaising with regional actors and security agencies on ways of ending conflicts and hostage-taking in the Niger Delta, the Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee was also expected to coordinate similar committees established at the prompting of the federal government in each of the states in the Niger Delta.

These committees (The Federal Government's Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee and the peace committees set up by the States in the Niger Delta) played important roles in facilitating resolution, or even preventing conflicts, and were known to have been involved in negotiations with agitators to join the peace process and for hostage releases. But the efforts of the Brigidi-led peace committee suffered a major setback in September 2007 when a key leader of MEND, Mr. Henry Okah was arrested in Angola and charged to court for gunrunning. Though based in far-away South Africa, Okah was immensely influential among the oil-agitators of the Niger Delta. He was without doubt their biggest source of arms and ammunition. It

was both unlikely and inevitable that the 43-year-old Okah would become involved with a militant group. The fourth of nine children born to a Navy officer, he and his siblings had an upbringing characterized by one brother as very 'British'. They grew up in rarefied Lagos society attending private schools and reading comic books. Okah's first visit to the family home in Bayelsa did not occur until he was nineteen, and even then only after his mother's death. He studied marine engineering and joined the Nigerian Merchant Navy after he graduated. He was also a salesman in Lagos in the 1990s, selling handguns. In 2003, he left for South Africa. (*Africa Confidential*, 2010).

According to his brother Charles, that first trip to the family home in Bayelsa had been 'shocking'. The contrast of living conditions there with those his family enjoyed in Lagos had upset Okah greatly. This made him very useful to MEND and garnered him an important position. This importance only increased with his arrest which made him a hero of sorts among Niger Delta agitators. Some even began referring him as rallying point for the struggle. (*Africa confidential, 2010*).

Late November, 2007, the Brigidi Committee obtained a cessation of hostilities pledge by agitators in Ondo State, though the combatants

said they would not disarm until convinced of the Federal government's actions on unemployment and infrastructure problems. At a 29 November, 2007, meeting with agitators at Ezetu (Pennton), Bayelsa State, the committee extracted commitment from the militant agitators to join the peace process; but their leader, Mr. Ebikabowei Victor-Ben (Known then as General Boyloaf), commanding the Bayelsa Division of MEND, said his men would observe a twelve-month ceasefire only if the federal government facilitated Okah's return from Angola to Nigeria and "respects his human rights".

Following the intensification of insurgency in the Niger Delta occasioned primarily, this time, by the continuing detention of Henry Okah in Angola, the Nigeria Government intervened and prevailed on the Angolan authorities to repatriate him to Nigeria for the continuation of the trial. In February 2008, the soft-spoken Okah was brought to Nigeria. He was charged with 62 counts including treason, terrorism and gun-running, offences carrying the death penalty. His trial, which began in April 2008, was held behind closed doors on the orders of President Yar'Adua. On 26 May 2008, MEND launched a reprisal attack on a pipeline in which it claimed eleven soldiers were killed. On 13 July 2009, after 23 months in Angolan and Nigerian

prisons, Okah was released. According to Okah, an attack on a Lagos jetty (Atlas Cove) just before his release was to 'welcome me into freedom'. This was the furthest afield of MEND's bloody attacks. Upon his release, Okah maintained he was not a militant, 'but a gentleman'.

It was also during this period that the Yar'Adua government announced its plan to hold a stakeholders summit on the Niger Delta. It was initially planned for 4 June 2007, but postponed to allow more extensive consultations. According to a statement signed by Alhaji Babagana Kingibe, the then secretary to the federal government, the Stakeholders summit was meant to "consider all ideas and existing initiatives, including the Niger Delta Master Plan, and come up with an Action Plan with a view to accelerating an enduring solution to the Niger Delta crisis". (*Africa Confidential, International Conflict Group's Africa Report*). The summit itself suffered a stillbirth. Both the process leading to the summit and its goals were severely criticized by Niger Delta activists and several of the zone's political and community leaders. The initial consultations with militant or potentially violent groups, whom the government rightly saw as posing the greatest threats to the peace process, sent unhelpful signals that only the violent were being engaged, while many civil society leaders were

being ignored. The government delegated the then Vice President, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, who himself is from the Niger Delta, to steer the consultations. Even this move drew complaint from some activists who argued that it should have been the President himself rather than the Vice President should take charge and oversee all efforts aimed at brokering lasting truce in the Niger Delta.

