

Introduction

'We can be as separate as fingers, but as united as the hand'
–Ikwerre Proverb

Live and let live has universal currency expressed in different forms. Early philosophers discussed it as justice. Plato said 'Justice as enshrined in the Constitution would imply the performance by each class, the only function allocated to it by nature and training.' He advocated mutual co-existence of classes in society. Live and let live is implied in Aristotle's use of 'reificatory justice', which aims at equality achieved through redistribution and the application of correct mathematical proportion to rebalance the effects of unjust actions.

When we shift focus to the divide between the developing countries in the northern hemisphere and the underdeveloped nations in the southern hemisphere, live and let live dictates that the development in the Global North is unsustainable without the Global South. Even when conceptualized as market for goods produced in the Global North, the Global South remains a precondition for the existence of the North.

The title of this inaugural has basis in African philosophy as propounded in the works of Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere. Live and let live re-echoes the fundamental principles of fair treatment found in natural justice. In Nigeria live and let live finds

maximum relevance in our quest for national integration and national unity. For instance, national unity preaches the gospel of peaceful coexistence of people from different ethnic nationalities without the fear of devaluation or extinction of ethnic identities. National integration expresses live and let live as unity among every state of the Federation. This philosophy validates the ideals of the first Nigerian Anthem, which we have just reverted to:

*Nigeria, we hail thee,
Our own dear native land,
Though tribe and tongue may differ,
In brotherhood, we stand,
Nigerians all, and proud to serve
Our sovereign Motherland.*

*Our flag shall be a symbol
That truth and justice reign,
In peace or battle honour'd,
And this we count as gain,
To hand on to our children
A banner without stain.
O God of all creation,
Grant this our one request,
Help us to build a nation
Where no man is oppressed,
And so, with peace and plenty
Nigeria may be blessed.*

In the Niger Delta, live and let live applies to the relationship between the resource-extracting organisations and the host communities. It equally finds relevance in the interaction between the Nigerian state and the people of the Niger Delta. Most importantly, it addresses the stormy issues in intra- and inter-community crises that trigger conflicts and insecurity which the state and resource-extracting agents exploit to the detriment of the Niger Deltans. In addition to bearing an intellectual searchlight, it also amounts to re-amplification of the age-old debate on the tragedies of oil mining in the Niger Delta and reorienting the debate with momentous reliance on the live and let live therapy.

The topic is apt because it beams an intellectual searchlight on:

- The laws and strategies which protect resource extraction and host communities
- The state derivation issues and development in host communities
- Resource extraction and environmental justice
- Oil and gas exploitation and climate justice
- International best practices in resource exploitation and livelihood of a people
- Balancing different and opposing interests of host communities leading to intra- and inter-community conflicts

- Moderating the needs and use of resources by the present generation in manners which do not endanger the needs of future generations.

Live and let live in the Niger Delta is a message to the people of Niger Delta and other Nigerians to live and let Niger Deltans live. This is in agreement with the theme of the International Day of Living Together in Peace, 21stSeptember: United in Differences and Diversity.



Fig 1a

Source:www.google.com



INTERNATIONAL
PEACE DAY

Fig 1b

Source:www.google.com



Fig 1c

Source:www.google.com



Fig 1d

Source: www.google.com



Fig 1e

Source:www.google.com

Fig. 1a-e: Symbol for International Day of Peace

The symbol in Fig.1a has two clear signs, namely **the globe** and **human hands**. The globe represents the whole world, with all the continents and countries. The human hands stand for the inhabitants of the world. The hands are of different colours, representing all possible races of the world. The hands are connected; there is no gap. This symbolises that, for the world not to break, all races must unite. The **blue background** with different patterns stands for love.

The symbol in Fig.1b has the sign of a **bluedove** holding the **(olive) branch** with its beaks. The two symbolise peace, as gentleness is attributed to the dove and the olive branch symbolises peace.

In Fig. 1c, there are two **white doves**, each carrying an **(olive) branch** with its beaks. Their posture of facing each other from different angles of the world suggests mutual exchange of peace initiatives.

The symbol in Fig. 1d has a **stand** with a circle around it. This represents the fact that the globe can stand only if there is peace that is no break in the circle surrounding the stand.

There are four signs in the Fig. 1e: **the globe, two stretched hands** and **two blue doves with (olive) branches**. This means that a single hand cannot keep the world from falling; the two human hands are needed. The peace brought by the two doves through the olive branches can only be secured with the two human hands.

In sum, as seen in all the figures, the linguistic code – “International Peace Day September 21” - is complemented by **the globe, human hands, doves, olive branch** and **stand**. All point to the fact that peace in the world relies heavily on people extending the olive branch to one another and keeping the world standing by supporting it with their hands that is their actions of love, humility and tolerance.

Live and let live is a vital message of peace and engagement that allows communities to create a new set of norms based on collaboration and strength rather than violence. The most prominent example of the live and let live philosophy serving as a model for peaceful coexistence comes from the harmonious coexistence between saltwater and freshwater. Freshwater and saltwater are often seen as representing opposing forces or dualities in the traditional belief systems. Freshwater is typically associated with purity, life,

nourishment and renewal, while saltwater is linked to preservation, cleansing, wisdom and the mysteries of the deep sea. The harmonious coexistence of fresh river and salt river symbolizes balance between different aspects of existence. It represents the idea that opposing forces can come together in harmony to create a unified whole. This balance is essential for maintaining order and equilibrium in the natural world.



Fig. 2: Map of the Niger Delta
Source: www.mynigerdelta.com.

Advantages of Collective Responsibility

Let me start the lecture by doing the last thing first, that is summarizing the contents of the lecture. All I seek to do here today is in tandem with what I have known since I came to this university. It is to say, 'enough is enough' in the Niger Delta. Enough of the communities being degraded by oil-prospecting activities, enough of the blood of the people being shed by circumstantial health challenges and physical death in the hands of security agencies, enough of the Niger Delta people too killing others and fellow Niger Deltans, and enough of the people living in abject poverty while other Nigerians and members of the international community feed fat on the oil wealth from the Niger Delta. Attaining these ideals requires, first and foremost, the need for us all to be alive to the lessons of collective responsibility. There are things that outsiders must do for us in the Niger Delta, and there are those we must do for ourselves. We may not be responsible for what or who we are. Our environment may have reshaped us beyond who we want to be, but as living beings, we can still adjust ourselves to what we ought to be. Together, we can build a better Nigeria where we are all proud citizens. That is my message to this noble assembly!

My entry to the discourse on togetherness or collective responsibility to making sustainable development possible is the idiom live and let live. You may have been hearing the idiom for a long time. It is commonly used in our villages in

local languages, though framed diversely. To the Ikwerre, for example, live and let live means 'Owho *nu obochi`zirindú, kwéri máko eleberere zírindú*. It is a warning for one to avoid disturbing community peace. The idiom is excellently captured by the Igbo adage that says '*egbe bere ugo bere, nkesi ibeya ebela, Nku kwaa ya*' (Let the eagle perch and let the kite perch, anyone that prevents the other from perching, let its wings break.) The Yoruba, too, say, '*oju orun t' eye fo lai fara kanra*' (The sky is big enough for every bird to fly without threatening the existence of the other). A Hausa adage says, '*A Komai da mukeyi yi, zaman tare da lafiya ya fi kama*' (In all that we do, peaceful co-existence is everything).

Oliver De Coque sings, '*mbiri k' anyi mbiri, onye azulu uwa azo, uwa ga abata onyeobula, mbiri o, mbiri k' anyi birl*' (Live and let's live. Don't struggle for the world; the world is spacious enough for everyone). Live and let's live offers a synopsis of the live and let live model. The special renditions of Oriental Brothers International band rightly affirm that '*Omer enma mereonweya, Omerenjomere oweya*' (The doer of good, does it for himself/herself, the doer of evil does it for himself/herself). In other words, everyone gets a reward for his/her good or bad/evil deeds). The most central promise of any religion, whether Western, Oriental or African, is peace between man and God or amongst human beings.

To us in peace studies, live and let live calls our attention to the necessity of mutuality, accommodation and inclusion for assuring and ensuring sustainable human living anywhere in the world. As a philosophical principle, live and let live connotes peaceful coexistence, solidarity and complementarity, justice, tolerance and non-violence (Okoye et al., 2018). It is reflected in several communal proverbs and adages as ethical standards; it informs state policies and legal systems and is even reflected globally in international conventions and agreements. For example, the international environmental agreements on global warming, laws of armed conflict and the like are based on it. The future of humanity can only be assured if we respect others as we want them to respect our own space. The South African principle of *Ubuntu* captures it all. It means, 'I am because I allow you to be who you want to be.' My argument in today's lecture is that the people of the Niger Delta find it challenging to be who they seek to be because of how the Nigerian state manages the oil resources in the region. This gave rise to different forms of violence to which we must find peaceful solutions. The latest adage in town is 'Nigeria should let the Niger Delta breathe.' In return, the Niger Delta people will allow Nigeria to keep flourishing as a giant of Africa that it should be.

The summary of my presentation here today is that this philosophical stand is required to ensure healthy living and

human survival in today's Niger Delta, a land of milk and honey, but which is often associated with blood, sorrow and anguish. The latest of our anguish in the region is the killing of 17 soldiers who intervened in the clash between the Okuama and Okoloba communities in Delta State. Those killed included the Commanding Officer of the 181 Army Amphibious Battalion, two Majors, one Captain and 13 soldiers. There are claims and counterclaims about what happened, but under no condition will any nation allow its soldiers to be killed so brutally. Not even the international community is happy with the people of the Niger Delta over this incident. It demonizes us as a people, but we, too, have our issues.

As if this is not bad enough, the Niger Delta militants are now deployed to fight Fulani bandits. Using these militants to do the work of security agencies shows state weakness. Lawlessness and the regularity of the militants in irregularities will inhibit state control.

How do we come to a Niger Delta community where the people would no longer kill themselves? How do we get to a stage where Niger Delta people would no longer kill our security officials and where our security agencies would no longer have to turn their weapons against the people of the Niger Delta? How do we get Niger Delta communities to live peacefully with one another and with the Nigerian state? How do we live peacefully with one another? Even in Rivers

State, where I am delivering this lecture, the question is still hanging on how we can live peacefully at communal levels and as members of different political leanings. How do we manage the turbulent nature of rivers, where metaphorically Rivers State derived its name? In other words, our destinies are in our hands; nobody will mould it for us. But how do we do it for ourselves?

In answering the questions asked above, I start this discourse by acknowledging the fact that, with the decline of the agriculture sector that once flourished in pre-colonial Nigeria, the oil and gas sector became the foundation of the country's economy shortly after independence. The oil and gas sector developed so rapidly that it soon began to contribute more than 90% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and 83% of her GDP (Ogbeifun, 2014; Nwoba & Abah, 2017). The Niger Delta region accounts for over 80% of Nigeria's oil production, with over 600 oil fields, 5,284 oil wells, 10 oil and gas export terminals, 275 flow stations, 10 gas plants and massive liquefied natural gas plants (Ibaba, 2009; Aghedo, 2011; Odalonu & Eronmhonsele, 2015). Despite this geo-economic significance, the Niger Delta region has long been plagued by a web of socio-political, economic and environmental challenges, stemming primarily from the exploitation of its rich oil reserves. The resultant conflicts have had devastating consequences on the region's communities, environment and overall development. In the

midst of this turmoil, the concept of live and let live is a promising framework for conflict transformation in the Niger Delta.

The Niger Delta, known as the heart of Nigeria's oil industry, is home to a diverse population of ethnic groups, each with its own cultural heritage and socio-political dynamics. Decades of oil exploration and exploitation by multinational corporations have led to widespread environmental degradation, loss of livelihoods and social unrest among the communities.

It is disheartening that other problems that the people have to live with include agricultural land degradation, flooding, fisheries depletion, deforestation, biodiversity loss, water hyacinth expansion, sewage, coastal erosion, oil pollution, industrial air emission, gas flaring, mangrove degradation and socio-structural disconfiguration. For instance, recent reports indicate that the following barrels of oil were spilled: 12,274 in 2023; 45,836 in 2022; 22,318 in 2021; 21,110 in 2020 and 39,343 in 2019 (Jeremiah, 2024).

These problems have had grievous consequences and created long-term environmental problems. The development of infrastructure for oil activities, for example, entailed physical alteration of the environment and degradation of natural resources, especially marine bio-resources. It is disheartening that some privileged indigenes

of Niger Delta who have occupied and are still occupying key positions that would have accelerated sustainable peace and development in the region have not showed the required patriotism by challenging the structures and processes that contribute to insecurity and underdevelopment. If the presence of the Niger Deltans in government cannot accelerate the development of the region, it is difficult for the Niger Deltans to have the moral justifications to ask other Nigerians to come and develop the area in future. A popular Yoruba adage says, 'the owner of a load lifts the heavier part.'

Promoting sustainable development requires taking a deeper look at these conflict issues and how to transform them. This is the framework that this lecture seeks to create.



Fig.3

Case of Gas flaring, a major Cause of Acid Rain, Land Infertility and Peculiar Diseases in the Niger Delta

Sources:<https://africa-energy-portal.org/news/gas-flaring-nigeria-loses-25bn-yearly>



Fig. 4: Example of Insensitive Laying of Oil Pipes across Villages in the Niger Delta

***Sources:*<https://firstcomoralcreditbureau.com/Nigeria-has-lost-n53-26-billion-in-two-months-to-due-to-gas-flaring>**

Through a multi-stakeholder approach, the framework aims to address issues of resource management, governance and social justice, while promoting sustainable development and environmental stewardship in the Niger Delta region. Hence, today's lecture explores the theoretical foundations, practical applications and potential impact of Lederach's Conflict Transformation Theory in the context of the Niger Delta. Achieving this requires that I undertake a historiographic venture that will be tailored to my ideological postulations. Drawing on case studies and expert analysis, I examine the challenges and opportunities for conflict transformation in the region, highlighting best practices and lessons, and giving recommendations for policymakers, practitioners and academics.

The decline in the quality of life of the indigenes of the Niger Delta reflects the structural violence of several decades of oil exploration (Ikelegbe, 2006; Akinbi, 2012; Bodo, 2019; Eze et al., 2023; Mackintosh, 2024). By shedding light on the transformative potential of this framework, this lecture aims to contribute to the ongoing efforts to build a more peaceful, just and sustainable future for the Niger Delta and its people. But before going into these theoretical issues, it is necessary to critically look at the history of the crisis.

History and Dimensions of Niger Delta Crisis

“There are necessary connections between causes and effects” (Descartes, 1637).

The peoples of the Niger Delta were at the vanguard of minority agitation during the colonial and post-independence periods in Nigeria (Saro-Wiwa, 1992; 1993). The Anglo-Dutch oil company Shell D’Arcy (now SPDC) began prospecting for oil in 1937. It discovered oil in Nigeria, specifically at Oloibiri, Bayelsa State, in 1956 and commercial production began in 1958 (Ehwarieme, 2009). The discovery of oil in the Niger Delta permitted Nigeria’s transformation from an agrarian economy to an oil and gas exporting economy. Shortly after the discovery of the liquid gold, environmental degradation that can be attributed to the oil prospecting and exploring activities brought colossal pollution, never experienced before in the history of the

region. The oil spillage and gas flaring that came with the petroleum exploration polluted the water and the air of the host communities (Kadafa, 2012). There is no evidence that any action was taken at that time, to address what were very credible threats.

In 2005, there were about 496 episodes of oil spillage and about 10,734.59 barrels were lost that production year (Egberongbe, et al., 2006; Nwobueze & Young 2018). Besides oil spillage, the effect of gas flaring on the environment has been enormous. Aghalino (2008) notes that, among others, the flaring of gas caused the weakening of the stratospheric ozone layers that filters the ultra-violet radiation coming to earth. He also mentions the loss of enormous arable land to gas flaring-related consequences, such as acidic precipitation or acid rain, polluted and acidic rivers, destruction of important flora and fauna, and noise pollution. Oil and gas changed much of the social and economic structure of the Niger-Delta region (Akinbi, 2012). Prior to the discovery of the highly valuable natural resources in the region, the peoples were engaged in farming, fishing and other subsistence occupations. The fact that the economic products of the inhabitants of each vegetational region were required beyond their zones encouraged commercial exchanges through the length and

breadth of Nigeria and thus promoted inter-group amity favourable to trade, national unity and integration.

The threat to livelihoods and the natural environment since the discovery of oil and gas in the Niger Delta instigated agitations for the consideration of the indigenous people in the appropriation of the resources extracted from the area. While some citizens agitated through peaceful means, some chose violent means (Ogbogbo, 2005; Okere & Nwobueze, 2017; Nwobueze & Okolie-Osemene, 2017; Nwobueze et al., 2017). The 12-day revolution by Isaac Adaka Boro, an indigene of the region, was the first experience of any individual or group of individuals picking up arms over rights to the resources in the Niger Delta region. In 1966, Boro led a small guerrilla army of Ijaw youths to declare the Niger Delta Republic. The Federal Government of Nigeria disbanded the small guerrilla army and charged Isaac Boro for treason and sentenced him to death on 21 June 1966 (*Newswatch*, 1995; *Niger Delta News*, 2007).

