

Armed Groups, Arms Proliferations and the Amnesty Program in the Niger Delta, Nigeria

Daniel Egiegba AGBIBOA¹

School of Sociology, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University

Introduction

The phenomenon of arms proliferation accelerated in the international system hard on the heels of the end of the Cold-War period when arms left in from stockpiles made their way into unstable regions. Some estimates have placed the number of small arms in circulation at about 500 million, enough for one in every ten people on earth.¹ Bah notes that, “of the approximately 500 million illicit weapons in circulation worldwide, it is estimated that 100 million of these are in sub-Saharan Africa with eight to ten million concentration in the West African sub-region alone.”² In addition, available data shows that of the 30 to 50 armed conflicts occurring between 1989 and 1995, more than 95 percent took place in developing countries and were fought primarily with small arms.³ By one reliable estimate, more than 3.6 million people were killed in internal warfare in the 1990s and half of all civilian casualties were children with an estimated 200,000 child soldiers in Africa out of a total figure of 300,000 worldwide.⁴ According to one study, in 1990 an African was twice more likely to die because of war than a non-African.⁵

In Africa, arms proliferation has led to “general insecurity, increased criminal violence, privatization of violence and security in the form of proliferation of mercenaries, private military

¹ Daniel Egiegba, AGBIBOA is a PhD Scholar in the School of Sociology, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian national University. He is a well-published author in the field of corruption, security and development, with special emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa. His works have appeared in top scholarly journals like *Third World Quarterly*, *Conflict, Security and Development*, *Journal of Black Studies*, *Africa Today*, *Peace Research*, *Peace Review*, and *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*. He may be contacted at daniel.agbiboa@anu.edu.au; danielagbiboa@gmail.com.

companies and paramilitary outfits.”⁶ The mere presence of guns belies alternative conflict resolution strategies. More so, the easy availability of weapons and a lack of state-based control fuel violence even after official war have ended. The economy of guns has a hand in this perpetuation, as both war and post-war economies use guns as a reliable currency.⁷

This paper locates the armed conflict in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria within the context of unrealized expectations and consequent frustration and aggression. I argue that while small arms do not directly cause conflict, their stockpiles fuels violent behavior and sustains conflict. In taking the availability of small arms in the Niger Delta as an intervening variable in lieu of a dependent variable, I offer a nuanced explanation of the Niger Delta conflict. I further argue that one of the reasons these convenient weapons circulate so widely and so easily is that there is a demand for them. This demand is due to the failure of the social contract between the state and its citizenry. The logic is simple: people accept state authority so long as the state equitably delivers economic goods and services and guarantees security for its citizens. When this social contract is breached, social disorder prevails and arms become the surrogate.

The rest of this paper is divided into four parts. The second examines the sources and theoretical perspectives to arms proliferation in the Niger Delta. The third part explores the armed conflict in Niger Delta at a general level followed by the theoretical debates that attempt to comprehend the conflict within the frameworks of relative deprivation, and frustration and aggression theories. The fourth part explores the dynamics of resistance movements in the Niger Delta. The fifth part critically interrogates the amnesty and post-amnesty program of the Nigerian state against the backdrop of whether it provides the basis for sustainable peace that will mark the end of armed groups, arms proliferation and violent conflicts in the region.

Sources and Theoretical Perspectives to Arms Proliferation in Nigeria

In Nigeria alone there are approximately one million⁸ to three million⁹ small arms in circulation. According to one reliable source, 80 percent of the weapons in civilian possession had been obtained illegally,¹⁰ due to strict laws on civilian possession. In turn, the illegality makes it intractable to track flows and possession. But how do weapons transit into the country? For the most part, weapons make their way into the country across land borders and through sea ports. In turn, these weapons transfer into the hands of armed groups, national dealers, political and community leaders, and individuals. Since Nigeria has lengthy and porous borders, a number of airports, and numerous ports along the southern coast, smuggling and cross-border trade are difficult to detect and monitor.¹¹ Added to this, inadequate staff, vehicles, and resources make the task of customs officials, the police, and the navy all the more Herculean.

While many are certain that small arms and light weapons are flowing alarmingly into the country as corroborated by the presence of foreign-made weapons in circulation, the exact entrance routes of these weapons remain largely *terra incognita*. A number of transit countries are often implicated. These include the neighbouring countries of Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger as well as Gabon and Guinea-Bissau.¹² Other avenues include Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Kosovo, and Serbia.¹³ The three most notorious arms smuggling frontiers in Nigeria are reportedly in the south-west (Idi-Iroko in Ogun state and Seme in Lagos state), in the south (the port city of Warri in Delta state), and in the north-east at the border with Niger and Cameroon (Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states).¹⁴ Warri has been dubbed the "hub of the gun trade" in the Niger Delta.¹⁵ Its location in the Delta, as well as the vibrant demand for small arms in that restive area of the country, make this a logical place for the reception of shipments.¹⁶ A number of towns are also notorious for the availability of small arms, including Asaba, Benin city, Aba, Onitsha, Enugu, Owerri, Awka, and Port Harcourt.¹⁷ Arms

that come into the country through the southern ports may be distributed in this southern region, or they move further north to primary distribution points, and then on to secondary distribution points. Some of these weapons will move further north, but the north seems to have extra sources of small arms through the borders with Niger and Chad in the north-east. Entry points here include Maigatari, Nguru, and Mallam Falori.¹⁸

Most prominent among the sources of illegal small arms and light weapons include “purchases from international and national arms dealers, sales and rentals by serving and retired security personnel, sales by returning peacekeepers, sales of recycled weapons from decommissioning exercise, oil-for-arms exchanges in the Delta region, and purchases of locally produced craft weapons.”¹⁹ In addition to these sources, illicit weapons are also obtained through thefts from dealers, armouries, and residences; seizures from security officials during robberies; and in clashes with other armed groups.²⁰

A major reason why small arms circulate so widely and so easily is due to a vibrant demand for them. In both developed and developing countries, a thriving market for both licit and illicit suppliers is provided by people and armies. Weiss observes that, “where there is a lack of human security, real or perceived, there is inevitably a surplus of guns in the hands of people who feel safer armed with the ability to protect themselves (whether they can successfully do so or not).”²¹ On the part of the development community, there has been an attempt to engage small arms issues from this relatively novel perspective. In one UNDP publication titled *Development Held Hostage: Assessing the Effects of Small Arms on Human Development*, Peter Batchelor and Robert Muggah argue that:

Narrow supply-side approaches that focus on the weapons and on ex-combatants are only part of the solution. Nor can the broad range of socio-economic impacts of small arms be dealt with in a framework that focuses exclusively on weapons reduction. Because small arms play a key role in undermining development gains in conflict-affected, post-conflict,

and stable societies alike, they should be of concern to the development community rather than the exclusive preserve of the security and disarmament community.²²

Many local approaches to firearms-fuelled violence are demand-and-conflict-prevention based while the international and national response tends to be emergency-triggered. I argue that there is a need to rethink this approach. From a demand vantage point, weapons cease to be the locus of intervention. Instead, the focus is shifted to gun-users and the aim is to influence the buyers in the market, in addition to regulating suppliers and enforcing relevant laws. Weiss aptly notes that “by bringing demand-reduction measures to the fore, the problem of small arms proliferation can be debated in new fora. This brings gun-fuelled, conflict-related problems out of traditional defense and foreign affairs areas and brings them under the lens of traditionally ‘humanitarian’ policies.”²³ In addition, the burden of crime and violence prevention is lifted off the back of policing and brought to broader, more powerful levels of government control.