Even more damning was the position of the Niger Delta Militant leaders that the government had not implemented a number of pre-agreed actions that were to precede the summit. Listed as unfulfilled pre-summit conditions include: an assessment of the Delta security situation to prepare troop withdrawals from certain areas by the second week of October 2007; a review of cases of all those detained in connection with militant activities, to be carried out from 18 September to mid-October 2007; and an assessment of rehabilitation work needed in eight communities damaged by military operations, to be undertaken from 18 September to 17 October, 2007. The Militant leaders viewed this failure to meet timelines as an indication that, as usual, the government was not being sincere about its quest to address the Niger Delta crisis.

More so, the federal government and the leaders of the Niger Delta

militant groups as well as civil society leaders differed fundamentally on what the summit's central issue should be. The government sought a comprehensive ceasefire agreement that will allow implementation of its development plan. The agitators and many Niger Delta activists insisted the summit should negotiate greater "resource control", a catch-all term referring to the right of states and communities to exercise political power over natural resources within their territories. To move the peace process forward, however, the federal government in late 2008, jettisoned the planned summit and instead, convened a technical committee to study all previous reports of the Niger Delta and subsequently develop strategies for the resolution of the region‟s crisis. Essentially this body was set up by the Federal Government to collate, review and distil all previous reports, suggestions and recommendations on the Niger Delta, and come up with plausible recommendations on how best to resolve the Niger Delta crisis. The implication of this is that most of the members were supposed to be knowledgeable enough about the challenges facing the region. They were expected to rely on past experiences and recommendations from previous works right from Wilkins' Commission of 1958 to the Ogomodia report of 2005 to arriving at their recommendations, which

will assist the Government to holistically deal with the Niger delta issue. The Government said it was giving the 45-man committee a free hand to operate and even chose its own chairman and secretary, Ledum Mitee, a human right activist, social crusader and the arrowhead of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and Nkoyo Toyo, respectively. Then as Vice President, Dr Goodluck Jonathan, who inaugurated the committee on the 8th of September, 2008, promised that government would view seriously its recommendations and would equally do well to implement them.

The Committee reputedly did a thorough work reviewing all previous reports and recommendations on ways of ensuring lasting peace in the Niger Delta. On the 1st of December 2008 it presented its report to President Umaru Ya'Adua. Ledum Mitee, who chaired the committee described the report as "a document that out of necessity encapsulates many interests but despite its limitations, it does have specific ideas that could be further developed, implemented immediately or actively supported by all stakeholders".

The report was emphatic in its recommendation that a credible starting point towards overcoming the impasse in the Niger Delta would be a speedy response to the fundamentals of the issue of

development of the region. It was the view of the committee that it was inconceivable that Nigeria can afford the luxury of thinking that it could have a development vision or could be seen to have one that does not start with addressing the issue of developing the Niger Delta. But Ledum Mittee was quick to caution that "We must be able to distinguish between genuine community agitations and criminality and respond to them respectively as they are. Communities, per communities, must be made to actually get the benefits of the non-replaceable resources of their land. If the communities do not derive any benefits from the exploitation of the resources from their land, then they would obviously feel insecure, and their insecurity will invariable compromise the security of the resource exploitation. Where they can see some direct benefits from the exploitation, then they can protect their stake in the enterprise. If for example, the flow stations are made to supply electricity and water to the local communities , they would in turn have a stake in the continued operation of the station". (*Being excerpts from a Paper presented By Ledum Mitee President of MOSOP & Chair Niger DeltaTechnical Committee at the 5th All Nigerian Editors Conference Kaduna, 3rd April, 2009*).

The Technical Committee's report also counseled that the much needed interventions in infrastructure development and social amenities, as currently proposed have to take into account the track record of patronage contracting, inflation of contracts and the mismatch of centrally generated projects and community needs. It held argued that the issue of derivation itself must change significantly enough to bring about a genuine feel of ownership or a major stake in the industry for local communities – the need to achieve this without unduly damaging the interests of the rest of the country could be achieved by exploiting a progressive change which takes advantage of pending increases in oil production and/or the very significant gap between oil prices and budgeted receipts.