The fate Boro suffered led to some level of calm in the Niger Delta until the 1990s. The rise of the military to administration after the Civil War brought about de-emphasising the principle of derivation as a revenue sharing formula. Other factors, such as population and development aggravated the situation (Ojakorotu & Olaopa, 2009).



Fig.5: Major Isaac Jasper AdakaBoro under Trial

Source: <https://web.facebook.com/townhallgist/photos/a.272587033187842/1471959596583907/?type=3&rdc=1&rdi>

The allocation of the revenues that oil-producing states got from the Federal Government was increasingly disproportionate to the region's sacrifices in producing the resources. A broad section of the elite in the Niger Delta believed that the injustice their people suffered was due to the fact that they were minorities in the Nigerian federation (Osaghae, 1995; *Corporate Social Responsibility News*, 2002).

The rise of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in the early 1990s provided the platform for Niger Deltans to call the attention of the world to the environmental injustice arising from the exploration of oil and gas in the region. It is a social movement organization

that advocates the rights and interests of the Ogoni people, an ethnic minority group in Nigeria.

MOSOP was founded in 1990 by Ken Saro-Wiwa, a Nigerian writer and activist, to address the environmental degradation and human rights abuses suffered by the Ogoni people due to oil exploration and exploitation activities in their region.

The organization's main objectives include:

1. Protecting the Ogoni people's environment and natural resources,
2. Promoting social justice and human rights,
3. Advocating for self-determination and autonomy, and
4. Supporting sustainable development and economic empowerment

The activism of the group has focused on issues such as:

1. Environmental pollution from oil spills and gas flaring,
2. Land rights and displacement,
3. Lack of economic benefits from oil revenues, and
4. Human rights abuses by security forces and oil companies.

The organization has gained international recognition for its non-violent struggle against environmental injustice and human rights violations. However, its activities have also faced repression and violence, including the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP leaders in 1995.

Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) had the highest volume of its oil spill in Ogoni (Okafor, 2024). Arising from this, MOSOP instigated a series of confrontations with SPDC that led to the halting of production on land for some time (Osaghae, 1995; Naanen, 1995).

Within the oil and gas sector of the country, the indigenes of the Niger Delta were not getting sufficient employment or appointment in government or the oil corporations (Onwubiko, 2007; Nwobueze 2018; 2019). Despite the environmental devastation in the region, oil workers lived in wealth and opulence, reminding the indigenes of the region that their misery made fortunes for some privileged individuals. This aggravated the frustration of the indigenes and encouraged them to be more aggressive in their agitation for resource control and environmental rights. The prospecting and mining license granted to SPDC gave it more privileges than other oil companies in the Nigerian economy. Although multinational oil corporations, such as Chevron (Gulf Oil), Texaco, Mobil, Agip, British Petroleum (BP) and Africa Petroleum, entered the market as competitors for the exploration and production of oil, Shell remains the most influential oil company in Nigeria to date (Amusan, 2009).

The crisis of ownership of the land between the government and communities, on the one hand, and among various communities, on the other, made the multinational oil

companies seize the opportunity to cause more confusion in the region through perpetual exploitation. In some cases, when government and oil companies engaged in community development, the activities of politicians, retired military generals, local chiefs and civil servants from the area thwart the efforts. This sabotage takes several forms, such as cornering of resources meant for development programmes in the communities (Amusan, 2009). The people began to realise that there were saboteurs among them, who secretly collaborated with the Federal Government and oil companies to frustrate their agenda. This led to the killing of some chiefs in 1994 (*Newswatch*, 1995; *Niger Delta News*, 2007). In connection to the killing of the Niger Delta chiefs, Ken Saro-Wiwa and 8 others were found guilty of murder in a case set up to intimidate environmental activism in the Niger Delta. They were sentenced to death by hanging by the Civil Disturbance Tribunals (*Newswatch*, 1995; Ikelegbe, 2006).



Fig. 6: The 9 Activists (Ken Saro-Wiwa and Others)

Source: Amnesty International

<https://twitter.com/AmnestyNigeria/status/1193533705857519616>

From 1990 to 1999, there were about 24 minority rights groups with objectives similar to MOSOP's (Ojajorotu & Olaopa, 2009). The groups included Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC), Movement for Reparation to Ogbia (MORETO), Ijaw National Congress (INC), Egi National Congress (ENG) and Isoko National Youth Movement (INYM). The Nigerian government and the multinational oil companies were indicted for the environmental degradation in the oil-rich region. The accusations of the 1990s can be summarized as follows:

- The MNOCs (multinational oil companies) operate below internationally acceptable standards, leading to atrocious side-effects on the health and livelihood of the people.
- Both the government and the MNOCs care less about the welfare of the indigenous people in the oil-bearing communities.
- The MNOCs are notorious for being sneaky and could not be trusted. They devised divide-and-rule tactics to cause hostility between and within communities through unequal compensatory payment (Amusan, 2009).

Some of the groups involved in the struggle were MOSOP, Itsekiri Ethnic Nationality, The Ijaw Youth Council, Isoko National Youth Assembly, Urhobo Youth Movement, Movement for the Oron People, Elimotu Movement, Arogbo

Movement Fighters, Meinbutu, Egbesu Boys of Africa and Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force.

When the Niger Delta youth realized that the economic and political agenda of their elders and political elite were a bit different from theirs, they embraced self-help. With little resources and no appropriate network to air their views on the global scene, they began to devise various strategies to halt new oil exploration efforts. This was the most effective way the youth knew to save their land from further pollution and government marginalization (Omoweh, 1996; Okere & Nwobueze 2011; Nwobueze, 2018b).

Poverty and the injustice of exclusion are the major factors that stimulate conflicts in Nigeria, a situation in which economic oppression and social injustice could make the majority of the poor take the militant stance to demand policy reversals; but carefully planned policies have the potential of initiating structural transformation (Faleti, 2005). A principal reason for youth agitation and militancy is greed and the desire for personal power, self-aggrandizement, and immediate monetary gains on the part of militant groups. The Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF) was founded by Asari Dokubo, a former president of the Ijaw Youth Council, in 2003, after he "retreated into the bush" to form the group with the explicit goal of acquiring control of regional petroleum resources. The NDPFV attempted to

control such resources through oil "bunkering", a process through which an oil pipeline is tapped and the oil is extracted onto a barge. Oil corporations and the Nigerian government view bunkering as illegal, but the militants justify bunkering, saying they are being exploited and have not received anything commensurate with what the state is taking away from their region and cannot continue to hold the horn of the cow for someone else to milk the cow. They point to the ecologically destructive oil industry as the main enemy of the Niger Delta.

Bunkered oil is sold for profit to foreigners. Nigeria has incurred and continues to incur huge financial losses from oil bunkering. Such resources would have increased actual output and productivity, created jobs, reduced poverty and increased the strength, stability and sustainability of the economy. Beyond the greed-grievance thesis, other germane issues include inadequate human capital development, owing to absence of peace education in the curriculum of schools, the falling standards of education, progressive corruption of social values, and unemployable status and influence of drugs on most of the youth. All these are compounded by neglect and nonchalance of stakeholders towards the promotion of youth empowerment through vocational, technical and entrepreneurial skills development.

One obvious lacuna in the enabling laws and, most especially the 1980 Presidential Task Force Account

(popularly known as the 1.5 percent committee) is the absence of any provision detailing the grounds on which institutional integrity for youth-focused human development initiatives can be implemented. This has adversely affected youth development processes and outcomes. The failure to build institutional integrity that discourages abuses and increases responsiveness is responsible for the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of development initiatives.

Poor investment in the development of human capital has translated into larger but less effective investment in threat management rather than sustainable development. These are the core issues behind the unrest and the demand for resource control in Niger Delta, which is critical to the success of the time-bound Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) targeted at achieving full rights to citizens who have been denied their full complement of human dignity.

Militancy in the Niger Delta has a clear hierarchical organisation, with fairly well-defined command-and-control structures. The leadership decides on the overall policy and plans, or the top of the pyramid. This is followed by a larger layer of active militants who carry out the acts of militancy. At the next level, there are the active supporters who supply intelligence, weapons, supplies, as well as communications, and buy the oil looted by militants. At the bottom, there are the supporters who agree with the goals of the militant

groups and spread their ideas and express their emotional support.

Militant groups have different types of members, including core members or professional militants, part-time militants or amateurs, who also lead a normal life outside the organization, as well as women and associated supporters. These different types of members exist in the study area to a fluctuating degree. Alapiki (2015) identifies the following major militant groups in the region: Niger Delta Vigilantes (NDV), under the leadership of Ateke Tom (Rivers State); Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), under the command of Asari Dokubo (Rivers State); General Boyloaf Organisation (Bayelsa State); Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), dominant in geographical Niger Delta; and Niger Delta Strike Force (NDSF), led by Farah Dagogo.

There was noticeable evidence of magical, miraculous and occult powers, which the militants consider as sources of wealth, status and security. The most obvious sign of this is the importance attached to the sanctity of the land, rivers, streams and forests by the militants. Investigations revealed that the traditional world view in the Niger Delta meshed into an influential syncretism to prepare the youth for the greed-induced militancy in the Niger Delta.

The financing of militancy in the Niger Delta is based on money clandestinely received from state governors,

multinational oil companies and their contractors, construction and oil-servicing companies, and politicians. Other sources include oil theft, piracy, organized bank robbery, ransoms paid for kidnapped victims, money laundering/money wiring and legal business investment. Militants have also received support from foreign rulers or wealthy individuals from other countries.

The role of the Niger Delta youth has largely been limited to political and criminal violence rather than peace and development. The situation is really paradoxical. As MDGs wind up, more private-sector participation in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be a giant step towards peace.

Societal Impacts of Militancy

From the early 1990s, pipeline vandalism, illegal bunkering, destruction of pipelines, shutting down of oil operations at tank farms and flow stations, bank robbery, culture of impunity and violence, excessive accumulation and easy availability of small arms (such as assault rifles, grenades and pistols) became the norm. These weapons have fuelled armed banditry, crime and social violence, all of which represent risk of future destabilization. The excessive accumulation and misuse of small arms are undoubtedly a significant obstacle to conflict transformation, and hence to sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta.

Keili's (2008) investigation of the report on the flow of small arms and light weapons in West Africa showed that this trade is powered by rising youth unemployment and the potential profit from the illegal trafficking of minerals. The paradox is that these small arms were provided to these armed groups by Nigerian leaders, the same people we expect to solve Nigeria problems. Most of these arms-bearers in Nigeria are children and youths.

Transparency and the capacity to recognize potential conflicts at an early stage can help to prevent and manage environment-induced conflicts and hence maintain peace and stability.

More than 1000 deaths have occurred each year since 2003, with public security undermined. These were as a result of attacks by militants on oil installations, kidnapping for ransoms (at least 500 oil workers and other expatriates were kidnapped between 1999 and 2009), major piracies and attempted piracies (in 2005, there were at least 25 reported cases), and the possibility of threats to oil tankers and other forms of shipping.

Nigeria's oil production capacity has been severely affected. For instance, in 1998, oil production dropped by one-third of the total national production level of 2.2 million barrels per day. At the peak of the violence in 2003, oil production dropped by 40 percent, with obvious implications for Nigeria's economy and annual budgets. In 2006, production

declined by over 20 percent. Philip Chuku, then Group Executive Director, Refining and Petrochemicals, Nigeria National Petroleum Cooperation (NNPC), reported that the four refineries operated by the NNPC were running at about 30 percent of installed capacity because of interruptions in the supply of crude. He asserted that, "We should be operating at 60 percent in all of the refineries. We are capable of doing that; the problem we have is the feedback. We have problems with the lines sometimes". He added that, "the refineries have the capacity to process 445,000 barrels of crude a day. Oil supplies have been intermittently disrupted by attacks on the pipelines by militants in the southern Niger River Delta. NNPC has used ships to transport crude to its 125,000 barrels per day Warri Refinery to decrease its reliance on piped oil". Consequently, Nigeria, Africa's top oil producer relies on fuel imports to meet its domestic fuel needs.

It has also been difficult to embark on routine maintenance of oil refineries; procurement and importation of equipment to undertake extraordinary maintenance that should enable the plants to operate at 60 percent of their capacities. In addition, there has been a steady flight of international and local investment opportunities from the crisis-ridden areas. For instance, the Warri crisis in 1997 led to the massive relocation of the corporate headquarters of some oil firms to Port Harcourt, Rivers State – occasioning loss of jobs and means of livelihood. Militancy is a violent business. The

trend of increasing deaths for the attack-initiated in the 1990s points to the need of keeping the media and the nation's awareness focused on the grievances of the people. The people of the Niger Delta have also faced other forms of physical harm and intimidation as a result of youth militancy and crimes. Women and girls have been raped or subjected to other forms of sexual abuse in the area. Following the fruits of oil theft, some young women began to join their male counterparts in oil bunkering.

Children have also been abused in the conflict. In most cases, this has been indirectly occasioned by the loss of their parents, forced displacement, or even lack of schooling opportunities when their schools close due to insecurity. There is absenteeism among students and teachers, who have also been stifled by the violence and some members of the non-teaching staff have also been intimidated. Insecurity has alienated the people from the government, thus hindering human development.

Security personnel have, in recent years, become the target of intimidation, injury and murder in the Niger Delta. This is not a right treatment for institutions intended for the development of the region.

Peace theorists and peace activists recognise that armed security tends to merely perpetuate insecurity and that any state policy that continues to reinforce armed security over human security will undermine far more important societal

concerns – the social welfare of the country. Arms spending also detracts from social welfare spending, precipitating great gaps in infrastructure, education, medical spending and loss of confidence to undertake the transformative tasks needed in peacebuilding.

More attention to human security is necessary. Effective implementation of universal norms through education would go a long way in undermining the root causes of violence and violent conflict. Environmental insecurity has created a justification for a devastating cycle of youth militancy in Niger Delta. As observed by the Executive Governor of Rivers State, Sir Siminalayi Fubara, crude oil theft affects the economy because the quantity of oil production determines the 13 percent oil derivation. Rivers State is a special place, with its emerging challenges, but environmental degradation that also contributes to climate change is a critical issue to be addressed. Nigeria can only be free from the shackles of economic downturn if its daily production of crude oil increases. In the next 6 months, the nation might be in a serious situation because there is no economic formula that can save it except it increases oil production by stopping vandalism of pipelines and stealing of crude oil. The projected 2 million barrel per day may not be a reality if economic sabotage does not stop. Youth violence has stifled development initiatives in the country. The reality is that the youth bear the burden of unemployment pain, hopelessness and helplessness. Anxiety and frustrations led them to

cultism, taking of hard drugs and all forms of violence. This is further compounded by moral decadence and incompetent and visionless leadership. Stakeholders must persistently plan for youth protection and empowerment as the way to development and prosperity in the Niger Delta.



Fig. 7a: Picture of the Current Environmental Situation of the Area

Source: By The Nation on February 24, 2023



Fig. 7b: Environmental Consequences of oil Spills on Marine Habitats

Source: <https://scrip.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=118339>



Fig. 8a:

Youth Militancy in the Niger Delta

Source: <https://grassroots.ng/2019/04/08/military-destroy-major-militant>



Fig. 8b:

Youth Militancy in the Niger Delta

Source: <https://grassroots.ng/2019/05218/militants-threaten-to-declare-Nig>

From Conflict Transformation to Sustainable Development

The Niger Delta will not experience any sustainable peace and development until the conflict in the region is deliberately transformed. The theory of conflict transformation, as propounded by Johan Lederach, is relevant in this regard. While the expression 'resolution' suggests seeking clarification of an identified problem, the term 'transformation' denotes bringing about major change in some aspects of a conflict or the socio-political system in which it exists. According to Lederach (1995a), conflict transformation emerged from a search for a better term to describe the dynamics in peace-making and peacebuilding endeavour. Theorists such as Väyrynen (1991), Galtung (1995), Rupesinghe (1995), Schwerin (1995) and Spencer and Spencer (1995) worked towards solidifying what Lederach (1995a) has described as modification of peace research and conflict resolution towards conflict transformation. The expression has accumulated a number of meanings that point to the transformation of individuals, relationships and both large and small social systems (Dukes, 1999). Burton (1990), as cited in Botes (2015), contends that conflict resolution suggests the transformation of relationships in a particular situation by finding solutions to the problems that led to the conflictual behaviour in the first place. Conflict transformation reveals the role and dynamics of social conflict as it moves through certain

predictable phases, transforming relationships and social organization. Lederach avers that the theory will deepen structural, cultural and long-term relational aspects of conflict (1995a).

Conflict transformation involves efforts to induce change in the parties' relationship through improving mutual understanding. A number of authors have explained conflict transformation in the context of a scale or process (Botes, 2015). The process usually begins with conflict settlement, then to conflict management, conflict resolution and lastly conflict transformation. Not all scholars agree that conflict transformation necessarily falls within this particular continuum. Some others have the idea of a more inclusive and linear arrangement of how the process ought to be. Kriesberg (1997) calls attention to the distinction between resolution and transformation. While conflict resolution means resolving the complications that led to the conflict, transformation means changing the relationships between parties to the conflict. Socio-political behaviour and social change are central to the theory. The ideology is founded on the awareness of the behaviour of parties to an impasse and how they can be conditioned to yield different results for the good of the parties. Conflict transformation encourages the adjustment of the stakeholder's relationships, after structural changes.