According to the United Nations Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arm, state-level failure to provide security is the causal basis of demand-based proliferation: “When the State loses control over its security functions and fails to maintain the security of its citizens, the subsequent growth of armed violence, banditry and organized crime increased the demand for weapons by citizens seeking to protect themselves and their property.”²⁴ At the cultural level, the report maintains that “possession of military-style weapons is a status symbol, a source of personal security, a means of subsistence, a sign of manliness and, in some cases, a symbol of ethnic and cultural identity.”²⁵ This culture of weapons drives demand mostly “when a State cannot guarantee security to its citizens or control the illicit activities in which these weapons are utilised.”²⁶ Despite the cogent argument for the role of demand as a driver of arms proliferation, the report’s recommendations were supply-side measures.

Small arms are extremely difficult to get rid of because they are sturdy, durable, and reusable: “Once present in a country they tend to stay there, either fuelling crime or flowing over national boundaries to serve the needs of neighbouring conflicts.”²⁷ Moreover, small arms are lethal, but easy to use. A single rapid-fire assault rifle can fire hundreds of rounds a minute. In restive regions with bleak economic forecasts, former combatants have little hope of finding a job in civilian life. The option of keeping a gun and seeking mercenary work becomes more beguiling than turning over their only chance at earning a livelihood. This is the case in West Africa where youths from Sierra Leone, where there was an extensive demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) process, are rumored to have gone on to fight in Liberia or Cote d’Ivoire.²⁸ Although poverty, unequal access to resources, high unemployment rate, *inter alia*, contribute to instability, “it is the presence of guns that enables conflict to escalate into the type of violence that is beyond state control or mediation.”²⁹

Moving on, I argue that it is the failure of the Nigerian government to meet the fundamental needs of the people – human security in particular – that led to the collapse of the social contract, which eventually put the state and society at dagger-drawn opposition. To properly fathom this collapse and the emergence of what is generally known as the “Hobbesian Niger Delta,” it is expedient to search for its etiology within the context of both the endogenous and exogenous factors. This is because “the international sociopolitical and economic contexts have overbearing effects on the local conditions especially in Nigeria’s oil basin.”³⁰

During the Cold War years, African states received ample financial assistance from the international financial institutions (IFIs), while the super powers were relentless in their pursuit of hegemonic interests and ideological supremacy which saw the continent in a vantage position for financial and military aid from Moscow and Washington—two behemoths. These sources of

support, coupled with the “relative” economic boom of the early independence years, enabled African governments to maintain peace due to the state-driven expansionism in the socio-economic sector.³¹

The economic boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s, started to show signs of depreciation by the late 1970s/early 1980s owing to the increasing negative socio-economic factors. Subsequently, Africa’s economic downturn ballooned into a full-blown economic crisis due to the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 that made oil price rise and fluctuate. The multiplier effect of the economic crisis was such that the abilities of African government to guarantee citizens’ welfare were seriously undermined and their legitimacies slowly eroded. In a desperate bid to rescue the situation, “African states responded by borrowing from the Bretton Wood Institutions with the acceptance of the neo-liberal, antidevelopmental Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) for the stabilization and recovery of their economies.”³²

SAP policies support the “rolling back of the state” in the economy. In particular, the policies call for the privatization of public enterprises, removal of subsidies and welfare support from social services, and neo-liberal market reform based on the belief that the state was obstructing economic growth and development by spending too much on welfare benefits in health, education and other subsidies.³³ The implementation of SAP became counterproductive as it further weakened the state’s legitimacy by aggravating the pre-SAP social crisis. In addition, the gap between the rich and the poor widened, thereby reinforcing uneven development in a manner amplifying political tensions.³⁴ Meanwhile, rural poverty led to ever increasing teeming populations of urban poor caused by rural to urban drift of people in search of employment and greener pastures to support their families. Worse still is the social instability fuelled by a vibrant population of disenchanting, marginalized, and pauperized people who can

only become a ready pool of recruitment for ethnic zealots who cashed in adroitly on the dissatisfaction and insecurity of the people.³⁵

The loss of control of the economies by the African government, and the state's inability to salvage its sapping population, fractured the basis of national unity and put the state and the society at dagger-drawn opposition to each other.³⁶ Thus, African states "lost their power, legitimacy, and national cohesion since they failed to fulfill their own promises of the social contract."³⁷ The social contract theory of arms postulates that "citizens transfer the possession of weapons to a constituted authority (for example, the sovereign and the state) with the agreement that the state will provide and guarantee people's security (in all its connotations) while the ownership of such weapons is in the hands of the people which gives them (that is, citizens) the opportunity to withdraw and reclaim self-defense when states fail to honour their own obligations of the contract."³⁸ Ibeanu argues that in so far as the legitimacy of the state at the local, state, and federal levels remain contested by a vast majority of people in the Niger Delta, "they will continue to contest the right of the state and its agencies to monopolize society's instruments of violence."³⁹

Prologue to the Niger Delta Conflict and Overview of Theoretical Perspectives

One can begin by posing the question: Why does a poor continent have such a magnitude of stockpiled small arms? What explains this contradictory state of affairs between economic underdevelopment (poverty) on the one hand and proliferation of arms and conflicts on the other is the "strongest expression of the injustice in the paradox of wealth that characterizes situations of conflicts in Africa – the fact that those who produce wealth are the poorest and those who are wealthy take the wealth by force."⁴⁰ Thus, the reason for people to arm themselves is not only due to their odious socio-economic conditions but also the yoke of exclusion, injustice and

exploitation that they bear daily. In this context, small arms serve two functions: “they abet in sustaining injustices and also offer hopes for redressing injustices.”⁴¹ This confirms Naylor’s avowal that the demand for small arms is a “surrogate for demand for social injustice, and the firearm is the capital good intended to bring that objective.”⁴² This is very evident in the case of the Niger Delta armed conflict.