The report strongly posited that creating jobs for the teeming army of youths in the Niger Delta is a more serious way of dealing with the (oil) security challenge. The report cited the cases of other countries across the world that have since realized that accumulation of youth unemployment is only a time bomb, sure to compromise societal security with devastating effect. In these countries serious investments in social security especially targeted at youths are taken as national priority. "If there are lessons to be learnt from the recent happenings

in South Africa it is that subjecting youths to the same social conditions as we find presently in the Niger delta, is guaranteed to produce similar reactions. Nigeria is probably the only country of the world where there is the public deception called employment embargo" (*Ledum Mitee, April 2009)*.

The technical committee report further confirmed what most Nigerians already knew: the huge cost of the prolonged Niger Delta imbroglio and the very crippling effect. The report affirmed that attacks on oil installations resulted in shutdowns and spillages with consequent losses in revenue estimated at about $20.7bn; that oil worth a further $3bn was stolen; that there are unaccounted costs in human misery, with about 1,000 persons killed within the same period of January to September 2008, and another 300 taken as hostages. This figures, the committee argued, showed it would be worthwhile "buying peace". On this score, the Committee recommended the setting-up of a decommissioning, disarmament and rehabilitation commission.

Among other things, the Federal Government accepted the recommendation of the technical committee to set up a decommissioning, disarmament and rehabilitation commission, it however declined a negotiated release of MEND leader, Henry Okah

who was facing a 62-count criminal charge of treason, treasonable felony and attempts to overthrow the Federal Government.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the Technical Report and also in line with his administration commitment to instill lasting peace in the Niger Delta, President Umaru Musa Yar" Adua on the 5th of May 2009 set up a Presidential Panel on Amnesty and Disarmament of Agitators in the Niger Delta. This Panel's task was to work out the modalities for the offer of amnesty to the former militant agitators in the Niger Delta. The Federal Government accepted the report of the committee and after due consultation with the Council of State, President Umaru Yar'Adua on June 25th 2009, announced an offer of unconditional amnesty to all agitators in the Niger Delta. In addition, the Presidential Committee on Amnesty and Disarmament for Agitators under the then Minister of the Interior, Major General (rtd) Godwin Abbe, was established to execute a post-amnesty programme of socio-economic development in the Niger Delta initially estimated to cost about 50 billion Naira (The Punch, Guradian, Daily Trust 1st July, 2009).

The offer of amnesty was predicated on the willingness and readiness of the agitators to give up all illegal arms in their possession, completely renounce militancy in all its ramifications unconditionally,

and depose to an undertaking to this effect. In return, the government pledged its commitment to institute programmes to assist the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of repentant agitators.

In his Amnesty proclamation speech, President Yar'Adua said "today, the 25th day of June 2009, the Federal government takes another decisive step in our avowed commitment to bringing enduring peace, security, stability, and development to our nation's Niger Delta." Yar'Adua said that from inception, his administration had demonstrated "unwavering commitment to evolving a holistic solution to the problems of the Niger Delta: securing the region for growth and development, while also effectively tackling the criminal dimension to the problem. We do recognize that the provision of the necessary infrastructure for the sorely needed socio-economic development of the area is dependent on an enduring atmosphere of peace and security."

The Nigerian President said that constructive and frank engagements with all the stakeholders defined the adminstation's approach to designing a workable solution to the seemingly intractable Niger Delta crisis and added that it was his "fervent hope that all agitators in the

Niger Delta will take advantage of this amnesty and come out to join in the quest for the transformation of our dear nation." He emphasized that the offer of amnesty was open to all agitators for a period of sixty days. Shortly after his speech, President Yar'Adua proceeded to append his signature to the Amnesty Proclamation document effectively making the proclamation a law.

Initially, the Nigeria Federal Government said it expected not more than 10,000 fighters in the region to disarm. But at the expiration of the 60-day grace period - by Sunday October 4, 2009, 20,192 Niger Delta ex-agitators had surrendered huge cache of arms and ammunitions to the Federal Government and accepted the offer of amnesty.

