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OIL POLITICS AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

by

Muhammad Nura Inuwa

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Thesis Co-Advisors:

Letitia L. Lawson
Scott Siegel

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OIL POLITICS AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

Muhammad N. Inuwa
Lieutenant Colonel, Nigerian Army
B.S., Nigerian Defense Academy, 1997

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December 2010**

Author: Muhammad Nura Inuwa

Approved by: Letitia Lawson
Thesis Co-Advisor

Scott Siegel
Thesis Co-Advisor

Harold A. Trinkunas, PhD
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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ABSTRACT

In the last two decades, the federal government of Nigeria has employed several strategies in an effort to resolve the ongoing crisis in its Niger Delta Region. Two main approaches were adopted concurrently by both military and civilian regimes within the period of study, diplomatic and non-diplomatic. Unfortunately, both strategies failed to resolve the crisis. This thesis explains why the strategies failed, arguing that combination of an overly high military with low civil counterinsurgency strategies during the military regimes of 1990–1999 allowed an excessively repressive approach that did not only fail to end the crisis but eventually fuelled it to transform agitation into insurgency. In addition, the civilian regimes of 1999–2009, which engaged low military and relatively high civil counterinsurgency strategies, have also not been able to resolve the crisis.

The study hence suggests a moderate approach comprising of both strategies; a professional military approach with moderate civil counterinsurgency strategies, and adopting measures that would assist the government to isolate its counterinsurgency strategies from political groups' interference, and resist responding to all pressures and complaints likely to sabotage its strategies.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIYC	All Ijaw Youth Conference
AOR	Area of Responsibility
AMOS	Association of Minority Oil States
CENND	Conference of Ethnic Nationalities of Niger Delta
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DOPCA	Delta Oil Producing Communities Association
DSOPADEC	Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission
DCR	Directorate for Citizen's Rights
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation
ENC	Eastern Naval Command
EFCC	Economic Financial Crimes Commission
ENF	Ethnic Nationalities Forum
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zones
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IYC	Ijaw Youth Council
IOPASS	Integrated Oil Producing Areas Security and Safety System
JTF	Joint Task Force
MNDA	Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MTC	Movement to Contact
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NHR	National House of Representatives
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NPRC	National Political Reform Conference
NDCSC	Niger Delta Civil Society Coalition
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDEF	Niger Delta Elders Forum
NDPVF	Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force

NDTC	Niger Delta Technical Committee
NDTLA	Niger Delta Traditional Leaders Association
NDV	Niger Delta Vigilante
NDVF	Niger Delta Volunteer Force
NAF	Nigerian Air Force
NA	Nigerian Army
NLC	Nigerian Labor Congress
NN	Nigerian Navy
NNS	Nigerian Navy Ship
NPF	Nigerian Police Force
OMPADEC	Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission
PDP	Peoples' Democratic Party
PNC	Peoples National Conference
PCPR	Presidential Committee on Police Reform
PRONACO	Pro-National Conference Organizations
PCC	Public Complaints Commission
QFC	Quick Reaction Force
RSISTF	Rivers State Internal Security Task Force
RSSDA	Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency
SSF	Southern Senators Forum
SRCTRN	Supreme Royal Council of Traditional Rulers in Nigeria
UN	United Nations
WNC	Western Naval Command

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I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most critical responsibilities of any modern state is the sustenance of an environment of peace, stability and security. In developing countries, state institutions are often fragile, shaky, and keenly contested amongst contending interests thereby making this core responsibility a challenge. Without security, not only do individuals find it difficult to engage in productive activities, states are bound to experience great difficulty in harnessing their human and material resources towards meaningful development.¹

The possible failure of such states brings many more complications including marginalization of some groups, new security threats and political oppression whether real or perceived. Most states in Africa confront these kinds of complications flowing from the inability of weak states to provide adequate peace, stability and security. Nigeria, the continent's most populated country, has recently experienced widespread waves of violent conflicts. These conflicts have been attributed to ethnicity, religion, poverty, politics and uneven distribution of economic resources. Such conflicts pose threats to the security of Nigerian citizens, as well as the Nigerian government. Due to the conflicts, lives and property have been lost with dire consequences for Nigeria's development and feed serious security threats. By far, the most serious of these violent conflicts has been the one in the Niger Delta region.