Nigeria is one of the Third World countries where the proliferation of small arms is manifested in crisis proportions and “its society has become fully militarized and enmeshed in the culture of the gun.”⁴³ More than any other areas of the country, the Niger Delta is emblematic of this tendency with a high degree of intensity where different oil-producing ethnic minority groups through their various social movements, are constantly contesting exploitation and fighting for a share in the country’s treasury of natural resources.⁴⁴ According to the UNDP, if left unaddressed, the unrest in the Niger Delta “could tip towards outright warfare.”⁴⁵

The Niger Delta’s peculiar swampy geography and extensive access to international waterways make the region an important conduit for arms proliferation activities in Nigeria. In 1956, oil was discovered in the Niger Delta by Shell D’Archy. In 1958 Nigeria became an oil exporter with a production level of 6,000 barrels per day. Despite an extremely volatile period that included two military coups in 1966 and the civil war of 1967-70 that erupted in the oil rich region, oil production mushroomed to a peak of two million barrels per day in the 1970s.⁴⁶ By 1979, prices rose to US\$40 per barrel – largely due to conflicts in the Middle East – and thus Nigeria’s annual export earnings rose from US\$1 billion to US\$26 billion; accounting for 95 percent of Nigeria’s foreign exchange earnings and about 85 percent of federal revenue.⁴⁷ In 2007, statistics indicated that about 23,183.9 billion barrels of crude oil were produced in the Niger Delta which amounts to a national revenue of 29.8 trillion naira.⁴⁸

Despite the oil surfeit, the situation in the Niger Delta presents a mammoth discrepancy. Available figures are telling: there is “one doctor per 82,000 people, rising to one doctor per 132,000 people in some areas, especially the rural areas, which is more than three times the national average of 40,000 people per doctor.”⁴⁹ An abysmal 27 percent of people in the region have access to safe drinking water and 30 percent of households have access to electricity, both of which are below the national averages of 31.7 percent and 33.6 percent, respectively.⁵⁰ According to Hazer and Horner, “mismanagement of oil revenues since independence, corruption, the failure to redistribute oil wealth, the utter lack of development in the Delta, and environmental damage have hardened the resolve of those living in the region to agitate for change, and increased popular support for those groups fighting for a better deal.”⁵¹ As such, the general attitude in the Niger Delta is not whether there will be more trouble, but a question of when and where.

In theoretical debates, attempts have been made to comprehend the Niger Delta conflict within the frameworks of relative deprivation (RD) and frustration and aggression theories. The concept of RD is clearly expressed in the works of two of its finest exponents: James Davies⁵² and Ted Robert Gurr. “Relative deprivation” is the term used to describe the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the “ought” and the “is” of collective value satisfaction.⁵³ The emphasis of this hypothesis is on the sense of deprivation. As Runciman puts it: “if people have no reason to expect or hope for more than they can achieve, they will be less discontented with what they have, or even grateful simply to be able to hold on to it.”⁵⁴ Thus, this approach insists that at the basis of individual and group’s grievances is the idea of unrealized expectations. For his part, Gurr argues that the “greater the deprivation an individual perceives

relative to his expectation the greater his discontent; the more widespread and intense is discontent among the members of a society, the more likely and severe is civil strife.”⁵⁵

The Niger Delta is emblematic of the insupportable gap between value expectation and value position. A prime example is the region’s oil which though has the potential to create compelling economic opportunities for majority of the population has paradoxically entrenched poverty and served as a recipe for conflict, repression, corruption and environmental damage. Lamenting the sense of relative deprivation in the Niger Delta, the Ogoni leader Ken Saro-Wiwa declared: “There is tremendous awareness in Ogoni now... there is no woman or child who does not know... that the Nigerian government is cheating them and that the ethnic majorities in Nigeria are cheating them... They also know that... something has to be done to stop it...”⁵⁶

What RD furnishes is an explanation of how the failure of non-violent measures such as peaceful protests, media and publicity, and litigation to yield the desired results has resulted in the radicalization of the struggle for redress through violent means. As Omotola argues, “the sense of deprivation shared by the [Niger Delta] people is deep-rooted, demanding more attention than is currently the case, before it degenerates into another Gulf war.”⁵⁷ The frustration-aggression theory provides the psychological dynamic for the proposed nexus between the intensity of deprivation and the potential for collective violence. The most influential formulation of frustration-aggression theory was proposed by Dollard and his colleagues at Yale in 1939. The crux of the theory is that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour presupposes the existence of frustration and the existence of frustration tends to lead to some form of aggression.

The frustrations of ethnic minority groups in the Niger Delta are well founded. The population bears the brunt of environmental degradation resulting from the operations of oil

companies and the oil bunkering (illegal tapping of oil pipelines) of armed groups. In particular, oil spills and gas flaring have dealt a fatal blow to agricultural land, water sources, and air quality. In return, the population has received only a modicum of support from the government, which benefits from the high revenues earned from selling crude oil overseas.

Legally, the population has no control over the oil that sits beneath their land, and no claim to the revenues accrued through its sale. The provisions of the Land Use Act (1978) served to entrench the nationalisation policy which vested ownership and control of all land and the resources therein in the Federal Government. While the percentage of revenue received by oil-producing states climbed to 13 percent from less than 2 percent under military rule, this funding goes to state coffers, with few visible signs of it being spent to improve the lives of people in local communities.⁵⁸ According to Watts, “by any measure of social achievement the oil states [in Nigeria] are a calamity,” characterised by “nestled shacks, broken-down canoes, and children who will be lucky to reach adulthood.”⁵⁹ The prevailing situation is partly responsible for the sustained grievances and the rise of resistant movements in the region.

Since the early 1990s, the Niger Delta has witnessed the emergence of several armed groups. According to one June 2004 anti-cult law in Rivers state, armed groups in the state number close to 100.⁶⁰ Thus, the Delta has become a haven for the proliferation of small arms, which the militias have put to use on different occasions.⁶¹ For example, armed groups and gunmen have hatched nefarious activities, including the use of violent tactics in the form of kidnappings, battles with security forces, clashes with one another and car bombs. Increasingly, such groups are demonstrating sophisticated tactics and weaponry, raising concerns regarding future violence.⁶² Attacks against oil installations and sabotage of oil pipelines have also been rampant.⁶³ As of 2008, such attacks against oil installations had mushroomed, forcing the

shutting of estimated 25 to 40 percent of Nigerian's oil production and exports warranting the ample loss of revenues and profits to the state-oil transnational's alliance. Thus, from a daily oil production of 2.5 million barrels of oil in 2005, by late 2008 the figure had plummeted to around 1.9 to 2.1 million barrels due to the disruption to production and supply.⁶⁴

The Nigerian state has often responded to the demonstrations in the Niger Delta through violent and repressive measures. This became acute under military rule.⁶⁵ This includes the emplacement of draconian decrees such as the one promulgated by the Abacha regime prohibiting the Ogoni people's demand for the right to self-determination.⁶⁶ Ake eloquently describes the reckless (ab)use of military might in the Niger Delta as the "militarization of commerce" and "privatization of the state."⁶⁷ The state's excessive use of force has served as a recipe for the militarization of the area, hence creating a genuine ground for anarchy.⁶⁸