Conflict transformation offers more than the elimination or control of conflict by pointing to the inherent dialectical process. The theory identifies a process capable of converting the dynamics of a conflict and the relationship between the parties to a new and mutually beneficial relationship. The opportunity for this is provided after conflict resolution, when the parties decide to improve their relations and solidify the cooperation by making genuine attitudinal changes to accommodate each other. Galtung (1995) argues that conflicts do not have a certain timeline where they totally disappear after resolution. Although a conflict might have been resolved, it would be good for the behavioural contradictions that may arise to be properly managed through a behavioural approach that supports social change. Lederach's (1995b) framework requires a long-term transformative process in which hostile relations are modified by education, advocacy (nonviolent activism) and mediation. Violent conflict declines as the original structural sources of hostilities, such as economic, social, political, military and cultural ideologies, improve. Conflicts, as noted by Notter and Diamond (1996), cannot be resolved, but can be transformed.

Some scholars have contended that conflict transformation is an ongoing, never-ending process (Vayrynen, 1991; Galtung, 1996; Lederach, 1997), and an opportunity to create 'new social relations, institutions, and visions' (Väyrynen 1999).

The behaviour of disputing parties goes through manifest transformations and, in the process, conflicts either escalate or de-escalate (Rubin et al., 1994).

Lederach (1998) provides his version of the theory to cover the post-conflict period where peace-building and development are not driven by a hierarchical (top-down) focus, but by an organic process that will approach the agenda as a web of interdependent activities and people. In this vision of transformational peace-building, the inter-party or inter-group politics of the post-conflict phase is open to all parties. This will attract the participation of a broad spectrum of the affected societies, and not only from a small group of leaders at the negotiating table. For this reason, Lederach (1998) developed a nested paradigm of peace-building activities. The paradigm offers four distinct aspects of post-conflict peace-building:

- the socio-psychological (issues regarding identity, self-esteem, emotion, trauma and grief);
- the socioeconomic (providing financial aid, retraining, employment and development);
- the socio-political (matters pertaining to demobilization, disarmament, troop integration, and professionalization); and
- the spiritual (concerns about healing, forgiveness and mutual acknowledgement).

With the overarching aims provided by the paradigm, Lederach created a framework that addresses transformative and relational affairs (Botes, 2015).

Lederach (1997) avers that a resolution cannot be achieved by pursuing the disengagement or minimizing the conflicting groups' affiliations, because relationship is the basis of conflict as well as its solution. He offers the Norwegian-sponsored dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian representatives in Oslo as an example. He presents how, over a period of time, the parties involved began to build fresher and deeper relations. They no longer saw each other as enemies but as humans with some inherent human rights.

Besides capacity building, relationship building is a major part of Lederach's transformational approach to conflict and peace building. The kind of social exchanges that can be enjoyed from Lederach's postulations include a shift from imbalanced to balanced interactions. A shift from dependent to interdependent exchanges, from dissonant to consonant evaluations and ultimately the shift from non-legitimized to legitimized evaluations of the social exchange is also expected.

In the view of Lederach (1997), it may not always be most effective to pursue change at the political level alone. Therefore, there is the need for strategic internal and

external communications, both within the diplomatic or political stakeholders on the intervening side and the actors in conflict. Properly applied conflict transformation must promote the human and cultural resources of society. A new set of models should be developed to visualize the desired system and the long-term aim of transformation should be building on people and resources within the system (Lederach 1995).

Lederach (1997) claims that the relational aspects of conflict are crucial. Poor relationship between groups seeking reconciliation usually triggers deeper conflict, and remains a critical hindrance to peacebuilding efforts after the cessation of hostilities. Lederach's work is a comprehensive statement on conflict transformation thinking for practitioners. He describes peacebuilding as a long-term transformation of a war system into a peace system, inspired by a quest for the values of peace and justice, truth and mercy. The key dimensions of this process are changes in the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict, engendered over different periods (such as short term, midterm and long term) with effect on different system levels at different times.

In line with Lederach's postulations, local and international civil society organisations advocate a sustained level of engagement over a long period. They seek an in-depth understanding of the roots of conflict, working closely with

people within and outside the conflict parties. They seek to open a space for dialogue, sustain local or national conferences and workshops on paths towards peace, identify opportunities for development and engage in peacebuilding, relationship-building and institution-building over a long period.

Lederach's theory places reconciliation at the heart of developing long-term infrastructures for peacebuilding within societies. Reconciliation comes from truth, justice, mercy and peace. Therefore, there is the need to rebuild destroyed relationships. Miall (2004) views the strength of Lederach's theory to be in its broader view of conflict transformation, drawing peacebuilding resources from the wider society. In the theory, the role of external peacebuilders is limited to supporting internal actors, co-ordinating external peace efforts, engaging in a context-sensitive way, respecting local culture and applying a long-term approach. These ideas are further developed in Lederach's later works on strategic peacebuilding (Lederach & Appleby, 2010).

A comprehensive peace process should address complementary changes at all levels of society. Lederach presents the idea of the pyramid structure in society. Elite leaders and decision-makers constitute the top; leaders of social organisations, churches, top journalists are in the mid-level; while grassroots community leaders populate the base (Miall, 2004). A core element of Lederach's focus on society's

peacebuilding resources is his 'middle-out' approach, which divides the categories identified above into three tracks of actors: (a) Track I – the top leadership; (b) Track II – the middle level leadership; and (c) Track III – the grassroots. Although three levels of leadership, or 'tracks' are presented in Lederach's theory, he argues that the middle level leadership (Track II) holds the highest possible chance of establishing an infrastructure that can sustain the peacebuilding process for the longest term. The middle-level leadership can also serve as a platform for immediate and practical actions that will support long-term transformation in the system (Paffenholz, 2014).

State Response to the Niger Delta Crisis

What are the efforts made over the years to transform the conflict issues in the Niger Delta? In particular, how has the government been responding to the problems? The response of the Nigerian state to the threat posed by Niger Delta militants can be broadly categorized into two: kinetic and non-kinetic approaches. The developmental challenges of the Niger Delta were recognized before the independence of Nigeria from Great Britain. This was why the colonial government set up the Henry Willink Commission in 1958 to look into the fears of minorities and means of alleviating their fears. It described the Niger Delta area as 'poor, backward and neglected'. Based on the commission's recommendations, the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) was set up in 1961 (ANEIJ, 2004).

The Nigerian government's non-kinetic reaction to the civil disturbance generated by the Niger Delta agitations later led to the establishment of other development agencies to bring progress to the region's grassroots. These development bodies included Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB), Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA), Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). Despite these institutional measures, there were popular opinions amongst the people that the agencies failed in delivering their mandate due to issues like external imposition, partisanship, patronage, insufficient financing and sabotage (Iyaye, 2005). The Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs was also established. Whatever the nomenclature deployed to describe the failures of these initiatives, I am of the opinion that the situation was due to low or non-existent integrity quotient on the side of the government and its allies.

Nwobueze, 2015 avers that:

to further abuse the sensitivity of the people of the Niger Delta, the late President Yar'dua declared that the over ₦200 billion owed the NDDC by the Federal Government as bad debt and ordered that it should be written off. Yet, it is the same government that

declared the Niger Delta as part of its 7-point Agenda programme. This shows the unpreparedness of the political class to develop the Niger Delta. Certainly, it is a decision taken in bad faith against the people of the region.

What is evident from the foregoing is that the state initiatives have failed to address the fundamental problems of exclusion, deprivation and marginalisation, which have thrown up the crises of development and youth restiveness in the region. Similarly, oil companies' intervention projects have not been able to have meaningful effects on livelihood because they are being implemented without any systematic link to any development plans. For example, oil companies either ignored demands by host communities, or they employed divide-and-rule tactics that set communities and community members and groups against one another. At best, they made feeble attempts to respond to demand for intervention, by dumping development projects on the communities, in most cases without consulting the target communities in the area of youth bulge and unemployment. This has always caused considerable rift within the region. For instance, the failure of the Ogoni to respond positively to Shell's reconciliatory moves was discouraging to Shell and put its oil interest in jeopardy.

Most of the state and non-state interventionist policies, actions and structures were not based on the understanding that the issues at stake in the Niger Delta are interwoven, multidimensional and complex. In its desperate move to tackle the problem of insecurity in the region, the Federal Government has failed to design its counter measures on a proper understanding of the causal dynamics of the crises. The simplistic measure of trying to appease the youth, the most vociferous of the entire social groups, by co-opting and bribing their leaders with millions of naira has only succeeded in complicating the security situation in the area (Inokoba & Imbua, 2010)

As the civil agitation turned to youth restiveness and eventually full-blown militancy, the spread of small arms and light weapons, as well as the development of armed militia organizations created a significant security challenge for the Federal Government of Nigeria. State governments were also helpless, as many of them were unable to stabilize their territories. The challenge created for the government by the Niger Delta youth manifested through oil-sector sabotage, shutting down of oil installations, pipeline vandalism, oil bunkering, hostage-taking and kidnapping of oil workers and high net worth individuals (Igbuzor, 2006).

In trying to quell the agitation in the Niger Delta, state repression and violence were prominent amongst the strategies adopted by the Nigerian government, most

especially the military regimes that ruled until the beginning of the Fourth Republic. The repressive schema saw the government drafting mobile police officers and the armed forces to lay siege to various communities in the Niger Delta region.

The five figures below show activities of security operations in the Niger Delta



Fig. 9a

Source: <https://phmundial.com/2024/02/illegal-bunkering-navy-uncovers-14-builing-sites-in-Rivers State>



Fig. 9b

Source: <https://tribuneonlineng.com/goc-62025/02/division-visits-frontline-troops-illegal-bunkering-sites>



Fig. 9c

Source: <https://beegeagle.wordpress.com/tag/internal-security-operation/page/19/10/2024>



Fig. 9d

Source: <https://punching.com/navy-destroys-illegal-refineries-in-bayelsa/2018>



Fig. 9e

Source: <https://thestreetjournal.org/security-agents-handoverillegaloil-refinerings-to-the-EFCC>

Scholarly works, such as Eteng (1996), Raji (1998), Ovwasa (1999) and Akinwumi (2004), identify selected instances of repression by the Nigerian state. Those security campaigns that raised human rights questions include Egbema crisis (1989-91), Oburu violence (1989), Umuechem massacre (November, 1990), Bonny tragedy (1992), Tai-Biara violence (1993), Egi-Obaji mayhem (1994), Ubima tragedy (1995), and Odi massacre 1999. Emuedo (2013), cited in Nwoba & Nwokwu (2018), summarises the security operations, as presented in the table below:

Table 1: Security Operations in the Niger Delta between 1990 and 2025

Year	Place	Operating Force	Activities
1990	Umuechem, Rivers State	Security forces	80 unarmed demonstrators killed; 395 houses destroyed
1993	Choba, Rivers State	Police, Mobile Force	Houses razed and property destroyed; academic activities disrupted, with adverse impact on University of Port Harcourt
1999	Odi, Bayelsa State	Army	The entire community was destroyed. Just a single building was spared in the attack. 2483 persons were reportedly killed.
2004	Uwheru, Delta State	Joint Task Force	20 persons killed and 11 houses burnt down
2004	Egbema, Rivers State	Joint Task Force	13 communities destroyed; over 500 buildings razed and over 200 persons, mostly women and children, feared dead
2004	Olugbobiri and Ikebiri, Bayelsa State	State security forces	About 16 peaceful and unarmed persons killed
2005	Odioma, Bayelsa State	Joint Military Task Force	Over 50 persons, mostly women and children, killed
2006	Gbaramatu, Delta State	Joint Task Force	15 women and children killed in their homes

2006	Afiesere, Delta State	Police	Over 80 houses burnt and 20 persons killed, leading to deteriorating living conditions and creating tension in the area
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Table 1 Cont'd

Year	Place	Operating Force	Activities
2007	Rivers State	Nigerian Army	Operation Flush Out was launched to combat militancy in Rivers State. The operation resulted in clashes between soldiers and militants. Casualty figures are unclear. This discouraged investors and tourists.
2008	Bodo, Rivers State	Nigerian Military	The Nigerian Military attacked the town of Bodo in Rivers State, allegedly targeting militants. However, the operation resulted in significant damage to the community.
2009	Gbaramatu Kingdom, Delta State	Nigerian Military	The operation resulted in the destruction of many communities, including Oporoza, Okerenkoko and Kunukunuma. Amnesty International reported that at least 20 people were killed during the military operation.

2009-2010	Delta and Bayelsa States	Nigerian Army	The Nigerian Army conducted Operation Restore Hope in Delta and Bayelsa States, aimed at reducing militancy and oil theft. Dozens of militants and civilians were reportedly killed.
2010-2014	Geographical Niger Delta Region	Joint Military Task Force	Operation Pulo Shield, covering Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers States, focusing on counter-insurgency, anti-oil theft and anti-kidnapping efforts, led to disruption of the peace, rising regional tension, extrajudicial killings, arrests, displacement of civilians and other forms of violation of human rights.
2012-2014	Delta State	Joint Military Task Force	Operation Delta Safe, a subset of Operation Pulo Shield, targeted militants and oil thieves in Delta State; estimated 100 deaths reported, besides humanitarian crisis
2016	Oporoza, Delta State	Joint Military Task Force	Homes were allegedly invaded and destroyed; livestock and economic trees were also destroyed
2016	Bayelsa State	Nigerian Army	The crackdown on Niger Delta Avengers led to reported human rights abuses, such as

			killing of innocent civilians and destruction of livelihoods, which engendered delayed sustainable development.
2016	Okerenkoko, Delta State	Nigerian Army	Operation Crocodile Smile, a military exercise aimed at curbing crime and militancy in the Niger Delta, created tension and instability.

Table 1 Cont'd

Year	Place	Operating Force	Activities
2017	Ibena, Akwa-Ibom State	Nigerian Army	The Nigerian Military launched Operation Python Dance, which destroyed productivity, innovation and growth.
2019	Burutu, Delta State	Nigerian Army	The Nigerian Military clashed with militants, resulting in loss of many lives and destruction of economy.
2020	Geographical Niger Delta Region	Joint Military Task Force	Operation Delta Safe II, a follow-up operation to Operation Delta Safe, aimed at maintaining security in the region, destabilized the broader Niger Delta region.
2020	Oyigbo, Rivers State	Nigerian Army	The Nigerian Military raided Oyigbo, in search of members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), which left the

			people vulnerable to instability.
2020	Nembe, Bayelsa State	Nigerian Military	The Nigerian Military raided Nembe in search of militants. This created a serious humanitarian crisis.
2024	Okuama and Okotoma, Delta State	Nigerian Army	The Nigerian army was engaged in a peacekeeping mission aimed at mediating between the Okuama and Okoloba communities following violent clashes. Seventeen (17) soldiers were killed by suspected irate youths from the Okuama community. This incident resulted in military reprisals against the community, which aggravated regional tensions and worsened living conditions and social unrest.
2025	Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers communities	Nigerian Army and Navy	Anti-crude oil operations and continued crackdown on illegal oil facilities in Niger Delta communities created palpable fear in the masses.

Source: Author's Compilation (2025)

Amnesty as a Non-kinetic Approach

The marginalization and repression of the Niger Delta people set the region on the trajectory of events that shifted from petitions to civil agitations and lastly militancy. It was as a

result of intense militancy that the government came up with the amnesty programme. President Umar Musa Yar'Adua inaugurated a technical committee on the Niger Delta question. His administration had a seven-point agenda which described the overall strategy of the administration. The 7th point in the agenda was restoration of peace and development to the Niger Delta region. For this reason, he set up a committee to investigate the Niger Delta struggles and proffer solutions. The 45-man committee was inaugurated on 8th September 2008. The president of MOSOP, Barr. Ledum Mittee, chaired the committee, and the report of the committee was submitted to the Federal Government on 1st of December 2008 (Technical Committee on Niger Delta, 2008; Mittee, 2008).

The committee collated and reviewed all past development reports on the Niger Delta region before making its recommendations to the Federal Government. This made many indigenes of the Niger Delta have some hope in the outcome of the process. To achieve sustainable peace and development, the committee recommended the appointment of a mediator to facilitate talks between the government and the militants. It also encouraged the government to grant amnesty to some militant leaders, initiate a disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation (DDR) campaign, and increase the percentage of oil derivation allocation to 25 percent from 13 percent. It also advised the government to

enact laws that will compel multinational oil companies to get insurance bonds and prioritize and reinforce critical environmental laws to protect the region (Report of the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta, 2008).

Yar'Adua agreed to implement just some parts of the report of the committee. This prompted him to institute a presidential panel on amnesty and disarmament of Niger Delta militants. On 5th May 2009, the exercise began pursuant to Section 175 of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution, which stipulates that, after consultation with the Council of State, the President may:

- a) grant any person concerned with or convicted of any offence created by an act of the National Assembly a pardon, either free or subject to lawful conditions.
- b) grant to any person a respite, either for an indefinite or for a specific person of the execution of any punishment imposed on that person for such an offence,
- c) remit the whole, or any part of any punishment imposed on that person for such an offence, or of any penalty of forfeiture otherwise due to the state on account of such an offence.