4.2. **Appraisal of Disarmament**

The Disarmament phase of Nigeria's Amnesty Programme has been globally acknowledged a huge success. Initially, the Nigeria Federal Government said it expected not more than 10,000 fighters in the region to disarm. But at the expiration of the 60-day grace period - by Sunday October 4, 2009, 20,192 Niger Delta ex-agitators had surrendered huge cache of arms and ammunitions to the Federal

Government and accepted the offer of amnesty. The Arms and ammunitions gathered were meticulously documented and stored at what the Armed Forces referred to as Inter Center which is located within the 82 Division of the Nigeria Army. The Amnesty Office's records show that 3,124 weapons, 18 gun-boats, 3,693 magazines, 297,056 rounds of ammunitions recovered.

The Disarmament implementation plan was designed to have the ex-agitators disarmed in their natural habitats or camps/operational bases and the arms and ammunitions so collected meticulously documented and encased in boxes and transported by men of the Armed Forces to the central collating centre, the Inter Centre, which was located within the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army in Enugu for stowing prior to public destruction. Also, at this disarmament point Militant Camp or Group's leaders were expected to present for documentation the 'soldiers' or agitators under their command. The Federal Government anticipated that given that it had already reached an agreement with the leaders of the militant groups to pay out on a monthly basis a total sum N65,000 to each of the ex-militant enlisted in the Programme, there was the possibility that the leaders would want to inflate the figures of their 'boys'. It was against this background that

a formula of one-gun-admits three persons was adopted. Using this formula, persons brought in by the disarmed leaders were immediately documented and their biometric data taken. In the classical DDR modus (please see chapter 2.2.) the disarmed ex-combatants would have been immediately taken out of their natural habitat or operational bases and sent to demobilization camps. But in the Nigerian situation, given the haste and rather uncoordinated way the disarmament exercise was carried out, the disarmed ex-combatants remained in their natural habitats (though this time not with their guns). This clearly posed a terrible risk as it unduly exposed the ex-combatants to reprisal from rival groups or even communities where they had committed heinous during the period of militant agitation. In spite of the challenges, the Disarmament phase of Nigeria's Amnesty Programme achieved the desired objective as spelt out in both the Amnesty Proclamation and Amnesty Programme's Implementation Plan.

4.3. **Appraisal of Demobilisation**

The takeoff of the Demobilzation phase of Nigeria's Amnesty was not smooth. Shortly after the Niger Delta ex-agitators were disarmed,

President Umaru Yar'Adua who was the main champion of the Amnesty Programme became very ill later relapsed into unconsciousness in a hospital in Saudi Arabia. But Yar'Adua's failure (or inability) to properly inform the National Assembly of his long absence and then hand over reigns of power to the then Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan triggered off a major political crisis in Nigeria. The National Assembly invoking the Doctrine of Necessity to confer recognition on Dr. Jonathan as the Acting President of Nigeria eventually stemmed this ugly political tide. Yar'Adua died eventually. While the political crisis lasted, already disarmed ex-agitators became restive with many of them threatening to return to militancy given that the Federal Government appeared unready to drive the process. On assumption office, Dr. Jonathan injected fresh impetus into the Amnesty Programme and ensured that it proceeded to the Demobilization phase.

In a classical DDR Programme , Demobilization is aimed at preparing disarmed ex-combatants for reinsertion on reintegration into civil society. The implementation plan of the Nigeria's DDR took this fact into full cognizance. The original plan as designed, was to send the ex-agitators to several camps across the States in the Niger Delta the

demobilization exercise but it was discovered that spreading out the ex-agitators in several camps across the states in the Niger Delta was going to pose huge administrative, political, financial and logistic challenges. A reworked version of the implementation plan provided for just one Demobilization Camp in a State in the Niger Delta. But a further challenge cropped up: No State was ready to host the camp especially after the ex-agitators who were temporarily quartered at a Camp in Alu, in Rivers State reportedly crossed over to the neighbouring Rivers State University and molested (some accounts said raped) a number of female students. However following staunch persuasion Mr. Timi Alaibe, the then Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta and the Chairman of the Presidential Amnesty Programme, the Governor of Cross River State, Senator Liyel Imoke yielded the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Orientation Camp in Cross River State to the Amnesty Office for the Demobilisation exercise. Fittingly, the camp is located in the serene but far-flung community of Obubra. "There could not have been a better place. The large expanse of land was impressive but above all, the major attraction for us was that the NYSC camp in Obubra was far removed from the main town. If like, the camp is in the middle of nowhere," Alaibe recalled. He was also

quick to point out that Governor Liyel Imoke yielded the camp to the Amnesty Office even in the face of stiff opposition even from members of his cabinet. “I think they were just afraid that we were going to flood their peaceful State with ex-agitators. You would not blame them given the fiery record of some of the persons we were planning to take there for demobilization,” added Alaibe. The Amnesty Office was however confident that the ex-militant would not constitute a problem to the either the inhabitants of Obubra or elsewhere in Cross River State. This confidence, as Alaibe pointed out, stemmed from the sheer volume of demobilsation activities that had been earmarked for the ex-combatants.