The Dynamics of Resistance in the Niger Delta

By way of a prelude, violence is usually defined as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."⁶⁹ Specifically, the concern here is with armed violence, which, for the purposes of this paper, is defined as the carrying out of a violent act with "any material thing designed or used or usable as an instrument for inflicting bodily harm."⁷⁰ This section provides a brief historical narrative of the trajectory of resistance in the Niger Delta and state responses culminating in the recent amnesty offered to militants from the region.⁷¹

Isaac Boro and the First Revolt

The first serious attempt to secede in Nigeria and to confront the oil multinationals and the Nigerian government was led by Major Isaac Adaka Boro in 1966. With about 150 volunteer

forces, Isaac Boro declared the Niger Delta Republic (NDR) on 23 February 1966 at Tantonabau in the Riverrine areas of the former Eastern region. In his autobiography, published posthumously, Boro explained his motivation for the revolt when he writes that “year after year we are clenched in tyrannical chains and led through a dark alley of perpetual political and social deprivation. Strangers in our country!”⁷² Addressing his army before the war, Boro declared:

Today is a great day, not only in your lives, but also in the history of the Niger Delta. Perhaps it will be the greatest day for a very long time. This is not because we are going to bring haven down, but because we are going to demonstrate to the world what and how we feel about oppression. Before today, we were branded robbers, bandits, terrorists or gangsters but after today, we shall be heroes of our land.⁷³

...remember your seventy-year-old grandmother who still farms before she eats; remember also your poverty stricken people; remember too your petroleum which is being pumped out daily from your veins, and then fight for your freedom.⁷⁴

Although the 12 days revolution was quashed by the federal government, it set the scene of the Niger Delta struggle for survival. As Omotola notes, the first revolt “succeeded in awakening the ethnic consciousness of the minorities of the Niger Delta as much as the establishment of several civil society groups of various types.”⁷⁵

Ken Saro-Wiwa, MOSOP, and the Agony of the Ogonis

In the early 1990s the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) was established under the leadership of playwright and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and traditional heads of various Ogoni clans. MOSOP, which became an instant rallying point for the Ogonis, planned to take action against the state and oil multinationals for the oil exploitation and attendant environmental dislocations in Ogoniland. MOSOP’s mandate was to campaign non-violently to (1) promote democratic awareness; (2) protect the environment of the Ogoni people;

(3) seek socio-economic and physical development for the region; (4) protect the cultural rights and practices of the Ogoni people; and (5) seek appropriate rights of self-determination for the Ogoni people.⁷⁶

In October 1990, MOSOP presented The Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR) to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Therein, MOSOP demanded (a) political control of Ogoni affairs (b) the right to control and use a fair proportion of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development (c) the right to protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation and (d) adequate and direct representation in all Nigerian national institutions.⁷⁷ These demands suggest that what the Ogonis desired was ‘a right to self-determination through the creation of an exclusively Ogoni state’.⁷⁸ MOSOP linked up with transnational rights advocacy networks such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Rainforest Action Group, Sierra Club, and Friends of the Earth in an attempt to globalize its local resistance and increase its pressure on the government and on Shell, the largest multinational oil operator in the Niger Delta. The internationalization of the Ogoni struggle soon unsettled the Nigerian government and oil multinationals as it exposed their human rights abuses against oil-producing ethnic minorities.

Beginning December 1992, the conflict intensified on the back of fresh demands by MOSOP from the three major oil stakeholders in Ogoniland—Shell, Chevron, and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). These demands included: (1) payment of US\$6 billion for accumulated rents and royalties for oil exploration since 1958; (2) payment of US\$4 billion for damages and compensation for environmental pollution; (3) immediate cessation of environmental degradation, especially gas flaring in Yorla, Korokoro, and Bornu; (4) immediate covering of all exposed high-pressure oil pipelines; and (5) initiation of negotiation with the

Ogoni people. To meet these demands, MOSOP announced a 30 days ultimatum.⁷⁹ It was in this phase of the conflict that overt violence was applied by the Nigerian government.

The oil multinationals, in alliance with the Nigerian government, chose to meet MOSOP's demands with repressive measures and increased security. To this end, the Nigerian government imposed draconian laws designed to command compliance in the Niger Delta, particularly in Ogoniland. These included: (1) The proscription of ethnic minority associations; (2) the confinement, detention, arbitrary conviction and/or imprisonment of outspoken oil minority elites; (3) the violent suppression, by military force, of protests, demonstrations and uprisings by oil minority communities; and (4) the official declaration of ethnic minority agitations for self-determination, or any disturbances of oil production activities for that matter, as a seditious or treasonable offense punishable with the death penalty!⁸⁰

At the end of the 30-day ultimatum, the Ogonis staged a mass rally at Bori on 3 January 1993. The mass action peaked when MOSOP led a total Ogoni boycott of the 12 June 1993 presidential elections. Following mass protests that were designed to stop contractors from laying a new pipeline for Shell in Ogoniland, government security forces raided the area to quell the unrest. In the ensuing chaos, 27 villages were allegedly raided, resulting in the death of 2,000 Ogoni people and displacement of 80,000.⁸¹ These attacks sounded the death knell of the mass action phase of the Ogoni struggle which would seem to have been the goal of the state.

The Ogoni struggle suffered a fatal blow on 21 May 1994. Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni members were found guilty of inciting Niger Delta youths to murder four left-winged Ogoni chiefs and, consequently, sentenced to death by hanging. The chicanery and hanging of Saro-Wiwa was a deliberate attempt by the Nigerian government to eliminate the pivotal figure of opposition around which a united Niger Delta front could emerge.⁸² Moreover, the execution

was not so much a sign of disrespect for international opinion but “a sign to Nigerians themselves that there was no escape from the state’s totalitarian apparatus and that nobody in the whole world could save them.”⁸³ Following Saro-Wiwa’s death, the Ogoni struggle lost its initial steam, aided by a combination of state repression and leadership bickering.

The Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) and the Kaiama Declaration

In December 1998, the IYC was formed at a meeting of Ijaw activists and representatives from 40 Ijaw clans from across the coastal states of southern Nigeria. It comprises a confederation of youth associations of the Ijaw ethnic group of the Rivers, Bayelsa, and Delta states of the Niger Delta. Its overriding goal was to “fight against the marginalisation, neglect, underdevelopment, militarization, and repression of the minorities in the Niger Delta by the federal government and multinational oil companies.”⁸⁴ Perhaps, the major achievement of the IYC was the famous Kaiama Declaration of 11 December 1998, made at a meeting of 5,000 youths drawn from 500 communities, 40 clans, and 25 organisations held at Kaiama in Bayelsa State. The Kaiama Declaration insisted that “we cease to recognise all undemocratic decrees that rob our peoples/communities of the right to ownership and control of our lives and resources, which were enacted without our participation and consent” and demand the “Ijaw control of Ijaw oil”.⁸⁵ For the IYC, ‘any oil company that employs the services of the armed forces of the Nigerian State to “protect” its operations will be viewed as an enemy of the Ijaw people.’⁸⁶