The President finally granted unconditional amnesty to repentant militants on June 25, 2009, albeit with conditions. Ekumaoko (2013) asserts that amnesty, as a matter of public policy, means the exoneration and pardon given to criminals,

rebels and insurgents for their roles in organized crimes committed against the state and society. Oluwaniyi (n.d.) claims that amnesty is not new to the Niger Delta. He notes that, in 1967, the Gen. Yakubu Gowon-led military government pardoned Isaac Adaka Boro and his guerrilla group, the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), the first Niger Delta armed struggle in 1966. Amnesty is usually backed by law and has a specific period for the alleged offenders to admit the offence and accept the pardon offered by the state. The amnesty plan required all militants to surrender their arms and ammunition and sign the amnesty register within a 60-day period (August 6-October 4, 2009) (Emuedo, 2013). According to the amnesty plan, those who surrender their weapons would be enrolled in a rehabilitation programme and receive a monthly stipend of sixty-five thousand Naira (₦65,000.00) (Reuters, 2009).



Fig. 10a

Niger Delta Disarmament Programme

Source: <https://ndlink.org/a-look-into-the-niger-delta-amnesty-program-success-or-failure/>



Fig. 10b

Niger Delta Disarmament Programme

Source: <https://ndlink.org/a-look-into-the-niger-delta-amnesty-program-success-or-failure/>

During the disarmament phase, in October 2009, 20,192 ex-militants and non-militants surrendered their weapons. The cache of weapons surrendered included 2,760 rifles, 287,445 ammo, 3,155 magazines, 1,090 dynamite caps, 763 explosives (including dynamite sticks), and 18 gunboats (Abiodun, Adekunle & Sylvester, 2009). The rehabilitation of the ex-militants began in June 2010 at Obubra Camp in Cross River State. The rehabilitation exercises for the ex-militants included training and workshops on non-violence as well as training and job guidance, in addition to meeting their basic needs of food, shelter and clothes.

The Senate approved a total of ₦10 billion for the Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) phase

of the initiative (Nwajiakwu-Dahous, 2009). With regard to the reintegration of the former militants, the Office of the Special Adviser to the President on the Niger Delta (2015) reported that there were 15, 224 recipients of the programme. The range of training provided for them by the government included education in local and foreign universities. The education focused on vocational skills (such as welding and fabrication), entrepreneurship, maritime, crane and heavy duty, pipe lifting, boat building, agriculture, automobile works, electrical installation, aviation (engineers, pilot for fixed wings and helicopters, instructors), diving, drilling, health, safety and environment, industry automation, entertainment and instrumentation (Ebiede et al., 2019). The Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) attracted a huge cost. The Nigerian government estimated that the entire programme would cost around US\$360 million when it was first proposed in 2009, but ended up spending far more. The adjustments implemented by the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta, Kingsley Kuku, in 2011 resulted in a considerable increase in the programme's cost. Due to this rise, the Nigerian government allocated US\$2.714 billion for the PAP from 2011 to 2017.

The progress made by the Federal Government Amnesty Programme in bringing to an end the destabilisation of the oil industry and the militarised conflict in the region by encouraging militants to lay down their arms and engage

with training and skills development is inconsequential and not substantial with regard to reducing poverty and finding robust and sustainable long-term solutions to the challenges of development, critical to harnessing the productive capacity of the youth for peace and development.

Violence has declined but has not disappeared. Getting the strategy right is the most crucial component in any policy implementation. There is a critical perspective of the Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta that scholars and analysts have inadvertently omitted, namely the sustainability component of the programme. Sustainability translated into human capacity-building is taken to mean endowing people with skills, abilities and competences capable of manipulating economic processes and at the same time providing a mechanism for employing such skilled manpower to increase productivity. In Nigeria, one of the programmes that need built-in sustainability criteria is the Amnesty Programme of the Federal Government.

From Amnesty to Piracy and High Sea Robbery in the Niger Delta Region

Stakeholders testified that the amnesty programme brought relative peace to the distressed Niger Delta region (Kuku 2012; Obi 2014). The programme had many immediate impacts, which included reducing the quantity of small arms and light weapons in circulation in the Niger Delta and the

country. During the regional disarmament ceremonies, the armed groups that participated in the DDR programme relinquished various weapons and ammunition (Joab-Peterside et al. 2011).

The successful implementation of the amnesty policy resulted in increase in oil production and corresponding increase in the country's foreign exchange earnings. Alison-Madueke, the then Minister of Petroleum Resources, stated in a keynote address that the country's crude oil (condensate) output increased to an average of 2.39 million barrels per day, exceeding the planned production of 2.30 million bpd (*The News*, 2012). Similarly, in 2011, gas sales increased by more than 70%, and for the first time, the industry supplied more gas domestically than the power and industrial sectors required. The Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Company (NLNG) also had one of its most successful years, with its output reaching 21.2 million cubic metric tons by 2011.

The most substantial gain of the amnesty programme, according to Sayne (2013), was the fact that the security in the region improved with the cut to armed attacks on oil facilities. There were also reports of peaceful elections in Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and Akwa Ibom States in the 2011 general elections. The Amnesty Programme relentlessly pursued human capital development, with the goal of

building intermediate and high-level experts in underwater welding, sea faring, marine engineering and piloting. Over 5,000 ex-militants travelled to the United States, United Arab Emirates, South Korea, South Africa, Ghana and other countries for education and skill training programmes. It was also believed that around 200 indigenes of the region were listed for various training activities in Greece, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Jordan and Nigeria. One noteworthy component of the capacity-building programme of the amnesty was that ex-militants were given the freedom to choose their own trade without difficult guidance. The Presidential Amnesty Office announced in 2012 that between one and two hundred ex-militants had acquired long-term employment in maritime services, fabrication and similar industries.

In 2010 alone, the Presidential Amnesty Committee spent 80% of its budget on consultation and only 20% on recipients (militants). Therefore, the Presidential Amnesty Programme faced harsh criticism for failing to pursue sustainable solutions to the major issues underpinning the Niger Delta crisis (*The Guardian*, November 14, 2010). Critics agreed that the programme has not adequately addressed the root causes of militancy, insecurity and criminality. They believed that the inherent issues that served as hindrances to the region's progress, such as lack of adequate infrastructure, quality education, decent employment and environmental degradation, were still

largely in existence. The initiative was also accused of corruption. Even the training and capacity-building courses offered in the rehabilitation camps were criticized for being insufficient because they covered ex-militants and left out other members of the society. The (DDR) process was weak in achieving the purpose of demobilization.

A key objective of demobilisation initiatives is to weaken the cohesion of militant groups, and end the relationship between ordinary fighters and the leaders of armed groups. However, the Niger Delta DDR programme tended to reinforce this relationship (Ebiede, 2017). In the Niger Delta, the monthly stipends allocated to ex-fighters were paid through the leaders of armed groups. This gave the ex-militant leaders an important role to play in the DDR process in the Niger Delta. This function also ensured that they maintained control and influence over their fighters. There was limited participation of the international oil corporations in the amnesty and DDR process, in addition to the continued patronage of armed thugs for political violence in the region

Resurgence of Militancy? Path to the Post-amnesty Insecurity

The political tension that arose after the 2015 presidential elections was the principal reason for the resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta after the amnesty period. With

the election of President Muhammadu Buhari in 2015, the monthly stipend paid to the repentant militants and the pipeline surveillance contracts that were given to some former militants were stopped. The government attributed the suspension to the need to review the implementation. This move infuriated some of the Niger Delta youth; the relationship between the region and the state deteriorated once again (BBC, 2016). This caused conflict between militant warlord Tompolo and the Federal Government that led to a warrant for the arrest of the militant leader. The threat to Tompolo's freedom made new militant groups emerge to demand his freedom from the Federal Government.

In 2016, Nigeria experienced 51 documented attacks from the militants (Global Terrorism Database, 2020). The attacks occurred in four states: Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Delta. Other violent groups with similar aims emerged, launching their own demands and attacks (Nwobueze and Okolie-Osemene, 2018). The militant groups that emerged during this period included Isoko Liberation Movement, Red Egbesu Water Lions, Suicide Squad, Egbesu Mightier Confraternity, Joint Niger Delta Liberation Force (JNDLF) and Ultimate Warriors of Niger Delta (UWND) (Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta, 2016). For the cessation of hostilities and return of peace that was briefly

enjoyed, the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) demanded the following conditions from the government of President Muhammadu Buhari:

1. Immediate implementation of the report of the 2014 National Conference;
2. Change in ownership of oil blocks to reflect 60% for individuals from oil-producing regions and 40% for individuals from non-oil producing regions;
3. Commencement of academic activities at the Maritime University in Delta State;
5. Clean-up of land and other polluted areas, and payment of compensation to all oil producing communities;
6. Release of Nnamdi Kanu, the detained leader of the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB); and
7. Continuation and funding of the Niger Delta Presidential Amnesty Programme (*Vanguard*, 2021).

Between November and December 2016, the Nigerian Army launched a renewed military operation in the region code-named Operation Crocodile Smile (*Daily Post*, 2017). The operation had the objective of securing oil infrastructure located in the creeks of the Niger Delta. It addressed militancy, kidnapping and oil theft. It recorded some level of achievements due to the suppression of suspected militants. It also secured the destruction of some emerging militant camps. To ensure that the government's response during the

post-amnesty phase was successful, the President Muhammadu Buhari administration, through the Vice President, used a soft approach, instead of the military's coercive strategy. On August 22, 2016, the NDA announced a 'ceasefire' to halt attacks on oil infrastructure in the Niger Delta (*Energy Aspects*, 2016). The truce was announced to enable negotiations between the government and regional parties in the Niger Delta. On November 1, 2016, the Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, representing the Federal Government of Nigeria, organized a summit with the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF). Following the summit, the Federal Government of Nigeria issued a 20-point agenda to guide future intervention in the Niger Delta. The agenda outlined short- and long-term strategies to promote stability, peace and development in the Niger Delta (Ministry of Petroleum Resources, 2017).

On November 4, 2017, the NDA issued a press release threatening to end the ceasefire (*Premium Times*, 2017). A lesser-known group, the Niger Delta Revolutionary Crusaders (NDRC), also called for renewed warfare in the Niger Delta. When the attacks were renewed and the Niger Delta youth were at war with the government once again, the former militants devised new illegal economic activities in addition to their militant activities. Some of the activities were piracy and artisanal refining of oil, which has led to the emergence of another environmental challenge in the form of black soot in the atmosphere of the Niger Delta (Zibima, 2015).

Piracy flourished at two levels: within the country's internal waterways in the Niger Delta region and within the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. While the inland waterway piracy impacted human security in the region, sea piracy in the Gulf of Guinea had significant impacts on international trade and regional security. Piracy was mainly carried out by armed groups from different countries in West and Central Africa but most of their activities in the Gulf of Guinea were from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Locals in the riverine settlements of Bayelsa State's Southern Ijaw Local Government Area, for instance, reported approximately twenty pirate attacks between November 2013 and February 2014, with additional ten in May and June 2014. In July, the state security personnel defending an oil flow station foiled a violent attack in which pirates made a daring attempt to take a machine gun from the security ship (Ebiede, 2014). While there have been reports of arm seizures, there is no clear information on the quantity of firearms still in the hands of non-state actors in the region.

Oil theft was also operated by a complex network of actors in the Niger Delta region. It was carried out by local youths, oil magnates, as well as the political and military elites in Nigeria (Ebiede, 2017). In practice, there are at least three levels of oil theft in the Niger Delta. The first is conducted by corrupt members of the Nigerian government and the oil industry. The second involves sabotage of oil industry

infrastructure. The third is that of oil for artisanal refining carried out by local groups. These groups have locally-made infrastructure used to refine oil, which is supplied to the local and regional markets to meet the energy demands of low-income earners. It is estimated that at least 13,000 barrels of oil are refined daily by artisanal refiners across the Niger Delta. The amount of crude oil stolen for artisanal refining is insignificant compared to Nigeria's daily production. However, the criminal nature of this activity affects the socio-political order in local communities, and the crude method of refining contributes significantly to environmental pollution. This form of illicit refining has led to state sanctions and punitive action by the Nigerian military. Unlike other forms of oil theft, the violence associated with artisanal refining is mainly between the groups involved in artisanal refining and the Nigerian military (Albert et al., 2024).



Fig. 11:

Navy Fighting Oil Theft in Niger Delta

Source: <https://www.thetidenewsonline.com/2019/07/05/hownavyfightoiltheftinnigerdelta>

Illicit artisanal oil refining is viewed as the most valuable source of local employment in the rural areas of the Niger Delta (SDN, 2013). The pecuniary compensation for this activity is determined by the exact task performed by individuals or their level of involvement. The Nigerian government has launched various security operations targeted at shutting down these artisanal oil refineries. For example, on July 25, 2013, the Joint Task Force destroyed 32 illegal artisanal refineries in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State (*Vanguard* 2013); seven were again destroyed in the same area on February 17, 2015 (*All Africa*, 2015); and another 80 in Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States in 2017 (*Nigerian Pilot*, 2017). These military activities have resulted in reduction in the number of artisanal refineries in local communities. When it persists, artisanal crude oil refining becomes dangerous.

Back to Sustainable Peace and Development

In my thinking, no framework for real and lasting sustainable peace and development anywhere in the world begins at just rhetoric about peace and development. Such a framework must begin at justice and fair play. It must begin at the recognition and respect for human rights and human dignity. In the particular case of Nigeria and her Niger Delta region, the framework for sustainable peace and development must begin at that point at which Nigeria repents of its predatory attitude to the Niger Delta region in the exploitation of the material resources so richly bestowed on the area. Nigeria

must not continue to see the region as a place only meant to give of its resources to the rest of the nation without any concrete reciprocation in the form of providing quality education and jobs for its young ones; providing for the populations made very vulnerable by oil exploitation in the axis in a life-threatening manner; ensuring that the environment is clean; ensuring inclusivity of the people of the Niger Delta region in the central governance machinery of the nation; and committing to the provision of healthcare, roads and other physical infrastructures. This is the starting point for sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta region. Once there are such intentional programmes geared towards the well-being of the people and their landscape, peace would flow naturally from the creeks of the Niger Delta even into the Sahelian region of the country.

Oil companies –mostly multinational and transnational ones – generally connive with the corrupt central government officials to undermine the well-being of the people. In many instances, they even have some predatory grip on the government of the nation; they believe they can always have their way with the nation and its peoples. They fail to realise that they could even reap more from the Niger Delta if their activities in the region manifest the same global best practices that operate in other parts of the world where they do business. Would these companies, for instance, dare to perpetrate oil spill in the advanced economies as they have

done in the Niger Delta area? Would they be taking so much from communities without giving back to them? However, one must acknowledge the connivance of some of the so-called community leaders with the oil companies either through collecting personal gratifications from the companies and silencing voices of dissent among the people, or through simply stealing the support from these companies that is meant for the generality of the people. In this case, it is necessary for those oil companies that are involved in meaningful social responsibility profile to find ways of doing business directly with the communities. They could build schools, health facilities, roads and provide scholarships to indigent children without having to pass through the local chiefs.

Greed, avarice and the struggle to outdo one another have often turned the attention of the local communities away from their common enemies –the government and the oil companies –to infighting. It is common to find the victim local communities fighting for supremacy in the sharing of the windfall from the table of their oppressors. Unlike the older patriots of the region, many of the modern so-called leaders of the communities are self-seeking individuals and traitors. It would be necessary to have an altruistic, non-partisan Niger Delta group that would examine the relations

among the people, strive to find commonalities among them and emphasize these, and bring the people under one umbrella, the way the older leaders of the region did. Cultural shows and dances, common history, togetherness in the political journey, for example the old COR (Calabar, Ogoja, Rivers) movement, could be returned to the forefront.

The rise/emergence of transformational leaders at all levels and times to enlighten, empower and protect the followers will promote sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.

Two gaps have been noticed in the implementation of the amnesty programme initiated by the administration of President Yar'Adua. The first is that it excluded the Niger Delta youth, who could not identify with the militancy in the region. The second is that it was not well linked to the communities where the beneficiaries were expected to have returned to. Under the scheme, the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs and the Niger Delta Development Commission should have been provided more federal support to engage in grassroots and infrastructural development of the Niger Delta. The government should have prompted the necessary ministries, departments and agencies associated with employment to increase the level of employment in the region to discourage all forms of criminality.

The programme agreed with Lederach's postulations on conflict transformation when it went into force after a resolution had been reached. After consultations of the Federal Government and the Presidential Amnesty Committee with the communities, the militants first agreed to the guidelines of the amnesty programme, starting with the laying down of arms. This transformed the behaviour of the actors in different ways. It signalled the end of the struggle between security forces and the youth in the region. It also signalled the beginning of cooperation and mutual respect. The militants became more resilient and less violent, as they embraced all the associated packages of the programme. The behaviour of the government was also transformed; the government was highly interested in exterminating the militants, catering for their welfare in terms of payments and contracts. The programme was successful, as it de-escalated tensions and created peace for a significant period. It was not until the programme was ended that the militants returned to the creeks and the conflict escalated. This reveals that poverty and unemployment are also a massive element of the violent struggles of the militants. If the militants had more dignifying jobs, they would be at peace with the other stakeholders.