As designed, the demobilization activities in the camp which spanned two weeks per batch, included the following:

- Verification and Documentation
- Wellness Assessment
- Transformational Nonviolence Training
- Peace building and conflict resolution training
- Counseling and Career Guidance
- Reintegration Classification (To ascertain career preference of each ex-militant)

- Graduation and Demobilization

4.4. **Appraisal of Reintegration**

Of the three phases in a typical DDR Programme, the 'R' which is the final phase, is usually the most difficult and most expensive. It is also usually stretches over several months or even years. In a nutshell, reintegration in a DDR Programme is defined as the processes of aiding the ex-militant acquire civilian status and sustainable employment and income. An Institute for Security Studies (ISS) paper calls it "the Achilles heel of DDR". Reintegration takes in to cognizance the fact that a disarmed ex-militant needs a whole lot of support to become a "normal" human being again. Experts say Reintegration considers the fact that "You have to provide an economic alternative to living by the gun." This process of providing for the ex-agitators an economic alternative to living by the gun, laborious especially given that in most cases, the ex-agitators are without skills or formal education hence unemployable. Even in cases where a few of them have skills or education, they are usually stigmatized and denied employment opportunities. Reintegration processes are also often worsened by the fact that in post-conflict countries, job opportunities are scarce.

In Nigeria's DDR, the Reintegration phase entails the meticulous processes of the Demobilisation records of each ex-militant to ascertain age, qualification, career choice and health status with a view to facilitate the placement of the former combatant in either formal education or vocational training. The general idea is to prepare the ex-militant for seamless reinsertion into civil society. In the Nigerian DDR Programme the time frame of five years was formulated for the reintegration phase. It is expected that during this period, all the 26, 358 persons enlisted in the Programme would either have acquired tertiary education or training in a preferred vocation. The reintegration framework in Nigeria provides for the continued payment of a monthly stipend of N65,000 to each ex-agitators until he/she secures gainful employment. The payment stops three months after the ex-militant begins earning income from his/her employers.

The Demobilization records of the Presidential Amnesty Office indicated that the ex-agitators were largely youths whose average ages ranged from 16 – 48 years. Given this youthful population, the Government resolved to return as many of the ex-agitators as possible to formal education given that many of them dropped out of school to take up arms in the creeks. But this preference for formal education

posed its peculiar challenges: many of the ex-combatants in their classification records preferred vocational training which took shorter time and seemed to present them the opportunity of securing 'lucrative' jobs in the several oil multinational companies in the Niger Delta. A thorough analysis of the classification records of the 20,192 ex-agitators demobilized in the first phase of the Amnesty Programme indicated that only 2,982 ex-agitators indicated their desire to return to formal education.

By February 2011, the Amnesty Office commenced the placement of demobilized Niger Delta ex-agitators in vocational skills acquisition institutions both in the country and offshore. As at August 2012, the Amnesty Office's record showed that a total of 11,525 fully demobilized former Niger Delta agitators had been placed in skills acquisition centres as well as in formal education within the country and offshore. Of this number Of this number, 4,929 were listed as either been trained or have graduated from training facilities or Universities offshore while the balance of 6,382 either had been trained or had graduated from training centres or Universities within the country. Similarly, by September 2012, 6,067 transformed ex-combatants were being processed for deployment during the 2012

fiscal year, to vocational training centres as well as universities (both within the country and offshore).