Like MOSOP, the IYC appealed to the youth and ordinary people by drawing upon Ijaw traditional beliefs about justice and resistance, including the use of Egbesu, an Ijaw deity of war, whose real significance lay in Ijaw cosmology as a symbol of spiritual protection. In late December 1998, the IYC mobilized the Ijaw through Operation Climate Change, a program of non-violent protest demanding that all oil companies leave the Niger Delta before the end of the

year. Rather than engaging the IYC in a political dialogue or responding to the demands made in the Kaiama Declaration, the military government sent in troops backed by warships that forcefully quelled the protests in January 1999.⁸⁷

Under the democratic rule of Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), the practice of deploying soldiers to shoot-to-kill protesting indigenes, and to raze down communities, became a standard state response mechanism. A prime example is the invasion of Odi (a town populated by the Ijaws) by state security forces in revenge for the murder of 12 policemen by youths in the town on 20 November 1999. Over 2000 Odi inhabitants were killed in the state-sanctioned massacre. Obasanjo justified this dastardly action by arguing that the brutal measure was necessary to deter communities from killing security officials as a way of pressing for their demands.⁸⁸

The continued militarisation of the Niger Delta contributed to the feeling in some circles that the state and the oil multinationals would neither listen to the demands of the local people nor respect their human rights. Such views were informed by the apparent “failure” of peaceful protest to effect any meaningful change. Importantly, the return to armed resistance in the region reminiscent of the Boro’s revolt is largely linked to the aftermath of the Kaiama declaration. The Kaiama declaration set the stage for violent resistance that finally escalated to an insurgency with the emergence of several armed groups with the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) being the most organized and formidable.

MEND and the Militarisation of Resistance

MEND is the most recent and insurgent face of Ijaw pan-Delta resistance. According to MEND and its supporters, the Niger Delta people have suffered from decades of environmental degradation due largely to unregulated pollution produced by oil companies in the area. This is facilitated by national state policies that continue to deprive local communities of their land in

favour of foreign oil interests and capitalist expansion. The London-based *Economist* magazine describes MEND as a “political organisation that wants a greater share of Nigeria’s oil revenues to go to the impoverished region that sits atop the oil. In fact, it is more of an umbrella organisation for several armed groups, which it sometimes pays in cash or guns to launch attacks.”⁸⁹ This resonates with a statement released by the group’s spokesperson, Jomo Gbomo:

MEND is an amalgam of all arm bearing groups in the Niger Delta fighting for the control of oil revenue by indigenes of the Niger Delta who have had relatively no benefits from the exploitation of our mineral resources by the Nigerian government and oil companies over the last fifty years.⁹⁰

According to Ike Okonta, MEND is not so much an “organisation” but an idea in which many civic, communal, and political groups, each with its own specificity and grievances, have bought into.⁹¹ Elsewhere, Okonta locates the emergence of MEND within “the lethal cocktail of economic deprivation, military dictatorship and worsening environmental crisis” in the Niger Delta, and its tapping into “the fifty year Ijaw quest for social and environmental justice in the Niger Delta.”⁹² Membership in MEND is reputed to be fluid, with militants involved with several groups simultaneously. Jomo Gbomo indicates that the group's members are “volunteers.”⁹³ Furthermore, a majority of MEND members are reported to be from the Ijaw ethnic group—the largest ethnic group in the Niger Delta.

MEND has been linked to attacks on petroleum operations in Nigeria as part of the conflict in the Niger Delta, engaging in actions including sabotage, theft, property destruction, guerrilla warfare, and kidnapping. In a January 2006 email, MEND warned the oil industry: “It must be clear that the Nigerian government cannot protect your workers or assets. Leave our land while you can or die in it.... Our aim is to totally destroy the capacity of the Nigerian government to export oil.”⁹⁴ MEND is notorious for kidnapping foreign oil workers and demanding huge

ransom for their release. For example, in January 2007 alone, “at least 50 foreigners were taken hostage... That compares to a total of around 70 foreigners snatched in the whole of 2006.”⁹⁵ Moreover, attacks by MEND on oil facilities have featured prominently in global media; in some cases, the group has given information prior to attacks, showing the inability of state security forces to forestall its attacks. MEND gained world publicity through its threats to cripple the Nigerian oil exports. True to its threat, attacks by MEND forced oil production shutdowns in Nigeria of up to 800,000 barrels per day or over 25 percent of the country’s oil output. By March 2009, crude oil exports had fallen to 1.6 million bpd, down from 2.6 million in 2006.⁹⁶

MEND has constantly reminded the public that their action was propelled by the desire for justice and fairness. According to the group’s spokesperson, ‘We are asking for justice. We want our land, and the Nigerian government to transfer all its involvement in the oil industry to host communities which will become shareholders in these oil companies.’⁹⁷ It was in the face of this insurgency that the Nigerian state introduced amnesty as a way of ending the attacks.

The 2009 Amnesty, Armed Groups, Arms Proliferation and Violent Conflict

In April 2009, the idea of an amnesty for repentant militants was first mooted by the late President Yar’Adua in an urgent bid to curb relentless MEND attacks on oil facilities in Nigeria.⁹⁸ According to Ndutimi Alaibe, National Coordinator and Chief Accounting Officer of the Federal Government Amnesty Program for Niger Delta ex-militants:

The amnesty program was a response to security conditions in the Niger Delta at the time. It was a response by the then President to reduce fundamentally the violence that was taking place. After consultation with stakeholders, it was decided that there was a need to get the militants to lay down their weapons. That was the basis of the amnesty which was meant to stabilize, consolidate and sustain the security conditions in the Niger Delta region, as a requisite for promoting economic development in the area’.⁹⁹

The Amnesty policy, which was announced by the late President Yar' Adua on 25 June 2009, stated that militants who freely surrender their arms within 60 days (6th August 2009 to 4th October 2009) will not be prosecuted for the crimes committed in the process of disrupting the Nigerian oil industry. President Yar' Adua made clear that the amnesty deal was aimed at reintegrating and rehabilitating militants willing to surrender their arms into the Nigerian society.¹⁰⁰ According to Korpamo-Agary, the disarmament and subsequent reintegration of the militants is only a first step towards bringing the urgently needed development to the Niger Delta regions since there cannot be development without peace.¹⁰¹

The disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of militia groups, closely associated with the amnesty deal in the Niger Delta, was a policy recommended by the Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC)—a committee established in 2008 by the Nigerian government to determine appropriate peace-building strategies in the restive region. Made up of scholars and opinion leaders drawn from the region, the 40 member committee consulted widely with stakeholders, including the combatants, before making its recommendations. In part, the policy recommendations on DDR states that the Federal government should: (1) establish a credible and authoritative DDR institutions and process including international negotiators to plan, implement, and oversee the DDR programs at regional, state and local government levels; (2) grant amnesty to all Niger Delta militants willing and ready to participate in the DDR program; (3) workout long-term strategies of human capacity development and reintegration for ex-militants; and (4) exclude from amnesty and criminalise the activities of those militants committed to the DDR process and unwilling to surrender their arms.¹⁰²