The Federal Government's crackdown on piracy increased the interest of the youth in oil theft and illegal refining (Anyika & Ojatorotu, 2022). The USAID office of conflict management and mitigation (2004:2) observes that "when young people particularly young men are uprooted, jobless, alienated and have few opportunities for positive engagement, they become a ready pool of recruits for groups seeking to mobilize for violence".

Conflict transformation in the Niger Delta cannot be adequately achieved if youth-focused human development initiatives (YHDIs) is neglected, the rationale underlying this approach suggest that YHDIs and institutionalization of conflict transformation will assist the youth with economic skills and gainful employment; create jobs and prosperity and enhance the living standards of citizens, thereby promoting inclusive governance and development. While the efforts of government and other stakeholders to stem the growing threats to sustainable development are commendable, the main thrust of the resource curse thesis remains true for Niger Delta.

Efforts to generate development, create prosperity will require that the youth should be empowered, given the broad mandate to assist, to advise, and where necessary, to participate in such economic improvements as maybe decided upon. The Niger Delta appears to suffer an affliction of the Dutch disease and paradox of resource curse. This

suggests the need for adequate YHDIs to cultivate inclusive citizenship, desegregate the mind, build a culture of peace and boost growth in the productive capacity of the region (Nwobueze, 2015; 2018; 2019; 2023; 2024).

Greater and sustained awareness of the necessity for greater emphasis on the promotion of youth entrepreneurship, self-employment and holistic sustainable livelihood for useful and peaceful living among the youth will guarantee a peaceful climate, which will accelerate sustainable development through the contributions that empowered, healthy and enlightened Niger Delta indigenes will make to national development (Nwobueze, 2015).

Engaging in massive infrastructural development will indicate the political will to address the long-standing challenges faced by the people of the Niger Delta (Jannamike, 2023). The challenges of infrastructure cut across every part of the nation owing to a long period of neglect by the government, but the development of the Niger Delta must be prioritised. In promoting sustainable development in the Niger Delta region, the Federal Government is the most important stakeholder because of its access to the entire stretch of government resources, policies and programmes that support development objectives at all levels. The Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has started a number of projects and programmes, including

building housing estates, providing jetties, supplying water, repairing roads and creating skill acquisition centres. If these projects receive full funding and support, they should significantly reduce local demands for infrastructural improvement (Williams, 2023). Sustainable maintenance and improved quality of East-West Road, which connects Niger Delta cities to some other parts of the country, Port Harcourt-Owerri Road and Port Harcourt-Enugu Road will provide peace and security, create increased opportunities for inter- and intra-group relations as well as national peace and development.

The NDDC is working towards sustainable development in the Niger Delta through a partnership approach but its efforts have been insufficient (NDDC, 2023). The private sector is one of the most important stakeholders that the Federal Government must collaborate with for the region's development. The Niger Delta region can experience economic growth and development from the proficiency, resources and technological capabilities of the private sector. Through joint ventures and public-private partnerships (PPPs), the NDDC and relevant ministries can effectively utilise these possibilities to carry out good initiatives and programmes. Through PPPs, the public and private sectors can work together to finance, plan, construct and run infrastructure projects. Community-based organisations (CBOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) are also crucial

collaborators for the region's development. The needs and goals of the people living in the region are well understood by these organisations. The government may make sure that its agenda and programmes are in line with the needs and ambitions of the CSOs and CBOs, by working together with them on particular projects and programmes, utilising their knowledge and assets, and including them in the planning and execution stages.

For the sake of sustainable development in the Niger Delta region, the government also needs the assistance of foreign organisations, such as multinational enterprises, donor organisations, foreign government agencies and multilateral agencies. The government can benefit greatly from the knowledge and experience provided by multilateral organisations, like World Bank and African Development Bank. To secure growth and development in the Niger Delta after the amnesty period, a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of conflict, promotes dialogue, reconciliation and cooperation among all stakeholders, and fosters a culture of peace, inclusivity and shared prosperity is essential. This approach should be based on the principle of live and let live, which emphasizes tolerance, understanding and recognition of diversity as essential components of conflict resolution and sustainable peacebuilding (SDN, 2020).

Achieving understanding requires inclusive communication which ensures that all individuals, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, can effectively understand and participate in interactions by using accessible, respectful and adaptable method (Global Peace Index, 2024). The following inclusive communication and positive peace pillars are relevant in this regard: use clear and simple language to make messages accessible; offer information in multiple formats (text, audio and visual) to meet different needs; include diverse voices and seek feedback from underrepresented groups; practise active listening and acknowledge contributions; and be patient and mindful of different communication styles or needs (Global Peace Index, 2024).

Another essential strategy for securing growth and development in the Niger Delta is for the government to deliberately increase public participation in the development and implementation of a range of initiatives addressing governance, economic diversification and environmental issues in the region. The programme will address the lack of inter-agency action in the Niger Delta, which has led to breakdown in relations between the federal and state governments and the citizens in the region. By meeting the demand for innovative approaches to security and stabilization in the short-term period and embedding structures for long-term stability, the programme can contribute to the region's sustainable development.

As noted by the current Governor of Bayelsa State during his visit to the Ayamasa community in Ekeremor Local Government Area of the state on 7 June, 2024:

This is not the time for us to have conflicts in our communities. We should be more united to attract development to our communities. The chiefs, youths and other community leaders should conduct themselves peacefully and not fight over peanuts from oil companies. People should be transparent when handling public money. The youths should desist from taking laws into their hands and channel their grievances to the appropriate quarters for peaceful resolution (Alabrah, 2024).

Another strategy for securing growth and development in the Niger Delta is to support the reconciliation and reintegration of former gang members and combatants and provide alternative livelihood options for them. Bringing together organizations implementing successful reintegration approaches for former gang members across the region can also contribute to the region's sustainable development, as

these people can learn from one another. Moreover, facilitating dialogue between civil society groups and the government on clean-up and remediation of oil-impacted areas and demonstrating effective implementation mechanisms can improve government approaches to the region's environmental issues. By testing, piloting and securing the adoption, scale-up and sustainability of initiatives that contribute to security and stability, the region can move towards sustainable development.

The government is fortunate to have secured a decline in piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. In 2019, the Gulf saw the kidnapping of at least 121 sailors; in 2020, the region was the scene of 130 out of 135 kidnappings worldwide. The cases of kidnapping that occurred during that time was exceptional and unheard of anywhere else in the world. Furthermore, forty crew members were abducted globally in the first four months of 2021, with all of the incidents in the Gulf of Guinea. According to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre, there were nine incidents in 2023 with varying serious pirate attacks in the Gulf of Guinea (Dryad Global, 2023). In one of these events, 12 heavily armed men successfully hijacked a tanker 300 nautical miles southwest of Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire. Nearly all of the piracy incidents along the Bight of Benin and in the Gulf of Guinea have been connected to Nigerian pirates (UNODC, 2013).

Piracy and armed robbery at sea has reduced greatly in the Gulf of Guinea and this decline can be credited to the Nigerian Navy and other concerted efforts of the Nigerian authorities, with the support of regional and international partners (UN, 2023). The highly common practice of 'oil bunkering', the stealing, diverting and smuggling of oil without authorization, has a close relationship with piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and artisanal refining in the Niger Delta. A 2023 study estimated that Nigeria's economy has suffered a loss of 2.184 trillion from bunkering. The illegal activity has also damaged local communities economically and posed various environmental threats to the local populace (Dryad Global, 2023).

The time is ripe for a synergy of security agencies and other relevant stakeholders in gathering reliable intelligence needed to fight all acts of economic sabotage against the government and the good people of the Niger Delta. Community engagement, which incorporates networking kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities, will tackle insecurity and salvage the nation's economy and environment from saboteurs.

Education is a site for moulding minds and attitudes. There should be deliberate inclusion of peacebuilding and development, human security and peace education in the curriculum of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in

the Niger Delta. Peacebuilding and development should focus on equipping young people with comprehensive knowledge, skills and practices on the nexus between peace and development. The central thesis is, "Without peace, there is no development; without development, there is no peace." The capacity of the youth in this area should be built to address complex conflicts and promote sustainable development, mainly focusing on an in-depth understanding of peacebuilding and development concepts, practical skills for conflict management and development work, and the ability to analyse complex conflicts and develop effective interventions.

Albert (2012) calls attention to the central role that education has to play in dealing with peace and security issues, as underscored by the 'Multi-track Diplomacy' framework. The role of Track V diplomacy is to generate knowledge on insecurity with a view to providing the intellectual and moral architecture of peace building. In this respect, the knowledge and skills generated by academic institutions, whether formal or non-formal, are not meant for them alone but also for the larger society for ensuring peace and security (Albert, 2012). UNESCO (2011:127) notes that "the target of education is about laying the foundations for peace. The right type of education is one of the best conflict-prevention strategies available to any society, the

wrong type makes armed conflict more likely". Thus, what is invested in education can be easily correlated with how secure a society is. Where the educational system is based on a well-thought-out curriculum, the needed manpower for developing the society and avoiding destructive conflict will be produced. In addition to providing knowledge that makes one employable, education can be used to teach peace, security and development in the heart of men.

The youth should also remember that, since conflict is part of human existence, what matters is their capacity to stop allowing it to escalate. They can do this by responding peacefully to all situations that may trigger misunderstanding and provocation. Another area is to remind all actors of the implications of conflict, especially how the youth are affected by armed conflicts, which have made countries to have low rating on the Global Peace Index. This poor rating will affect economic and investment opportunities that could improve youth empowerment and societal development (Nwobueze, 2020). Strong and credible social institutions to minimize corruption and crime, facilitate wealth creation and prosperity, enforcing the rule of law is advocated.

Flood Mitigation/Management Strategies

No matter the engineering design and management strategies adopted, there will always be a risk of flood

occurrence, especially in low-lying coastal regions. Since flood occurrence is inevitable and it is also not economically feasible to stop or have absolute control over it, there is the need to adopt measures to minimize its devastating effects on both man and the environment. Flood mitigation strategies are well articulated plans, designed specifically with the necessary tools to help mitigate sufferings or foreseen challenges that might come up as a result of flood disaster. In other words, these are step-by-step strategies or measures adopted to help reduce damage by flood (Ukpere, 2015). The following steps could be taken in this regard:

1. Keeping adequate records of previous floods in terms of volume and level of water, damage, number of deaths, spatial coverage and amount spent on rehabilitation and resettlement, etc.;
2. Early warning signals through proper monitoring of stream water level and adequate public enlightenment campaigns;
3. Adequate mechanisms and plans for possible relocation of residents of areas affected;
4. Strategic plan to cushion the effect of possible damage on property and means of livelihood;
5. Identification of feasible IDP (internally displaced persons) camps, logistics for feeding and medical care, source of funds and general management of the proposed IDP camps;

6. Possible resettlement plans after the flood;
7. Dispute/conflict management strategies within the IDP camps and after the floods as the people return to their homes;
8. Construction of levees and flood walls;
9. Construction of bigger/larger dams to serve as reservoirs;
10. Construction of deeper and wider drainages and planting of trees and grasses along the flood channels to serve as protective cover on land;
11. Avoiding blocking of drainages with solid wastes and sediments and opening of flood paths/channels; and
12. Regular cleaning of blocked drainages and public enlightenment on the danger of disposing of wastes into drainage.

The following are some hindrances to flood mitigation:

- a) Lack of adequate forecasting tools/ techniques;
- b) Lack of adequate long-term planning to reduce risks and consequences; and
- c) Inefficiency of local authorities and agencies

Solutions to the challenges of flood-mitigation strategies in Nigeria include the following:

- i. Adoption of efficient policies;
- ii. Effective management of the ecological funds;

- iii. Encouragement of adoption of environment disaster insurance scheme;
- iv. Continuous public enlightenment programmes;
- v. Integration of environmental planning/management education into school curriculums at all levels; and
- vi. Capacity building on adaptation and mitigation strategies on the impacts of climate change.
- vii. There is the need for environmental education at all levels of schools; improvement of environmental compliance strategy by stakeholders as well as strengthening the environmental studies.

Legislative measures are indispensable tools for promoting peaceful coexistence. Through anti-discrimination laws, conflict resolution mechanisms and education-focused initiatives, legislation creates a robust framework that fosters respect, tolerance, inclusivity and cultural understanding. Anti-discrimination laws establish clear boundaries and consequences for discriminatory behaviour, thus promoting equality and discouraging bias. Conflict resolution mechanisms, like mediation and arbitration, offer alternative avenues for resolving disputes, as well as encourage dialogue and negotiation to prevent conflicts from escalating into violence. Education-focused legislation favours initiatives that promote intercultural awareness and respect, shaping societal attitudes and behaviour towards embracing differences and fostering a culture of tolerance and

appreciation of diversity. By addressing systemic inequalities, providing mechanism for resolving conflict peacefully, and promoting dialogue and understanding, legislative measures serve as a cornerstone for building and maintaining peaceful coexistence. The collective impact of these measures, supported by empirical research and legal enforcement, contributes significantly to creating harmonious societies where individuals of diverse backgrounds can thrive together in mutual respect and cooperation.

Healthcare centred on availability of services in communities and access to basic curative and preventive measures will improve the basic health of individuals and families. Equitable and functional health systems will contribute to growth due to the availability of healthy workers, more committed employees, and greater energy and dynamism. They will also promote collaboration and partnership. These could contribute to building sustainable community infrastructure that is central to human security, institutionalising feelings of care and compassion, commitment to each other's well-being, and promoting feelings of security and safety.

Let me quickly draw attention to the fact that, as robust and interesting as these policies may seem, their functional implementation is dependent on human behaviour in the form of effective commitment, sense of engagement and renewed citizenship. A balanced mix of these virtues will

undoubtedly reorient the integrity curve for revolutionized means of living and living together peacefully and sustainably.

Conclusion

“A man who invokes a storm on his people cannot prevent his house from destruction”.

African proverb

“A collapsing sky will spare nobody” - Ikwerre proverb

‘Where there is equitable distribution of resources, anger will go’ –Ikwerre proverb.

The literature reveals clearly that conventional methods of dealing with contradictions and conflicts in the Niger Delta and the problem of youth restiveness have failed to broker sustainable peace in the region. Instead, these strategies have heightened tension, insecurity and conflicts. Previous methods of conflict management in the Niger Delta have been adversarial. Communication between the various stakeholders, particularly the Federal government, oil companies and communities, has been tactical and withholding, argumentative, fault-finding and blame-trading.

The attitudes have been mainly suspicious, one-sided, past-oriented and aggressive. Violence and youth militancy have persisted in the Niger Delta in spite of advances in the understanding of conflict dynamics, management processes,

and the essence and need for transformation before development could become sustainable in a society that is just emerging from acute and protracted violent conflict. There is clear evidence that advances in peace studies and conflict-sensitive development are yet to impact public policy decision processes, and policy-makers have continued to mistake effects for causes, treating the symptoms of the problem instead of the social viruses that trigger them. The prescriptions of state and non-state actors have failed to procure any sustainable solution to the Niger Delta problem because the key linkages between the existence of youth unemployment and youth restiveness in a context of underdevelopment have not been adequately examined.

Understanding how the stakeholders could have been working based on the principles of trust and confidence to transform the issues that have turned the Niger Delta into a 'swamp of insurgency and geography of terrorism' is necessary. Many scholars have also empirically supported the assertion that development strategy initiated by the government and transnational oil companies are yet to build the capacity of the youth to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development of the Niger Delta. Hence, it has been difficult to build dignified and productive citizenship and the capacities of the youth in the region to bring about transformation from violence to constructive engagement.

There is the need for the government to be impartial and objective in tackling the issues that precipitate crisis in the region. The government should ensure that developmental agencies are well supervised, monitored and funded to pursue their objectives to reality. An upward review of the fines paid for oil spillage and gas flaring in Nigeria is imperative. This might go a long way in discouraging these activities. The government should also embrace collaboration and joint problem-solving frameworks in the area of artisanal refining. It must ensure that the venture provides employment to the locals. The fact that they can design those makeshift refineries mean that, with the right training and support, people involved in the illegal venture can do it professionally and at a larger and regulated scale. The entrepreneurial prowess demonstrated in artisanal refining by the Niger Delta youth can be transformed for huge economic gains not only for the youth of the region but also for the Nigerian economy.

Discouraging and putting an end to artisanal refining in the Niger Delta require a comprehensive approach that will consider the root causes of the tradition, promote alternative livelihood options, strengthen law enforcement and regulation, promote community engagement and participation, and address the negative impacts of artisanal refining on the environment, public health and

socioeconomic development. Much creative efforts and programmes have to be put in place if we are to succeed in protecting our society from crime. By implementing these strategies, the Nigerian government and other stakeholders can contribute to sustainable development and peace in the Niger Delta.