The Amnesty Office's records further showed that the Amnesty Programme's beneficiaries were as at September 2012 in 39 local training centres in 12 States of the Federation; while the ex-combatants placed in offshore educational and skill acquisition centres were in the United States of America, Italy, Russia, South Africa, Malaysia, England, Israel, Sri Lanka, India, Benin Republic, Cyprus, Poland, Ghana, Turkey, Romania, Belarus, United Arab Emirates, The Philippines as well as Trinidad and Tobago. More of the trainees are due to be deployed to skill acquisition facilities in Greece, Germany and Canada. Even by global standards, experts have adjudged this reintegration record of Nigeria's DDR Programme over a period of two years, as one of the best ever.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

In spite of its natural endowment as home to Nigeria's huge oil and gas resources, the Niger Delta clearly harbours damning contradictions. Juxtaposed against the potential for economic growth and sustainable development are deteriorating economic and social conditions that have been largely ignored by contemporary policies and actions. With local inhabitants subjected to abject poverty and suffering in the midst of plenty, some view the oil and gas endowments as a curse and a double-edged sword. For decades, life expectancy in the Niger Delta continued to nose-dive in an age of blockbuster oil prices. Energy availability remained poor in a region that provides one-fifth of the energy needs of the United States. The Niger Delta (like other zones in Nigeria) depends on imported fuel despite producing over two million barrels of crude oil per day. There is an almost total lack of roads in a region whose wealth is funding gigantic infrastructural development in other parts of Nigeria and expensive peacekeeping activities in other parts of Africa.

Indeed these contradictions have historically led to both peaceful and very violent protests that have in turn led to the loss of hundreds of lives. In a nutshell, the seemingly intractable crises in the Niger Delta have stemmed largely from proven cases of injustice with regard to the neglect on the part of the Federal Government (and its Joint Venture multinational oil and gas partners) to develop the area where Nigeria generates the bulk of its revenue, the complicity on the part of the oil companies to devote appreciable resources to bolster corporate social responsibility, the denial or failure to accept, and clean up environmental damages resulting from oil production and the demand of the people for increased stake in the administration and allocation of resources. Between 1990 and 2009, this feeling of alienation, even servitude among the people of the oil-bearing communities of the Niger Delta led to several bloody altercations between activists in the zone and the Nigerian Government as well as the Oil multinationals. The clashes made the zone extremely volatile and led to colossal loss of lives and drastically cut the volume of Nigeria's crude oil production. A truce of sorts was however reached between the Nigerian Government and the Niger Delta activists in 2009 when the then President, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua proclaimed unconditional amnesty for persons

in Niger Delta who had been involved in militant agitation in the zone. The terms of the amnesty included the willingness and readiness of the agitators to surrender their arms on or before October 4, 2009, unconditionally renounce militancy and sign an undertaking to this effect. In return, the government pledged its commitment to institute programmes to assist the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of the former combatants. In this thesis, we have presented a brief historical overview of the Niger Delta struggle and made the point that the Amnesty Programme aimed at restoring lasting peace in the Niger Delta by addressing the grievances of its people represents a milestone in the trajectory of the Niger Delta struggle. This thesis focused on assessing the impacts of the Amnesty Programme in terms of the implementation of its core components, namely, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of former insurgents referred to as agitators since the Programme's inception.

The research identified the factors responsible for the outbreak of insurgency in the Niger Delta, furnished a recap of the process of the formulation of the Amnesty Programme and explained its core content; undertook a critical evaluation of the implementation of the Amnesty

Programme and made recommendations on how the lofty goals of the Amnesty Programme can be consolidated and sustained.

5.2. Conclusions

Sufficiently, this study has been able to affirm the fact that the efficacious implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Niger Delta agitators under Nigeria's Amnesty Programme have aided the restoration of peace, safety and security in the zone which is the oil and gas base of Nigeria. The study exposed the tortuous efforts that culminated in the Amnesty Programme and concludes that the sustenance of the Programme and the widening of the benefits of the oil wealth in the Niger Delta will reasonably stabilize security conditions in the oil-bearing Niger Delta.

5.3. Recommendations

This study has also shown that the credible starting point towards overcoming security challenges in the Niger Delta would be a speedy response to the fundamentals of the issue of development of the region. This research has shown that it is the view of community, political and youth leaders in the Niger Delta that it was inconceivable that Nigeria can afford the luxury of thinking that it could have a

development vision or could be seen to have one that does not start with addressing the issue of developing the Niger Delta.