In particular, state governments were required to support the rebuilding of communities destroyed by military invasion, and establish youth development centers and community

demobilization and reintegration committees to enhance reintegration and capacity building.¹⁰³ State governments were also required to provide social amenities, including health centers and schools at the site of former militant camps.¹⁰⁴ In July 2009, a budget of \$145 million was controversially announced for the Amnesty deal intended for 20,192 registered militants. There was an appreciable lack of clarity about exactly how the budget was to be spent, and the proportion which was to be allocated to monthly allowances versus the proportion allocated to a broader reintegration and rehabilitation package. Former combatants who registered for the 42-month period of training, reintegration and rehabilitation in government designated residential training centers received monthly allowances of \$409.78 over the same period. This was three times the average salary for a young public sector worker in Nigeria but just a little higher than the foot soldier salary, which stood at US\$400 in 2006.¹⁰⁵

However, the criteria used to establish eligibility for inclusion were largely unclear, with the numbers of intended “beneficiaries” widely believed to have been inflated. According to Abubakar Kari, anyone can claim to be an ex-militant to make some money: “A plain, unemployed youth who was never involved in any militancy, realizing that they could easily make money by claiming or pretending to be militants, have been going into militant camps and so on and demanding that they too should be accommodated within the amnesty program.”¹⁰⁶

The amnesty deal saw over 15,000 militants surrender their weapons at the expiry date of the Disarmament and Demobilisation phase. Weapons recovered during the disarmament process included ‘2,760 assorted guns, 287,445 ammunitions of different calibre, 18 gun-boats, 763 dynamite sticks, 1,090 dynamite caps, 3,155 magazines and several other military accessories, such as dynamite cables, bulletproof jackets and jack-knives’.¹⁰⁷ Many militants also turned themselves in as well, albeit major militant groups like MEND viewed the amnesty with

suspicion since it made less room for dialogue and it does not address the underlying causes that gave rise to the struggles in the first place. According to Ndutimi Alaibe, “these militants... wanted assurances... Some of them went to the mundane level of committing me to take an oath with them.”¹⁰⁸ The popular belief is that militants only handed in a small fraction of their arms as most of them doubted the government’s commitment to the amnesty.¹⁰⁹

Although the amnesty has led to a lull in violence in the Niger Delta since 2009, I argue that it affords only a cosmetic and *pro tem* solution to the decades-old armed conflict. Specifically, cash payouts to armed militants and proposals to give oil-bearing communities a ten percent stake in state oil revenues fail to seriously address the underlying issues of government corruption, political sponsorship of violence and environmental degradation’ that continues to fuel resistance in the Niger Delta. Indeed, what prompted the amnesty was not the environmental tragedy in the Niger Delta but the urgent need to stem the tide of MEND’s crippling attacks on oil facilities in Nigeria in order to maximize oil revenues.¹¹⁰ Quite aside, in an interview posted in the Daily Independent newspaper (Nigeria), Ndutimi Alaibe noted that:

Some of the challenges facing the (Amnesty) program today have to do with the background of some of the militants themselves and the initial process of de-briefing. You may take them abroad, and on arrival find that the individual is not even psychologically prepared and then indulge in negative habits and in the process, they get deported. There is therefore need to properly engage the ex-militants to determine their career aspirations before re-integration. The program has recorded fundamental success in terms of some of them who have been trained in specialised disciplines; and more can still be achieved. There are those who have graduated as pilots. Managing 26,000 ex-militants through reintegration can be very challenging. The cooperation of all stakeholders is imperative.¹¹¹

Conclusion/Recommendation

More than three years after the amnesty program, Niger Delta communities still suffer from grinding poverty and underdevelopment. These communities continue to lack basic

infrastructural facilities such as paved roads, pipe-borne water, and stable power supply, while unregulated oil pollution continues to compromise the land and water upon which their livelihood depends. Yar'Adua's announcement of a presidential pardon in 2009 is essentially conceived in this paper as a means of buying off militants and re-establishing oil and gas production in the Niger Delta without dealing with the root causes of sustained grievances in the region. Moreover, the protracted illness and subsequent death of Yar'Adua – the main architect of the amnesty program – meant that little real progress was made on the reintegration and rehabilitation front. Former militants complained bitterly that promised allowances and training were either not forthcoming or ill suited to their needs. Its shortcomings notwithstanding, the Niger Delta amnesty program is important because it pursues a tactic of negotiation and promotes non-killing alternatives to resolving violent conflicts.

In 2013, the Niger Delta remains the site of severe injustices which continue to sustain grievances and threaten the fragile peace introduced by the Amnesty program. The injustice in the region largely concerns the way public resources are acquired, distributed or shared and used by relevant state authorities. Stories of state officials stealing resources earmarked for the development of the region are commonplace. For example, D.S.P. Alamiyeseigha, former governor of the oil-rich Bayelsa State, was found to be in possession of four properties in London valued at about €10 million, plus another property in Cape Town valued at \$1.2 million. About €1 million was recovered at the Royal Bank of Scotland in London and more than \$240 million in Nigeria. This is in addition to foreign bank accounts traced to Cyprus, Denmark, the United States and Bahamas.¹¹² In another case, in December 2007, the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) stunned Nigeria by arresting James Ibori, the former governor of Delta State. Ibori had presided over a state that had remained impoverished and

dysfunctional under his watch despite massive inflows of oil revenue. Ibori, who was jailed by a London court, pleaded guilty to embezzling over \$250 million in public funds that should have been used to improve the lives of the Delta people.¹¹³

In the light of the above, ordinary people in the Niger Delta now see the local elites as part of the corrupt national elites in Nigeria. Unfortunately, many of the leaders of the resistance movement in the Niger Delta have been “settled” and become millionaires in the national capital, Abuja. This indicates the lack of any true vision or depth to their struggle for justice and survival. Clearly, these leaders lack an alternative vision of justice or development that is superior to that of the corrupt national elites. If they did, and have been able to demonstrate that on a small scale, that could have seriously challenged the Nigerian government as it will show all Nigerians the possibility of an alternative way to use public resources.

In conclusion, I recommend that Nigeria should intensify its ongoing efforts to diversify its economy to shrink its huge dependence on crude oil which still accounts for the vast bulk of foreign exchange earnings. This is the only option which in the long run can reduce the country’s overreliance on crude oil and its associated tensions.

Notes

1. Small Arms Survey, *Profiling the Problem* (Geneva: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.157
2. A. Bah, *Implementing the ECOWAS as Moratorium in Post-War Sierra Leone* (Ontario: Project Ploughshares, 2004), p.33
3. T. Weiss, “A Demand-Side Approach to Fighting Small Arms Proliferation,” *African Security Review* 12 (2003), pp.5-16.
4. UNDP, “Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World,” Human Development Report website: <http://web.ng.undp.org/documents/nigeria-delta-hder.pdf>. p.11
5. C. Allen, “Warfare, endemic violence and state collapse in Africa,” *Review of African Political Economy* 26 (1999), p.367.