Another solution to the Niger Delta imbroglio is that government should consider is the need to undo the economic legacy of the British colonialists in the region. Before the advent of colonialism, Nigeria was a monocultural economy, heavily reliant on agriculture. The years of colonialism enjoyed the immense agricultural abundance and potential of Nigerian communities. It was towards the end of colonialism that commercial production of oil appeared in Nigeria and slowly caused the decline of the agricultural sector. The Nigerian government must return to the Niger Delta to reorganize the agricultural potential of the area. The government must help the communities to return to profitable and mechanized farming, animal husbandry and fishing. These economic ventures will provide more employment and economic sustenance for the indigenes of the region.

In addition, the government must consider selecting the Niger Delta for the site of the country's industrial revolution. The trajectory of development in much of Europe was from

agrarian to manufacturing economies. The Nigerian government should establish manufacturing plants for food, plastic, textiles, electronics, building materials, transportation and many others in the Niger Delta. The rise of manufacturing plants in the region will assist the government to deliver its obligations of creating profitable jobs. The proliferation of manufacturing and processing plants for agricultural products from the region will ensure the contribution of the communities to their own growth and development through the payment of taxes and corporate social responsibilities. It will also ensure sustainability of projects and promote community engagement in crisis management, conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Thriving production and manufacturing of general products in the region will make the Niger Delta contribute more significantly to the export profile of the country and encourage private investment in business ventures in the region. This strategy will positively transform the relationship between the people and the government and encourage cooperation of the Niger Delta people with the Nigerian state.

I advocate greater prioritization of youth needs in all situations. Since the youth are the main actors in security and development issues, neglecting their basic needs has knock-on effects on society. An approach which prioritises

youth welfare requirements would have positive knock-on effects on society in times of peacebuilding.

No matter the challenges Nigeria faces today, Nigerians must remain selfless in service, patriotic in action, and focused on nation building. No matter the grievance against, or expectations from the government and oil companies, Niger Deltans need to understand the peace building value of “Obu Wene”, which literally translates as “nothing is more important than the caring heart of a sibling”. This implies that being good to one another is the most important virtue on earth. There is no justification whatsoever for criminality; lawlessness should not be tolerated. With these prescriptions meticulously deployed with activated and oiled sense of integrity, it will be live and let live.

My Contributions to Knowledge

My Education in the University of Ibadan

The University of Ibadan, established in 1948, is known for a purposeful intellectual engagement with society. The Ibadan peace programme is an excellent way to integrate theory and practice, since it brings together history, political science, economics and the real-world experience of practitioners.

The epistemological foundation of Peace Studies programme of the University of Ibadan is predicated and framed on the mantra of ‘African Solutions to African Problems’. The

programme is conflict sensitive and effective to ensure sustainable peace and development.

My vision was to learn how to become a mediator and conflict resolution expert, resolving disputes outside the court, so as to build and use peace to unlock economic prosperity, ecological sustainability and improved well-being. My mission to University of Ibadan was to build and strengthen my capacity for quality service delivery in peace and development work, so as to:

- a) support and encourage reforms that promote a culture of peace, through peace-focused education and advocacy, generating a curriculum to facilitate training and practice of peace and development studies and other conflict transformation techniques;
- b) promote the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and other non-violent models for joint-problem solving;
- c) organize workshops and conferences and publish conference proceedings;
- d) float peace and development journals, and write books;
- e) mobilize human and financial resources to advance peaceful co-existence in Nigeria; and
- f) promote and uphold professionalism in peace practice and establish an Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies/ Practice in IAUE, Port Harcourt.

To the glory of God, I am a worthy alumnus of the University of Ibadan.

Why I Did Peace Studies

My conception and birth occurred during a period of crisis (January 1966-January 1970). Following the political turbulence which characterised the First Republic, the army seized power. Rather than promote national integration, many of the policies of the junta tended to deepen inter-group tensions and suspicions.

As children, we saw it all; and 58 years later, the heart remembers it all. Today, Nigerian children caught up in the Civil War remember vividly the agony and horror of the attempted secession, as well as the bombing of their homes, the killing of their parents and brothers, and the raping of their sisters. They recall the starvation and the spread of kwashiorkor that killed many, violation of human rights and dignity, human insecurity and human underdevelopment, and food crisis. To these Nigerians, some of whom were less than 15 years old when the war ended in 1970, the choice is clear: no more wars. They struggle to recover lost ground, but it has not been easy.

I walked in the valley of the shadow of death throughout the Civil War. I saw hunger-stricken Biafran soldiers cut human beings into pieces, roast and eat them. I can never forget that sight and, until recently, I was in shock each time I remember that incident. I saw people eat lizards, grasshoppers and food without salt, pepper and palm oil.

On 15th January, 1970, the Biafrans made an unconditional surrender. The army thus succeeded in maintaining the unity of the country. It proceeded to consolidate the unity by embarking on a three-pronged programme of reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation. Today, about 55 years after the war, the issue/controversy of abandoned property has not been addressed; its ghost has not been successfully excised from the hearts and minds of Nigerians, especially those who were more directly involved, the Igbo.

The fundamental lesson from the Civil War is that it is easier to destroy than to rebuild. History is an experience guide. In order not to take the future for granted, I decided to pursue a doctoral programme in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Ibadan so as to acquire the knowledge, skills, aptitude and behaviour needed to promote the culture of peace in Nigeria. This is the root of my peace scholarship and practice.

Humankind and the Environment

Environmental disputes are public policy conflicts that involve issues associated with the natural environment and how humans interact with it. Examples include disputes over air and water quality and scarcity, biodiversity, natural hazards, externalities associated with industrial production, conservation and public land management and use. Human

populations keep increasing and becoming more technologically advanced, but exhaustible resources are being wasted, environment despoiled, and preconditions for mass extinction and global catastrophe created.

The environmental problems we currently face can no longer be solved by individual nations, or by using military, bureaucratic or autocratic methods, which only increase opposition and delay remedial efforts. These problems now demand the collective action of everyone. To implement sustainable solutions to global environmental problems, all stakeholders need to learn to work together.

With the aim of becoming environmental conflict analyst and practitioner, I sojourned to the University of Ibadan for capacity-building training that covered the interdisciplinary field of environmental conflict in terms of theory, research and contemporary practice. Current perspectives, assumptions and modules were covered, in addition to contending approaches to managing conflicts that arise over the use and abuse of environment and environmental resources.

The training afforded me the privilege to gain knowledge of analysis of environmental conflict, including consideration of historical sources of contentions over environmental resources, the multiplicity of causes and dynamics leading to their manifest expression and escalation, and the strategic

choices made by groups that share common environmental resources. The training involved case studies, presentations, seminars and group assignments to understand a number of major environmental issues that have elicited global concern, including the nature of environmental resources, resource scarcity, and the conflict-generating properties of shared resources, climate change and resource conflicts. We also examined sustainable development, focusing on its meaning and challenges as well as multilateral actions on management of environmental conflicts, particularly Kyoto Protocol, Rio Earth Summit, and Green Politics.

To the glory of God Almighty, I am presently an environmental conflict analyst and practitioner.

Peace as God's Institution

Peacemakers are called God's children, as stated in Matthew 5 vs 9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God". Christ is 'the Prince of peace' and it is His mission to restore to earth and heaven the peace that sin has broken. 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Holy Bible). Whoever consents to renounce sin, and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace.

There is no other ground of peace than this. The grace of Christ received into the heart subdues enmity; it allays strife

and fills the soul with love. He who is at peace with God and his fellow humans cannot be miserable. Envy will not be in his heart; evil will find no room there. The heart that is in harmony with God is a partaker of the peace of heaven, and will diffuse its blessed influence on all around. The spirit of peace will rest like dew upon hearts weary and troubled with worldly strife.

Christ's followers are sent to the world with the message of peace. Whoever, by word or deed, shall lead another to renounce sin and yield his heart to God is a peacemaker. The spirit of peace is evidence of the connection of peacemakers with heaven. The sweet savour of Christ surrounds them. The fragrance of the life and the loveliness of the character of peacemakers reveal to the world that they are children of God.

It is against this background that Peace Studies is a veritable tool in the hand of God to ensure our kinship (being children of God) and a peaceful society.

Professor Chibuzor Nwobueze's research focuses on issues of peace education, human development and conflict transformation, particularly in situations of complex conflict and intractable youth violence. He has over 100 published works. Through his studies, he established the significance

of youth-focused human development in managing the Niger Delta crisis. The contents of his publications and the outlets where they were published as well as the kind of practical peace and development work he pursues have assisted people in dealing with diverse conflict issues.

His book titled *Youth, Human Development and Conflict Transformation in the Niger Delta* is a holistic examination of the challenges posed by insecurity and underdevelopment to sustainable development in the Niger Delta. It reviews the efforts of government and multinational corporations in tackling this multidimensional crisis in the region. It further targets the specific problems and proffers solutions to them. The book has wide applicability, especially with regard to different resource-induced problems. It also enriches knowledge on youth-focused human development, and advocates the inclusion of peace education in the curricula of various levels of education in Nigeria. This book is, therefore, good for government and policy makers, among others.

The preoccupation of the study 'Leadership and Peace in Nigeria' is how leadership styles shape peace and conflict outcomes in Nigeria. Using secondary sources of data, this paper argues that inefficiency owing to corruption, coupled with lack of workable people-centred programmes, accounts for the recurrent breakdown of law and order and intractable

conflicts. It stresses that leaders and followers must adopt peace as a way of life in order to have a stable society.

The study 'The Role of Peace Education in Peacebuilding' examines the value and importance of peace education for effective peace building. It argues that proper integration of peace education, training and research, in accordance with the multi-track diplomacy, can make peacebuilding more effective, with appreciable impact on society. Youth empowerment issues and responsibilities stemming from the sustainable development goals should induce the conflict transformation agenda in Nigeria.

In 'Understanding the Global Peace Index in Peace and Conflict Resolution', Nwobueze and Orluwene (2018) explore the ranking of world's peacefulness according to countries. A notable observation from the Global Peace Index is that most developing nations in Africa and Asia are within the lower part of the ranking, with high incidence of violence and armed conflicts. The paper opines that, in order to build peace, strong policies, mechanisms, initiatives and activities must be put in place to promote good governance, strong and credible social institutions, sound business environment, high level of human capital and low level of corruption. It also stresses the need to curb rascality, protect the rights of all and ensure equitable distribution of resources.

'Relevance of Peace Education to the Evolution of Peace Culture' examines the relevance of Peace Education to the evolution of peace culture in every society. Peace Education is situated within track five of the multi-track diplomacy, which involves research, training and education. The paper contends that mainstreaming Peace Education into the school curriculum will help to build a new generation of peace practitioners; it will also enhance good governance and culture of non-violence. This will lead to the evolution of a just social system that enhances relationship for peace.

In 'The Resurgence of Militant Groups in the Niger Delta: A Study of Security Threats and the Prospects for Peace in Nigeria' Nwobueze and Okolie-Osemene (2018) explore the problem of resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta. It argues that the road map to sustainable peace and development must be knowledge-based and innovation-driven, ensuring a participatory approach to the design and implementation of youth-focused and human development initiatives. The paper concludes that any peace plan or conflict transformation effort that prioritises the flow of oil at the expense of youth-focused human development will make sustainable peace in the Niger Delta a mirage.

'Mitigating Youth Restiveness for Sustainable Development in the Niger Delta, Nigeria' addresses three issues: the nature and sources of youth burden; the effects of youth

restiveness in the Niger Delta; and the ways of managing the challenges of youth restiveness to actualize sustainable development goals in the region. This piece calls for a rethink of the crime-control model for containing the youth in the Niger Delta.

'The Role of Youths in Peacebuilding Education: Challenges and Prospects' examines the effectiveness and necessity of peacebuilding education and the constraints involved, in order to direct the activities of the actors and models for engagement in the peacebuilding enterprise. It contends that elite rascality and impunity, products of governance issues, poor character and knowledge development and chronic human security deficiencies, have adverse impacts on youth education and development. It further notes that youth-focused peacebuilding will empower the youth for leadership and peace. If young people are provided with value-based education and economic skills and the prospects of a better future, they will less likely be disaffected individuals and cannon fodder for war makers.

In 'Terrorism and Businesses in North East: Implications for Economic Growth in Nigeria', Nwobueze and Young (2021) examine the implications of terrorism for business activities in north-eastern Nigeria. It argues that timely containment of terror is the only way to save the economy from total collapse. It contends that this requires the joint military task

force to stop the terrorists from snatching vehicles loaded with foodstuffs on the highways, burning of villages and mounting of road blocks.

The study on 'Politics, Corruption and the Nigerian State: An Analysis of Economic and Financial Crime Commission' by Nwobueze and Ibeh (2021) adopts prebendal and rentier theories to explain how the state sustains corruption and bad governance. It also examines the activities of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. It counters the assertion of many scholars that weak institution is the bane of corruption and bad governance. Rather, it contends that the selection/recruitment process, reward system and the exit/retirement procedures in Nigeria are the problem. It then advocates a total overhaul of the system to encourage merit.

The paper by Nwobueze and Adiele (2021) titled 'National Human Rights Commission, Citizenship Education and Prospects of Citizens Rights Protection for Peace and Stability in Nigeria' establishes the linkages between citizenship education and the relevance of human rights protection through National Human Rights Commission. The paper avers that having people well informed about their duties as citizens of Nigeria and effective human rights monitoring would sustain the capacity of the state to reduce human rights abuses in the post-COVID-19 era.

'Managing Conflict along the Lower Course of the Niger Delta, Nigeria', by Oku and Nwobueze (2020) uses a qualitative descriptive survey design to discuss the critical issues of managing crises arising from the use of geomorphic, biospheric and hydrospheric resources along the lower parts of the Niger Delta streams. It assesses the crises/conflict management strategies adopted by communities along the river channel of the Niger Delta streams. The paper concludes that proper environmental education and a comprehensive programme of rural integration could help to sustain a peaceful atmosphere along the river channel trajectory.

Nwobueze and Okere (2020) in 'Constructive Conflict Management and Organizational Productivity in Nigeria', discuss the issues concerning constructive conflict management strategies and sustainable productivity in Nigerian organizations. The study recommends that there should be a win-win approach in conflict management, because it gives all parties the opportunity to be seen and heard. Besides, it helps to promote conflict transformation and build a relationship of trust and confidence in an organization.

Okere, et al. (2020) in their study 'Organizational Disciplinary Measures and Regulation of Employee's Behaviour for Effective Teamwork in Nigerian Industries', focuses on issues

related to organizational disciplinary measures and regulation of employees' behaviour for effective teamwork in Nigerian industries. The study reveals that there are different types of punishments resulting from various types of omission or misconduct. These include oral warning, written warnings, withholding of privileges and fines, punitive suspensions, pay cut and withholding of increments and termination. The paper recommends that human resource managers in Nigerian organisations should be aware of and follow general guidelines developed in administering organizational disciplinary measure to problem employees.

'Analysis of Leadership Styles and Management of Human Resources in Nigerian Organizations' by Nwobueze et al. (2020) considers leadership and management of human resources in Nigerian work organizations. It asserts that positive leaders are those who motivate people by increasing their satisfaction, while negative leaders are those who motivate their subordinates through fear and insecurity. It recommends that leaders should not use threats to get work done by their subordinates but should be creative and transparent.

'Exploring the Need for Peacebuilding Projects in Ikwerre Communities, Rivers State' identifies the conflict indicators and the approaches to be adopted to carry out

peacebuilding. The relevance of track five in promoting peacefulness and people-centred development is stressed. This paper adopts the Integrative Theory of Peace for analysis. It concludes that involving the youth in training and peace education would give them a sense of belonging and opportunity to develop their lifestyles. Track five diplomacy will promote the effectiveness and necessity of youth-focused and human development initiatives as the bridge to peace in Ikwerre land.

'Intra- and Inter-group Relations in the Niger Delta, Nigeria' discusses the value and importance of collaboration and social cohesion. It suggests that groups should focus on the positive side of inter-group relations and sacrifice hostility for peace and sustainable development in the region.

'The State, Urban Displacement and Land Rights in Nigeria', by Nwobueze et al. (2018) is a case study of state's leaning towards urban displacement. It suggests that there is need to prioritise welfare and adequate compensation for identified real settlements. It concludes that, in order to prevent or manage conflicts and urban crisis, urban development or urban renewal projects should be carried out through a participatory approach, with appropriate resettlement programme for those affected by demolition or renewal.

'Agitations and Intergroup Relations in the Niger Delta of Nigeria' examines the effects of agitations on inter-group relations within and outside the Niger Delta. It avers that dealing adequately with such conflicts demands an indigenous, organic, long-term, sustainable and non-violent process of conflict transformation and peace building aimed at constructive, holistic change.

'Public Accountability and Sustainable Development: A study of Whistle-blower Policy in Nigeria', using primary and secondary sources, examines public accountability and the implementation of the whistle-blower policy to eradicate corruption—the obstacle to development in Nigeria. The paper maintains that the only way the whistle-blower policy would be effective and yield results is to legalize it with an act of parliament. It argues that public accountability and integrity are more valuable than primitive accumulation of wealth through corruption. The forfeiture of recovered funds will send a note of warning to the elite. Active involvement of corps members is crucial to institutionalizing transparency and public accountability as an integral part of the anti-corruption efforts.