It is also the position of this study that the much needed interventions in infrastructure development and social amenities, as currently proposed have to take into account the track record of patronage contracting, inflation of contracts and the mismatch of centrally generated projects and community needs. The issue of derivation itself must change significantly enough to bring about a genuine feel of ownership or a major stake in the oil industry for local communities – the need to achieve this without unduly damaging the interests of the rest of the country could be achieved by exploiting a progressive change which takes advantage of pending increases in oil production and/or the very significant gap between oil prices and budgeted receipts.

Also, this research agrees that creating jobs for the teeming army of youths in the Niger Delta is a more serious way of dealing with the (oil) security challenge. Nigeria could take a cue from other countries across the world that have since realized that accumulation of youth unemployment is only a time bomb, sure to compromise societal security with devastating effect. In these countries serious investments

in social security especially targeted at youths are taken as national priority. Like Ledum Mitee rightly posited: “If there are lessons to be learnt from the recent happenings in South Africa it is that subjecting youths to the same social conditions as we find presently in the Niger Delta, is guaranteed to produce similar reactions. Nigeria is probably the only country of the world where there is the public deception called employment embargo” (Ledum Mitee, April 2009).

Nigeria is the world's fifth largest oil producer, and oil and gas and the country has enough high quality crude in the ground to pump more than 3 million barrels per day. The inhabitants of the communities where this oil is extracted must be given priority in infrastructures and developmental projects.

For now, the Amnesty Programme has ensured peace, safety and security in the Niger Delta, the Nigerian Federal Government, irrespective of who is President, must sustain this Programme until the full reintegration into civil society of most of the ex-agitators who are enlisted in the Amnesty Programme, is achieved.

Perhaps, the biggest bane of the Amnesty Programme, as identified by this study, is the perception by the Nigerian Federal Government that the DDR component of the Programme as the be-all and end-all

solution to the age-old Niger Delta crisis. This should not be. In fact, at best, the DDR component which has taken the guns and the agitators off the creeks of the Niger Delta ought to be the beginning of the tackling of the developmental challenges of the zone, which led to militancy in the first place. Even the Amnesty Office has repeatedly warned that the achievements of the Amnesty Programme were being eroded by the glaring failure of the Federal Government to move into the zone and massively develop critical infrastructure. With this failing on the part of the Government, even political and community leaders in the Niger Delta have began to view the Amnesty Programme with suspicion. This is dangerous. The Government (both Federal and States in the Niger Delta) must seek ways and means of creating enabling environment for the economy of the Niger Delta thrive so as to create employment and empowerment opportunities for it teaming youths.

Appendix I

AMNESTY PROCLAMATION

PURSUANT TO SECTION 175 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Whereas the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria acknowledges that the challenges of the Niger Delta arose mainly from the inadequacies of previous attempts at meeting the yearnings and aspiration of the people, and have set in motion machinery for the sustainable development of the Niger Delta States;

Whereas certain elements of the Niger Delta populace have resorted to unlawful means of agitation for the development of the region including militancy thereby threatening peace, security, order and good governance and jeopardising the economy of the nation;

Whereas the Government realises that many of the agitators are able-bodied youths whose energies could be harnessed for the development of the Niger Delta and the nation at large;

Whereas the Government desires that all persons who have directly or indirectly participated in militancy in the Niger Delta should return to respect constituted authority; and

Whereas many persons who had so engaged in militancy now desire to apply for and obtain amnesty and pardon.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, after due consultation with the council of States and in exercise of the powers conferred upon me by the provisions of Section 175 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, make the following proclamation:

1. I hereby grant amnesty and unconditional pardon to all persons who have directly or indirectly participated in the commission of offences associated with militant activities in the Niger Delta;

2. The pardon shall take effect upon the surrender and handing over of all equipment, weapons, arms and ammunition and execution of the renunciation of Militancy Forms specified in the schedule hereto, by the affected persons at the nearest collection centre established for the purpose of Government in each of the Niger Delta States;

3. The unconditional pardon granted pursuant to this proclamation shall extend to all persons presently being prosecuted for offences associated with militant activities; and

4. This proclamation shall cease to have effect from Sunday, 4th October 2009.

MADE UNDER MY HAND THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2009.

UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA

Appendix II

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007 – 2010): Made the Amnesty Proclamation in 2009 and implemented the Amnesty Programme till his demise in 2010.

Appendix III

President Goodluck Jonathan (2010 – 2015): Implemented the Amnesty Programme from 2010 till end of his term in 2015.

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