6. D. Francis, *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), p.62.
7. W. Cukier, "Small arms and light weapons: A public health approach," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 9 (2002), p.3.
8. A. Ebo, "Small Arms Proliferation in Nigeria: A Preliminary Overview," in Ibeanu, O. and Mohammed, F. (eds.), *Oiling the Violence: The Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Niger Delta* (Abuja: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2006) p.1.
9. N. Obasi, *Small Arms Proliferation and Disarmament in West Africa: Progress and Prospects of the ECOWAS Moratorium* (Abuja: Apophyl Productions, 2002), p.69.
10. *Ibid.*
11. C. Agboton-Johnson, A. Ebo and L. Mazal, *Small Arms Control in Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal* (London: International Alert, 2004), p.21.
12. J. Ginifer and O. Ismail, *Armed Violence and Poverty in Nigeria* (Bradford: Center for International Cooperation and Security, 2005), p.6; A. Ikelegbe, "The Economy of Conflict in the Oil Rich Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 14 (2005), p.208; B. Ojudu, "Gun Smuggling in the Niger Delta," World Press Review website: <http://www.worldpress.org/cover7.htm>
13. J. Hazen and J. Horner, *Small arms, armed violence and insecurity in Nigeria: the Niger Delta perspective* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2007), p.34.
14. C. Agboton-Johnson, A. Ebo and L. Mazal, *Small Arms Control in Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal* p.21
15. M. Peel, *Crisis in the Niger Delta: How Failures of Transparency and Accountability Are Destroying the Region* (London: Chatham House, 2005), p.2.
16. J. Hazen and J. Horner, *Small arms, armed violence and Insecurity in Nigeria: the Niger Delta perspective*, p.34.
17. Small Arms Survey, *Security Agencies, Small Arms, and Violence in Nigeria* (Unpublished background paper, 2007a).
18. P. Y. Adejo, "Crime and the Cross-border Movement of Weapons: The Case of Nigeria," in Ayissi, A. and Sall, I. (eds.), *Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 2005), pp.93-99.
19. Small Arms Survey, *Security Agencies, Small Arms, and Violence in Nigeria*, p.16
20. *Ibid.*
21. T. Weiss, "A Demand-Side Approach to Fighting Small Arms Proliferation," p.5
22. P. Batchelor and R. Muggah, *Development Held Hostage: Assessing the Effects of Small Arms on Human Development* (New York: UNDP, 2002), p.9.
23. T. Weiss, "A Demand-Side Approach to Fighting Small Arms Proliferation," p.7
24. United Nations (UN), *Reports of the Panel of Government Expert on Small Arms*, A/52/298, August 27, 1997, Available <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/sanctions/a52298.pdf> p.12.
25. *Ibid.* p.16.
26. *Ibid.*
27. T. Weiss, "A Demand-Side Approach to Fighting Small Arms Proliferation," p.10.
28. K. Anning, "African Security, Dialogue and Research," A presentation at the Institute for Security Studies Seminar on "Youth and Human Security: Perspectives on African Conflict," February 28, 2003.
29. T. Weiss, "A Demand Side Approach to Fighting Small Arms Proliferation," p.15.

30. I. A. Badmus, "Oiling the Guns and Gunning for Oil: Oil Violence, Arms Proliferation and the Destruction of the Niger Delta," *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 2 (2010), p. 327.
31. *Ibid.*
32. P. Vasundevan, "Africa and Structural Adjustment: The Need for Sustained Approach," *Africa Currents* 27 (1999), pp.11-28.
33. I. A. Badmus, "Oiling the Guns and Gunning for Oil: Oil Violence, Arms Proliferation and the Destruction of the Niger Delta," p.328.
34. I. A. Badmus, "What Went Wrong with Africa? On the Etiology of Sustaining Disarticulation of the African Nation State," *Verfassung Und Recht In Urberseei* 39 (2006), pp.270-291.
35. A. Jega, "The State and Identity Transformation under Structural Adjustment in Africa," in Jega, A. (ed.), *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2000), p.235
36. I. A. Badmus, "Oiling the Guns and Gunning for Oil: Oil Violence, Arms Proliferation and the Destruction of the Niger Delta," p.328.
37. *Ibid.*
38. O. Ibeanu, "The Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Niger Delta: An Introduction," in Ibeanu, O. and Mohammed, F. K. (eds.), *Oiling Violence: The Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Niger Delta* (Abuja: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2005), p.53.
39. *Ibid.* p.37.
40. I. A. Badmus, "Oiling the Guns and Gunning for Oil: Oil Violence, Arms Proliferation and the Destruction of the Niger Delta," p.325.
41. D. Dominick and F. Olonisakin, "Security Reform and the Demand for Small Arms and Light Weapons," Ploughshares Briefing 01/7: <http://www.ploughshares.ca>
42. I. A. Badmus, "Oiling the Guns and Gunning for Oil: Oil Violence, Arms Proliferation and the Destruction of the Niger Delta," p.325.
43. *Ibid.*
44. UNDP, *Niger Delta Human Development Report* (New York: UNDP, 2006), p.18.
45. O. Ibeanu, "Janus Unbound: Antinomies of Petrobusiness and Petropolitics in the Niger Delta," *Association of Concerned Africa Scholars Bulletin* 60/61 (2001), p.21.
46. N. Shaxson, "Oil, corruption and the resource curse," *International Affairs* 83 (2007), p.1.
47. UNDP, *Niger Delta Human Development Report*, p.21.
48. O. Ibeanu, *Civil Society and Conflict Management in the Niger Delta*, p.10.
49. *Ibid.*
50. J. Hazen and J. Horner, *Small arms, armed violence and insecurity in Nigeria: the Niger Delta perspective*, p.18.
51. J. C. Davies, "Towards a theory of revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27 (1962), p.5-19; J. C. Davies, *Human Nature in Politics* (New York: Wiley).
52. T. R. Gurr, *Why men rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), p.; see also A. R. Oberschall, "Rising expectations and political turmoil," *Journal of Development Studies* (1969), pp.5-23; D. Birrel, "Relative deprivation as a factor in conflict in Northern Ireland," *Sociological Review* (1972), pp.317-343.
53. T. R. Gurr, *Why men rebel*, p.23.
54. W. G. Runciman, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p.9.