'A Study of the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan and Conflict management' by Nwobueze and Young (2018) examines conflict management in the Niger Delta through the region's development master plan. It observes that many components of the master plan still remain

unachieved more than a decade after its launch. In particular, urban community needs, rural community needs, human resource development, economic growth, urban environmental control, poverty reduction and rural infrastructure are critical to the actualization of Sustainable Development Goals and must not be neglected by the stakeholders implementing the master plan.

'Prioritizing Training and People-oriented Security Education for Effective Policing in Nigeria', by Nwobueze et al. (2018) focuses on policing Nigeria. The paper explores how training and people-oriented security education can enhance effective policing for a more secure Nigeria. It argues that police effectiveness should no longer be hinged only on equipping officers for counter-terrorism or establishment of special units to eradicate organized crime. It should also focus on training them on weekly/monthly basis to respond to rapidly emerging threats to national security and training on enhancing collaborative police-public relations.

'Hostility Perception: Theoretical Analysis of Intergroup Relations in Nigeria', by Nwobueze et al. (2017), offers a theoretical explanation of inter-group relations. Greed, grievance, deprivation and nepotism are some ingredients of hostility perceptions which heighten the insecurity of lives and property in most parts of Nigeria. The paper stresses that hostility perception downplays civil harmony in rural and

urban areas and aggravates feelings of the other in the country even after over 100 years of inter-group relations. Eradicating hostility perceptions from the grassroots to the top, especially when groups rethink hostility, would enhance national integration and promote good governance, which is devoid of nepotism.

'Mortgaging Tomorrow's Security through Today's Graveyard Peace: A Critical Discourse of the Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta, Nigeria', by Nwobueze and Inokoba (2017) argues that the Amnesty Programme does not have the capacity to engender genuine and durable peace in the crisis-ridden region. This is because the focus of the peace-building strategy is on addressing the symptoms rather than the root causes of the Niger Delta conflicts. The paper concludes that, until the real drivers of restiveness and violence are holistically and constructively engaged, genuine and sustainable peace and security will continue to elude the region.

'Theoretical Explanations of Kidnapping in Nigeria's Fourth Republic' by Nwobueze et al. (2016) emphasises the various forms of kidnapping, vulnerable groups and context dynamics of armed banditry. This paper offers theoretical explanations of such in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The paper also takes into consideration the vulnerability assessment framework of the war on kidnapping and armed banditry in

the country. It offers more insights into grounded theories, greed grievance, relative deprivation, frustration, socio-economic perspective, conspiracy and insider perspective. It advocates youth-focused human development as a means of tackling kidnapping.

Nwobueze and Igbere (2015) in 'Respecting Human Rights: The Route to Peace in Nigeria', investigate human rights in relation to promotion of justice and peace. The study examines the effectiveness of human rights to education and discipline. It argues that promotion of human rights, education, financial discipline and peace education, especially in school curricula will strengthen stakeholders' initiatives in pursuit of sustainable peace.

Okere et al. (2013) in 'Application of Ethics, Justice and Fair Treatment in Human Resources Management for Sustainable Peace in Nigerian Work Organizations', deal with ethics, justice and humane treatment in human resource management. It recommends respect for the rights of all and discipline as a basis of improved productivity and industrial peace.

Okere and Nwobueze (2011) in 'Negotiation and Bargaining as Important Devices in Maintaining Industrial Peace and Harmony between Employers and Employees in Nigerian Organizations', focus on the nature and process of negotiation and bargaining, bargaining conventions, the

stages of negotiation and the skills required to do these. It identifies four stages of negotiations, namely: preparing for negotiation, opening, bargaining and closing. The main negotiating skills include analytical ability empathy, planning ability, interactive skills and communicating skills. The paper recommends that negotiations and bargaining should be looked at as a forum to harmonize the differences between employers and employees on a particular issue of importance.

The study on 'Conflict Drivers and People-centred Peacebuilding in Niger Delta, Nigeria' adopts the Active Peace Theory, which concerns how peace is mainstreamed as part of a triad that includes justice and well-being (wholeness). The claims that the Niger Delta is the delta of the Niger River sitting directly on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean in Nigeria. It is blessed with enormous human capacity and natural resource wealth but characterised by poverty, insecurity and underdevelopment. Conflict happens everywhere in the world, including the Niger Delta, where the participants all have different survival goals and interests. People are driven to compete with others by certain motives. For society to advance in all spheres, peacebuilding is necessary. This study analyzes data from secondary sources to investigate the causes of conflict that give rise to peacebuilding, which emphasizes relationship of development and empowerment. The report also covers the

lessons from the factors that contribute to war and instability in the region. As noted by the paper, teenagers who recognize the importance of well-being find it challenging to take part in activities that violate others' rights to sustainable life. Being on the side of the government is quite advantageous for young people. They may contribute directly to growth as partners, or address labour shortages by generating jobs in their lawful enterprises. The existence of partnership and peace committees in various multinational companies is an opportunity for the youth to be given recognition in the area of having their grievances attended to. Youth well-being and safety priorities must be considered by the state and policymakers at all levels if peaceful oil-producing delta is to be achieved.

'Post-amnesty Security Situation in Nigeria: Challenges and Consequences of Military Operations in the Niger Delta' by Nwobueze (2024), posits that the Niger Delta is a region that is strategic to the Federal Government of Nigeria and states because of the availability of crude oil, which is a major source of government revenues, there. Different approaches have shaped government's intervention with the aim of enhancing the security situation of the region. This paper examines the nature of post-amnesty security situation in the Niger Delta. With secondary sources, the paper responds to the following questions: What is the current security situation in post-amnesty Niger Delta? How is military

deployment relevant to the security situation in the region? And what are the challenges of military deployment? The actors of security provision are security agencies, such as military, paramilitary forces, police, civil defence, local vigilantes and other private security providers. These actors have worked tirelessly to sustain the gains achieved through the amnesty programme, which prevented the existence of ungoverned spaces, especially in the creeks, forest areas, communities and highways. These agents of security provision have engaged with outlaws who seem to be unrepentant armed groups. Immediate outcomes of the security measures include human security and economic development. The paper suggests that security forces should adhere to the code of conduct and avoid corruption and extortion of civilians and focus on their mandate of maintaining the peace.

Professor Nwobueze is eager to learn, unlearn and relearn, update his knowledge and consolidate his position on any given academic issue. His scholarship, status and worth has contributed to knowledge development, sustainable peace and development in Nigeria. His works are used in teaching peace and conflict studies across the globe.



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10 June, 2024

Ref. No. VC/GC.1/43

Professor Chibuzor Chile Nwobueze, *fspsp*
Associate Dean
Postgraduate School
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni
PMB 5047, Port Harcourt
Rivers State.

Dear Professor Nwobueze,

RE: ENDOWMENT OF ISAAC OLAWALE ALBERT LIBRARY: LETTER OF APPRECIATION

The Ag. Head, Department of Peace, Security and Humanitarian Studies has written to inform me, via a letter dated 05 June, 2024, of your generous endowment of the Isaac Olawale Albert Library in the Department of Peace, Security and Humanitarian Studies. I acknowledge with thanks your kind benefaction.

I hereby express the deep appreciation of Senate, Management, staff and students of the University of Ibadan to you for your thoughtfulness and kind gesture towards the University.

Please accept the assurances of my warm regards.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Professor K. O. Adebowale, mni, FAS, fspsp
Vice-Chancellor

Our Vision:

To be a world-class institution for academic excellence geared towards meeting societal needs.

Our Mission:

- To expand the frontiers of knowledge through provision of excellent conditions for learning and research.
- To produce graduates who are worthy in character and sound judgement.
- To contribute to the transformation of society through creativity and innovation.
- To serve as a dynamic custodian of society's salutary values and thus sustain its integrity.



CHURCH OF NIGERIA
(Anglican Communion)
DIOCESE OF NIGER DELTA NORTH
OKORO-NU-ODO ARCHDEACONRY
P. O. BOX 63, PORT HARCOURT



Your Ref: _____

Our Ref: _____

Date: 10th September, 2024.

Prof. Chibuzor Nwobueze
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education,
Rumuolumeni.
Rivers State.

Dear Sir,

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

On behalf of the Clergy, the PCC and the entire faithful of Emmanuel Anglican Church, Okoro-nu-Odo, we bring special Calvary greetings to you and your family in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

It is with heart full of gratitude that we at this point formally acknowledge and put on record your good deed in the house of God by your repainting and giving a facelift in the entire auditorium of Emmanuel Anglican Church, Okoro-nu-Odo.

Your act of benevolence in the household of God is an honour you have done to the Lord with your substance, which shall attract the blessings of God to you and your family. (Prov. 3: 9 – 10).

The entire Church is indeed extremely grateful and appreciates you for this singular act of service rendered and it is the collective prayers of us all that your labour of love shown to us will be rewarded abundantly in Jesus name, Amen.

Once again, do accept the Church warm appreciation.

Thanks.

Yours in His Service,


Ven. Solomon Eze Nelson
Vicar


Barr. Godwin Chioma
PCC Secretary

In May 2024, Prof. Nwobueze beautified Emmanuel Anglican Church, Okoro-Nu-Odo Deanry, Diocese of Niger Delta North, to enhance its role in peace building.

Professor Nwobueze has provided pipe-borne water on a sustainable basis to a large section of his community, Ogbodo Isiokpo.

The desire for peace scholarship and contribution to peaceful coexistence led to his appointment as External Examiner for the BSc programme in Department of Peace Studies, University of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Umuagwo, Imo State in June 2024. He is also the External Examiner, Centre for Peace and Security Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Port Harcourt.

He is a member of many committees in IAUE, PH. Professor Nwobueze's interests include organisation of academic seminars and workshops in the university, involvement in university hostel administration and coordination of students' welfare activities.

On the invitation of Rotary Club of Trans-Amadi District 9141, he presented two papers, titled 'Towards Peacebuilding in Rivers State, Nigeria' and 'People-centred Development and Peacebuilding in the Niger Delta, Nigeria', in 2019 and 2021, respectively. These lectures no doubt will continue to add value to the efforts of the town and the gown to make society better.

Closing Remarks

The Niger Delta, Nigeria, unlike the peaceful oil-producing deltas, such as Mahakam Delta (in Indonesia), Orinoco Delta (in Venezuela) and Mackenzie Delta (in Alaska), has high population of uneducated, unemployed and idle youth, who are highly prone to violence. Frustrations resulting from weak political, structural and social peace building frameworks forced many members of the communities into revolutionary violence.

Violence will change nothing; only a joint problem-solving strategy, characterised by collaboration and consensus building, will do. This school of thought finds support in the biblical verse where God says, 'come let us reason together' (Isaiah 1:18). This approach leads to different forms of fence-mending, acknowledgement of wrongdoing, forgiveness, mercy and reconciliation, trust and confidence building, and peace.

The central thesis of the nexus between peace and development is 'without peace, there is no development, without development there is no peace'. Essentially, peace, the central terminology in this lecture, refers to non-violence and constructive management of disputes, good governance, respecting the rights and dignity of others, sound business environment, high level of human capital, low level of corruption, efficient and effective communication system,

freedom from want and fear, sustainable human security and good neighbourliness.

Building a peaceful and prosperous Nigeria requires people to love those who hate them and respond to hate with love and show compassion and understanding to people of other groups. People must rise above their prejudices. They must avoid the temptation to demonise whole groups by judging them by their extreme fringes, and intentionally marginalise agents of intolerance and hatred. We must adopt peace as a way of life if we are to promote sustainable development in Nigeria. The country must be owned and managed by all groups. The peace of Nigeria is a collective responsibility. In the Niger Delta, peace will only succeed if it is more profitable than structural violence.

Mr. Vice Chancellor, sir, ladies and gentlemen, Sustainable peace is a significant framework which focuses on long-term solutions to prevent recurrence of conflict, facilitate continuing healthy human relationships and community development. This framework emphasizes economic development, social cohesion, inclusive governance, justice, kindness, decency, equality, compassion, love and non-violence. In rounding off this lecture, let me draw the attention of stakeholders to Matthew 25:31-46:

On the judgement day when all nations shall be brought before the Son of Man, they will

be separated into two, located at the right hand and left hand of the great judge. To those on the right he will say 'come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you for when I was hungry you gave me food, when I was thirsty you gave me water...' Then, the righteous shall answer saying, 'Lord when did we see you hungry or thirsty and gave you food and water... and the king shall answer saying, 'in as much as you have done it, unto one of the least of these my brethren then you have done it for me.' Those on the left he will send to eternal hell fire because they did not feed, clothe, house or visit the poor while they enjoyed themselves.

I end with this prayer from our National Anthem:

O God of all creation, grant this our one request:

Help us to build a nation where no man is oppressed,

And so with peace and plenty Nigeria may be blessed

May the Good Lord bless you with great grace and overflowing testimonies.

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**BRIEF CITATION ON
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Chibuzor C. Nwobueze, PhD is a Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies in the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The grace and mercy of God, his brilliance, proficiency in writing, diligence, selfless commitment and devotion to duty,

and investment of time, money, goodwill and energy contributed to his elevation to the rank of Professor on October 1, 2021. Thus, he became the first Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.

A product of God's faithfulness, he was born on Wednesday, February 8, 1967, during the period of the Nigerian Civil War. Only God and the carefulness of his mother saved him. His Primary Education was in 1972-1978 at St Paul's State School, Ogbodo Isiokpo. His secondary school education ended at Stella Maris College, Port Harcourt in 1984. He secured admission to the then Rivers State College of Education, an affiliate of the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, to study History and Social Studies in 1985. In 1991, he bagged the Bachelor of Education in History, with Second Class Honours (Upper Division). His long essay titled 'A Comparative Study of Nigeria's First and Second Republics' has influenced policy direction towards promotion of people-centred democracy and development in Nigeria.

After the national service, he was given appointment as Graduate Assistant in the Department of History and Diplomatic Studies, Rivers State College of Education. By this appointment, he became the first product of the department to be retained as a member of the teaching staff.

Professor Chibuzor Chile Nwobueze is the ancient and modern of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE).

Indeed, he is a link between the past, the present and the future of IAUE. He has related with many provosts and vice chancellors between 1985 and 2025. He has also related with staff and students that have passed through the institution since he enrolled as a student and later as a staff member 40 years back.

After bagging MA in History at the University of Port Harcourt in 1999, inspired by the vision, mission and exemplary contributions of the University of Ibadan to peace scholarship, he enrolled for the doctoral programme in Peace and Conflict Studies, and bagged a PhD in 2015. This decision of his to embark on his doctoral journey was to build and strengthen his capacity for quality service delivery in peace and development work. The overall goal was to promote the culture of peace in Nigeria. He is a worthy alumnus of the University of Ibadan.

God put great abilities, creative powers and potential in him to live a successful life, accounting for his transformational promotions in nine years: Senior Lecturer in 2015, Reader in 2018 and Professor in 2021. Conscious of God's goodness and mercy, he decided to mentor others and support humanity by helping the poor, the homeless, the hopeless, the sick and the uneducated. Not many people understand his philosophy and ideology; hence, he is misinterpreted and misrepresented. There is nothing revolutionary or sudden

about him; he believes that justice before peace will promote peace and loving followership. This will produce peaceful leaders for a stable society, where the peace culture will become the order of the day.

The peace culture means that people must adopt peace as a way of life. The fact that conflict is part of human existence does not mean that people cannot decide and choose to be peaceful in a state of disagreement with people. He represents humanity and peace. He has sustained his support for the ideals of peace and the progress of humanity and always strives to bring out the best in people. He is a rare gift to mankind; his kindness for humanity is unparalleled.

Professor Glory Ikechukwu Worukwo, in his condolence message after the transition of Professor Nwobueze's mother, wrote:

I am blessed to have been associated with mama's family, as I owe whatever I have eventually become today largely to the benevolence of one of the rare gifts that she gave to mankind, her erudite son and global scholar, Professor Chibuzor Chile Nwobueze, who has made it a point of duty to bring happiness into the lives of people. Unfortunately, we have gathered here to say

goodbye to such a virtuous woman, as is applicable to every mortal.

Professor Isaac O. Albert, *fspsp* corroborated thus: 'Professor Chibuzor C. Nwobueze, *fspsp*, your name is everywhere now; that is the reward for goodwork.' Perhaps, it is important to quote from Professor Adesina Bukunmi Sunday's recent exposition on Professor Nwobueze at some length to drive home the world's opinion on the character of this illustrious son of Nigeria and Africa. 'You are indescribably good, marvellous and loving. I've never had any client like you. I value you.'