55. T. R. Gurr, *Why men rebel*, p.24.
56. S. Ibaba, *Understanding the Niger Delta Crisis* (Port Harcourt: Amethyst and Colleagues Publishers, 2005), p.83.
57. S. Omotola, "The Next Gulf? Oil Politics, Environmental Apocalypse and Rising Tension in the Niger Delta," p.83.
58. UNDP, *Human Development Report*, p.58.
59. M. Watts, "Sweet and Sour," in Watts, M. and Kashi, E (eds.), *Course of the Black Gold* (Brooklyn NY: Powerhouse Books), p.44.
60. S. Best and D. Von Kemedi, "Armed Groups and Conflict in Rivers and Plateau States, Nigeria,"
<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/sas/publications/bseriespdf/AA/Part%201%2001%20Nigeria.pdf>, pp.21-22.
61. S. Omotola, "The Next Gulf? Oil Politics, Environmental Apocalypse and Rising Tension in the Niger Delta," p.13.
62. J. Hazen and J. Horner, *Small arms, armed violence and insecurity in Nigeria: the Niger Delta perspective*, p.19; see also J. Fisher-Thompson, "U.S. Partners with Nigeria on Security for Oil-Rich Delta Region," <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&y=March&x=2007031515251EJrehsiF0.7514307>.
63. G. Onuoha, "Energy and Security in the Gulf of Guinea: a Nigerian perspective," *South African Journal of International Affairs* 16 (2009), p.247.
64. *Ibid.*
65. K. Saro-Wiwa (ed.), *Ogoni: Trial and Travails* (Lagos: CLO), p.43.
66. L. O. Ovwasa, "Oil and the Minority Question in Nigeria," in Saliu, H. A. (ed.), *Issues in Contemporary Political Economy of Nigeria* (Ilorin: Sally and Associates), pp.94-95; see also S. Omotola, "The Next Gulf? Oil Politics, Environmental Apocalypse and Rising Tensions in the Niger Delta," p.19.
67. quoted in J. Rowell, J. Marriot and L. Stockman (eds.), *The Next Gulf? London, Washington and the Oil Conflict in Nigeria* (London: Constable and Robinson Ltd, 2005), p.15.
68. A. Gramsci, *Selections from the prison notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), p.239.
69. World Health Organisation (WHO), *World Report on Violence and Health* (Geneva: WHO, 2002), p.2.; see also J. Hazen and J. Horner, *Small arms, armed violence and insecurity in Nigeria: The Niger Delta Perspective*, p.13.
70. N. Taback and R. Coupland, "Towards Collation and Modelling of the Global Cost of Armed Violence on Civilian," *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 21 (2005), p.20.
71. C. I. Obi, *The Changing Forms of Identity Politics in Nigeria Under Economic Adjustment: The Case of the Oil Minorities Movement of the Niger Delta* (Goteborg: Elanders Digitaltryik AB, 2001), p.6.
72. S. Omotola, "Dissent and State Excess in the Niger Delta, Nigeria," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28(5) (2009), p.132.
73. *Ibid.*
74. T. Tebekaemi (ed.), *The Twelve Day Revolution* (Benin City: Idodo Umeh Publishers, 1983), p. 117.
75. Omotola, "Dissent and State Excess," p. 134.
76. Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), *Ogoni Bill of Rights* (Portharcourt: Saros International Publishers, 1992).

77. *Ibid.*
78. Omotola, "Dissent and State Excess," p.134.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
80. R.T. Suberu, *Ethnic Minority Conflicts and Governance in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1996), p.xii.
81. D. Kupfer, "Worldwide Shell Boycott," *The Progressive*, July 1 1996.
82. W. Soyinka, *The Open Sore of a Continent: A Personal Narrative of the Nigerian Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
83. A.R. Na'Allah (ed.), *Ogoni's Agonies: Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Crisis in Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998), p.75.
84. Omotola, "Dissent and State Excess," p.136.
85. The Ijaw Youth Council Bill of Right, see *The Guardian*, Lagos Nigeria 30 December 1998, p.14.
86. *Ibid.*
87. C. Dokubo, "Proliferation of Small Arms and National Security," in *Nigeria under Democratic Rule, 1999-2003*, edited by H.A. Saliu (Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press, 2005), p.129.
86. *Ibid.*
87. *Ibid.*
88. Omotola, "Dissent and State Excess," p.136.
89. *The Economist* (London). 18 September 2008.
90. C.I. Obi, "Nigeria's Oil in Global Energy Security: Critical Issues and Challenges," in *Africa and Energy Security: Global Issues, Local Responses*, edited by B. Ruchita and U. Shinha (New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2009), p.123.
91. I. Okonta and O. Douglas, *Where Vultures Feast: Shell, Human Rights and Oil* (London: Verson, 2001), p.4.
92. *Ibid.*, p.711.
93. *The Guardian* (Lagos), 21 March 2006.
94. BBC News, "Shell Evacuates Nigerian Workers." January 16. Available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4615890.stm> (Accessed 24 September 2012).
95. Obi, "Nigeria's Oil in Global Energy Security," p.104.
96. K. Nwajiaku-Dahou, "The Politics of Amnesty in the Niger Delta: Challenges Ahead." IFRI Sub-Saharan Africa Program, December, 2010.
97. Jomo Gbomo's online message to the media.
98. K. Omeje, "The State, Conflict and Evolving Politics in the Niger Delta," *Review of African Political Economy* 31 (2004), pp.425-440.
99. Daily Independent, "The Problem with Amnesty," July 3. Available at <http://dailyindependentnig.com/2012/06/the-problem-with-amnesty-program-by-alaibe/> (Accessed 24 September 2012).
100. G. Onuoha, "Energy and Security in the Gulf of Guinea: A Nigerian Perspective." *South African Journal of International Affairs* 16(2) (2009), p.252.
101. D.E. Agbibo, "The Impact of the Amnesty on Resistance Movement in the Niger Delta," *Review of African Political Economy* (Forthcoming).
102. Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC), "Report of the Committee Established by the Nigerian Governor to Review the Recommendations of the Reports of Previous Commissions

and Committees and Determine Appropriate Policy Options for the Resolution of the Niger Delta Crisis,” November, 2008, p.66.

103. S.I. Ibaba, “Amnesty and Peace-Building in the Niger Delta: Addressing the Frustration-Aggression Trap,” *Africana: The Niger Delta* 5(1) (2011), pp. 238-271.

104. Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC), “Report of the Committee Established by the Nigerian Governor.”

105. K. Nwajiaku-Dahou, “The Politics of Amnesty in the Niger Delta.”

106. H. Murdock, “Former Nigerian Militants Say Amnesty Program Failing.” Voice of America, 18 June, 2012. Available at <http://www.voanews.com/content/former-nigerian-militants-say-amnesty-program-failing/1212337.html>. (Accessed 25 June 2012).

107. G. Onuoha, “Energy and Security in the Gulf of Guinea,” p. 252.

108. Daily Independent, “The Problem with Amnesty.”

109. G. Onuoha, “Energy and Security in the Gulf of Guinea,” p. 252.

110. K. Omeje, “The State, Conflict and Evolving Politics in the Niger Delta.”

111. Daily Independent, “The Problem with Amnesty.”

112. Human Rights Watch, “Corruption on Trial? The Record of Nigeria’s Economic and Financial Crimes Commission” (New York: HRW, 2011).

113. Sahara Reporters, “The Looting of Delta State: James Ibori and his Accomplices.” Available at <http://saharareporters.com/content/looting-delta-statejames-ibori-and-his-accomplices>. (Accessed 18 March 2013).