Prof. Nwobueze believes in leaving a positive impact on anyone he comes in contact with, without considering gender, status or primordial factors. His tenacity, charisma and commitment to serving humanity portray his philosophy of live and let live. His significance is global. With reference to the quality of this man and his moral courage, the words of Dr. Scholastica Amadi become apt:

When the goodness of God speaks and manifests, man carries it. The volumes of its magnitude are only known as they spread through the divine bearers among us. You are one of such on my pathway. I may not have eulogized your acts of kindness or beat

the drums for songs at conventional festivals. One thing I know, and I'm sure of, is I appreciate your goodness in season and out of season and seasonlessly. I pray for God's unceasing blessings to you. As a New Year, 2025, dawned, newness of blessings from God to you abound. May God continue to lighten your paths to greatness.

Happy New Year, my Prof.

Prof. Nwobueze's kindness to humanity in various areas inspired Prof Godwin Bassey Okon to pray for a surge and a deluge of God's glory upon his life thus: 'Chei, Associate Dean! Can I ever thank you enough? You're truly a brother. The good Lord who rewards sufficiently will bless you for me. Greetings, sir.'

He teaches courses at all levels in the fields of History and Peace and Conflict Studies. He also supervises students across all levels. In his rewarding career as an academic, he has produced 10 PhD holders in his core research area, besides successfully supervising 15 MA dissertations and 50 long essays, with some still ongoing. He is passionately committed to making his students productive and peaceful in life. He achieves quantity and quality in products without compromising either of them. He is happy with his products,

some of whom are among the political, economic, social and administrative elites; none of them is substandard. 'The calabash of a kind person breaks not' (Ikwerre proverb). Apart from the numerous ones supervised, he has examined over 7 PhD theses and 15 MSc dissertations in the University of Port Harcourt. In addition, he has served as assessor for professorial positions to many universities within and outside the country.

Professor Nwobueze has published over 100 articles in books and in reputable national and international outlets. He is a Co-editor of *IAUE Graduate School Book of Readings on Arts, Education and Development Studies*, a Co-editor of *IAUE Multidisciplinary Journal of Development Studies*, an Associate Editor of *Port Harcourt Journal of History and Diplomatic Studies (PHJHDS)*, and an Associate Editor of *Niger Delta Journal of Gender, Peace and Conflict Studies*.

He is the Associate Dean, Postgraduate School, IAUE. He has used this position to assist the administration of the Vice Chancellor, Prof Okechuku Onuchuku, to build a humane and impressive postgraduate school in terms of quantity, quality and speed. He views ensuring high standards in Ignatius Ajuru University as a collective responsibility.

Professor Nwobueze is eager to learn, unlearn and relearn, update his knowledge and consolidate his position on any

given academic issue. His scholarship, status and worth has contributed to knowledge development, sustainable peace and development in Nigeria. His works are used in teaching of peace and conflict studies across the globe. His works and his constructive participation in about 60 seminars and conferences are opening numerous doors for IAUE Peace Studies programmes. Thus, IAUE, PH will continue to appear on global peace map.

In 2018, he participated in a 3-day Dialogue and Mediation Training Workshop for civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and community actors organized by the Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA) of the ECOWAS Commission, in partnership with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) Abuja. The training workshop enhanced the dialogue and mediation competencies of the participants from the six states of the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. After the training, he has been using dialogue and mediation as tools to prevent and mitigate potential conflicts around electoral processes, thereby contributing to the overall peace and stability in the country.

In 2019, he participated in a public lecture on peace studies and security challenges in Nigeria at the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ibadan. The knowledge generated from this lecture supports and encourages

reforms that promote a culture of peace through education and advocacy. The participants at the lecture generated a curriculum to promote training and practice in peace studies and other conflict management techniques necessary for joint problem-solving strategies through collaboration and consensus building.

In 2023, he was invited by the Nigerian Academy of Letters (NAL) to participate in the 2023 convocation lecture titled 'Historical Trends in the Management of Inter-ethnic and Intra-ethnic Relations in Nigeria' at J. F. Ade-Ajayi Auditorium, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.

In 2024, the Rivers State Government invited Professor Nwobueze as a guest lecturer on Conflict Resolution Strategies for Sustainable Peace in Border Communities in Rivers State. He could not participate in the meeting because of another crucial engagement in Abuja, Nigeria. However, he wrote two papers on that issue– 'The Future of the Past: Rethinking Alternatives to Border Disputes in Rivers State, Nigeria' and 'Ending the Cycle of Violence in the Boarder Communities: Is Peace Possible in the Heart of Darkness?' These works will promote a democratic process characterized by joint problem-solving attitudes and behaviours, such as compromise, cooperation, understanding and transparency and accountability, as well as peace and good governance.

Professor Nwobueze represents humanity and peace. As such, he has kept faith with deep and profound research in peace studies, academic rigour and intellectual contributions that influence public policy along the lines of good governance, strong and credible social institutions, sound business environment, high levels of human capital and low levels of corruption.

He also utilizes the platform of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP) to mentor early-career scholars and initiate new projects with them. He has collaborated with scholars within and outside Nigeria to advance peace scholarship in the Niger Delta and beyond. He has shown that living would have been worse without Peace Studies and Practice.

Professor Nwobueze instituted the following awards to promote academic excellence:

- i. Most Peaceful Graduating Student,
- ii. Best Graduating Student in IAUE,
- iii. Best Graduating Student in Faculty of Humanities,
- iv. Best Graduating Student in History and Diplomatic Studies,
- v. Best Graduating Student in English and Communication Arts,
- vi. Best PhD Graduate,

- vii. Best MA Graduate,
- viii. Best MSc Graduate, and
- ix. Best MEd Graduate.

Community Service

For two decades, Prof. Nwobueze has been actively involved in Society for Peace Studies and Practice conferences across the country. He has also taken part in other scientific conferences organized within and outside Nigeria, including the Border Regions in Transition (BRIT) International Conference hosted by the University of Ibadan and University of Abome Calavy, which held in 2018.

The fact that he endowed the Professor Isaac Olawale Albert Library, which was launched on 3 June, 2024 by the Inspector General of Police Kayode Egbetokun, at the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS), Faculty of Multidisciplinary Studies, University of Ibadan, is a testament to his desire for peaceful coexistence and scholarship in Nigeria.

He was the convener of the Albert @65 Publication Committee of the book in honour of the 3rd most cited global peace scholar, Professor I. O. Albert, titled *History, Milestones and Prospects of Peace Studies and Practice in Nigeria: A Festschrift in Honour of Isaac Olawale Albert at 65*. This project involved scholars from different parts of

Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Latin America. Prof. Chibuzor C. Nwobueze also edited *Perspectives on Nigeria's Development: Essays in Honour of Okechuku Onuchuku*.

Professor Nwobueze is a fellow of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP). He is a member of Historical Society of Nigeria (HSN) and European Centre for Research Training and Development (ECRTD) United Kingdom.

He is poised to obey the ten (10) commandments wholeheartedly. He is blessed with two children, Ngozichi Chibuzor Nwobueze and Otunba Chibuzor Nwobueze, as well as humane and peaceful siblings – Chigbo, Gloria, Peace, Nyebuchi, Ozinum and Anokwuru. Professor Nwobueze has had many happy days. In his own words, his happiest day was the day he became a professor. His hobbies are reading, listening to music, particularly Highlife, travelling and playing the football.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

*Nigeria, we hail thee,
Our own dear native land,
Though tribe and tongue may differ,
In brotherhood, we stand,
Nigerians all, and proud to serve
Our sovereign Motherland.
Our flag shall be a symbol
That truth and justice reign,*

*In peace or battle honour'd,
And this we count as gain,
To hand on to our children
A banner without stain.*

*O God of all creation,
Grant this our one request,
Help us to build a nation
Where no man is oppressed,
And so with peace and plenty
Nigeria may be blessed.*

**IGNATIUS AJURU UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
RUMUOLUMENI, P.M.B 5047 PORT HARCOURT**

INAUGURAL LECTURE SERIES

S/N	INAUGURAL LECTURER	DATE	TITLE OF INAUGURAL LECTURE
1.	Professor Charles Iwundu	Dec. 17, 2015	A Nosological Approach to the Epidemiology of Crime and Criminality Among Nigeria Youths Towards Social Re-Engineering Base Prophylactic and Psychotherapeutic
2.	Professor Dele Osahogulu	May 15, 2016	Decisimatics: Advancing a Kernel Discipline for the Decision Science Universe
3.	Professor FolorunsoOgunleke	Sept. 2, 2016	Bilingualism and International Relations
4.	Professor Kenneth C. Uzoeshi	Feb. 23, 2017	Stress Among Nigerian Workers: Realistic Inoculative and Therapeutic Management Strategies for Effective Living and Productivity
5.	Professor Lawanson A. Briggs	April 27, 2017	Pregnancy in Adolescence: Intergenerational Cycle of Growth Failure and Stunting
6.	Professor Mamudu Obagah	June 29, 2017	Psychometric and Pedagogical Dysfunction: A Correction through Philosophical and Ethical Curriculum Implementation in Nigeria
7.	Professor Rosemund Dienye Green-Osahogulu	Oct. 12, 2017	Sciencing: A Key to Attitudinal Change
8.	Professor Vincent Asuru	Dec. 8, 2017	Assessment for, as and of Learning: A Psycho-Legal Convergence for National Development
9.	Professor Daniel N. Ogum	Feb. 27, 2018	Humanity in the Externalised Synergy of Sign, Space and Style: Advances and Thoughts
10.	Professor Joseph B. Kinanee	April 26, 2018	The Traumata of Frustration and Depression: A Dilemma for Mental Health Professionals in Nigeria

11.	Professor Tugwel Agina-Obu	June 28, 2018	The Nigerian Socio-Cultural Milieu and School Curricular Offerings: The Need for Integration and Synergy between Town and Gown
12.	Professor Jane Onwugbuta-Enyi	Aug. 21, 2018	The Agony of Choice: Balancing Growth and Survival by Water Stressed Plants to Secure the Next Generation
13.	Professor Loveday C. Okere	Oct. 25, 2018	Pillars in Human Resource Management Practices and Organizational Survival
14.	Professor Kingdom E. Orji	Feb. 28, 2019	Signature in the Sands of Time: A Legacy for Humans' Survival Strategy in Nigerian Society
15.	Professor Jessica Ezekiel-Hart	March 28, 2019	Today's Matters will Matter
16.	Professor Rose N. Amanchukwu	April 25, 2019	Success as an Iceberg of Results-Oriented Education
17.	Professor Kemka H. Ogbonda	May 30, 2019	Microbes: Man's Despair and Man's Hope
18.	Professor Chioma Chukueggu	July 25, 2019	Teaching English Language in Nigeria: Challenges and Demands of the 21 st Century
19.	Professor KonteinTrinya	Aug. 29, 2019	Therapoetics: Prospective on Affective Art
20.	Professor Keziah A. Achuonye	Sept. 26, 2019	The Virtuousness of a Teacher
21.	Professor Samuel Amaele	Oct. 31, 2019	The Dilemma of a Frustrated Nigeria Education System
22.	Professor Ozioma A. Ekpete	Nov. 28, 2019	Heavy Metals as Human Associates: The Ubiquitous Inevitable
23.	Professor Sam Ababa Otamiri	Feb. 27, 2020	Communicating the Business of Educational Management: Experimenting the Stakeholder Continuum Model
24.	Professor Alafuro Epelle	March 26, 2020	Between Father, Son and Ghost; Who Is Accentuating the Payment of Wages of Sin to Nigerian Workers?
25.	Professor Ofor, U. Stephen	May 20, 2021	The Grandeur of Plants; <i>Our Life and Our Environment</i>
26.	Professor Kingdom Elendu Ohia Nwaenyi	June 26, 2021	The Dilemma of Development in Post- Independence Nigeria: The Rural Development Options
27.	Professor Sixtus O. Anyanwu	July 14, 2021	The Contemporary Trajectories for

			Increased Agricultural Productivity in Nigeria
28.	Professor Gabriel E. Elechi	July 29, 2021	Violation of Nigeria's Ancient Landmarks: The Bane of Nigeria's Indigenous Education System
29.	Professor Livinus Ogbondah	Aug. 5, 2021	Systemic Dysfunctionalities in Nigeria's Education System: Which Way Nigeria?
30.	Professor Boma Beatrice Obi	Aug. 26, 2021	Answering Query in the Growing Organism
31.	Professor Godspower J. Irikana	Sept. 2, 2021	Hegemonic Social Structure: Theorizing the Sociology of Crisis of Poverty in Nigeria
32.	Professor Prince N. Ololube	Sept. 30, 2021	Social Sins and the Character of Institutional Leadership and Management: A Nation Programmed to Fail
33.	Professor Reginald O. Amadi	Oct. 7, 2021	Social Pathology and the Challenges of Pedagogy: The Digital Option
34.	Professor Emmanuel C. Ibara	Nov. 4, 2021	Navigating the Dilemma of Policies Development and Implementation in Nigeria's Education System
35.	Professor Chinyere O. Agabi	Nov. 25, 2021	The Dilemma of the Sower in Growing the Desirable Labour Force
36.	Professor Lawrence Ikechi Ajoku	Feb. 24, 2022	Egalitarianism and Equalization of Educational Opportunities in Nigeria
37.	Professor Sunday Nsirimobi Ordu	March 31, 2022	Taming the Marital Monsters: The Rescue and Reformatory roles of the Counselling Psychologist
38.	Professor Ibekwe Robert-Okah	May 26, 2022	Battered Tower and Tattered Gown: A National Dilemma
39.	Professor Ibiere Ken-Maduako	June 30, 2022	Meaning and the Linguist
40.	Professor Priye E. Iyalla-Amadi	July 28, 2022	Translation as a Tool for Indigenous Language Engineering: The African Experiment
41.	Professor Good Wilson	Aug. 25, 2022	Nigeria's Quest for Development: A Journey Without a Roadmap
42.	Professor Simeon T. Igbaniho	Oct. 27, 2022	Interdisciplinarity and Social Order in Nigeria: A Socio-Jurisprudential Perspective
43.	Professor Fayeofori Gbobo Bob-Manuel	Nov. 24, 2022	Blue Ecosystem Resources: Unharnessed Black Gold for

			Sustainable Development in Nigeria
44.	Professor Isaac. Ogundu	March 30, 2023	A Slave does not Trade in Plantain
45.	Professor Dorothy Chikaodi Inko-Tariah	April 27, 2023	Evaluating the Evaluators: Policy Framework and Practical Considerations
46.	Professor Apele Graham Iyagba	May 26, 2023	Waste but not a Waste and its Impact on National Food Security
47.	Professor ThankGod Peter Ojimba	July 27, 2023	Crude Oil Pollution, Crop Production and Farmers' Welfare in Rivers State, Nigeria
48.	Professor Samuel Nariochukwu Owmondah	Aug. 31, 2023	Bunkering in the Nigeria Education Sector
49.	Professor Ugochukwu Kysburn Agi	Sept. 28, 2023	Priming Internal Mechanisms for the Improvement of Nigeria's Secondary Education System in the 21 st Century
50.	Professor Gift Uchenna Nwiyi	Oct. 26, 2023	Managing the Silent Killer in Nigerian Universities
51.	Professor Anthonia Eghieso Omehia	Nov. 30, 2023	Knowledge Harnessing: A Functionality of the Timeless Catalyst
52.	Professor Godwin Chukwuemeka Nwaeke	Feb. 29, 2024	May the "Goose not Die" in Nigeria
53.	Professor Ozioma Bennett Oruwene	March 28, 2024	Nigeria and paradoxes of governance: undressing and addressing the fight against corruption
54.	Professor Levi Doe Kalagbor	May 2, 2024	The "Natural Person" Vs. The "Persona Ficta Entity" In Nigerian Scholae
55.	Professor Edward Ezebuaghom Adiele	May 30, 2024	Epidemiology of the Paralytic and Epileptic Nigeria's Education System: Towards Epistemological-Oriented Based Economy
56.	Professor Adokiye Adolphus Okujagu	June 27, 2024	Unfettered Pedagogical Exploration for Early Years Learning: A Catalyst for the Nation's Knowledge-Based Economy
57.	Prof. Mercy Olufunmilayo Adesanya	July 25, 2024	Leveraging the Transformative Potential of Language on Nigeria's Societal Challenges
58.	Professor Rosetta Bekinwari Bob-	Aug. 29, 2024	Entomophagy: A Panacea for Food

	Manuel		and Feed Insecurity in Nigeria
59.	Professor Lysias Dodd Gilbert	Sep. 26, 2024	Recalibrating Nigeria's African Policy: From Altruistic Afrocentrism to Strategic Afrocentric Economic Diplomacy (SAED)
60.	Professor Godfrey Adokiye Kalio	Oct. 31, 2024	"The Good Shepherd": Responsive Animal Agriculture for Protein Security in Nigeria
61.	Professor Ekaette Idongesit Ekpo	Nov 28, 2024	Systematic and Systemic Dysfunctionalities in Nigeria's Primary Education System
62.	Professor Nyekachi N. Amadi	Feb. 27, 2025	Tottered Economy and War of Survival: Predators and Preys, Who are the Losers?
63.	Professor Anthony Adele Orlu	Mar. 13, 2025	Literature, Environmental Violation and Leadership Crisis in The Niger Delta
64.	Prof. Chibuzor Chile Nwobueze,	Mar. 27, 2025	Live and Let Live: A Framework for Sustainable Peace and Development in The Niger Delta, Nigeria