Oil was first discovered in Nigeria in 1956 in Oloibiri Village, Bayelsa State, in the Niger Delta region (Figure 1).² Since then, Nigeria has increased its oil and gas reserves through exploration to become Africa's largest and the world's seventh largest producer of crude oil and natural gas. According to the 2005 Annual Report of Nigeria's Federal Office of Statistics, oil and natural gas account for about 90 percent of Nigeria's

¹ T. Akindele, "Theory and Practice of Crises," (Lecture delivered at the National War College, Abuja, Nigeria, to Participants of Course 13, May 19, 2005), 34–35.

² U. Etiosa and A. Mathew, "Coping With Climate Change and Environmental Degradation in Niger Delta Region of Southern Nigeri," (A paper presented at the Community Research and Development Centre, Benin, Nigeria, May 16, 2002), 2.

export income³ for the past three decades. The importance of these two mineral resources, concentrated in the Niger Delta region of the country, cannot be overemphasized.



Figure 1. Thirty Six States of Nigeria Highlighting the Niger Delta Region⁴

Due to the vast resources in this area, many government agencies, private establishments and multinational maritime organizations are located there. Because the exploration and exploitation activities of transnational oil companies occasionally result in spillages and environmental degradation, mobilization in the region for environmental protection and greater local control of resources has evolved. The ongoing conflict in the

³ Syndicate 4, "NN Role in Securing Nigeria's Offshore Assets and Resources: Problems and Prospects," (A symposium paper presented to DMW Armed Forces Command and Staff College Nigeria, January 23, 2008), 8.

⁴ Adam Groves, "Shell and Society: Securing the Niger Delta," *International Relations*, accessed July 8, 2010, <http://www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/nigeria-map.png>.

Niger Delta is attributed to poverty, corruption, ethnic conflicts and unemployment.⁵ The main grievances and demands in the region include:

1. Environmental degradation
2. Marginalization
3. Redistribution of oil revenue
3. Political autonomy
4. Control of local resources

In recent years, armed groups increasingly have targeted the oil industry, reducing oil production by as much as 20 percent of production capacity through pipeline vandalism, sabotage, illegal oil bunkering, and kidnapping. These activities have been directed at oilrigs, pipelines, storage tanks, flow stations, loading points, and jetties, as well as refineries.⁶ Over the years, the government has acted against perceived internal threats to the oil industry by mobilizing its security agencies to deter the sabotage of oil installations and generally protect the production environment for the oil companies. It also introduced social development programs and other government sponsored developmental initiatives aimed at eroding insurgency support within the region.⁷ However, these efforts have met with minimal success. Why has the Nigerian government been unable to contain and eliminate these threats to its vital economic and security interest to date? How can it improve its effectiveness?

⁵ Capt (NN) K.L. Olofinmoyin, "Conflict in the Oil producing Area of Nigeria: Implication for National security," *National War College Paper Nigeria*, April 6, 1998, 27.

⁶ Nnoli Okuwadiba Nnoli, *Ethnic Conflicts in Niger Delta: A Comparative Analysis*, (Nottingham: Russell Press, 1998), 1.

⁷ World News, "Nigeria begins amnesty for Niger Delta militants," *guardian.uk*, August 6, 2009, accessed September 12, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/aug/06/niger-delta-militants-amnesty-launched>.

A. IMPORTANCE

Nigeria relies upon oil for its economic survival.⁸ Oil has also become the main contributor to the capacity of the nation's security. Therefore, any threat to the oil sector is a direct blow to the heart of the country capable of having a devastating effect on the nation's economy and security.⁹

While protection of Nigeria's oil industry would appear to be an economic issue, the instability in the oil sector has serious implications for the security of the nation.¹⁰ Therefore, the protection of this industry and its associated network and facilities is of utmost importance to Nigeria. More importantly, Nigeria's dependence on oil as the principal source of national revenue underscores the country's structure of instability, which makes the problem an urgent issue for research and policy attention.

B. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESIS

Various factors contribute to the failure to contain the disruptions in the Nigerian oil market. While many of these are well understood, little attention has been paid to political influence in response to the conflict or to the strategies the Nigerian government has adopted to resolve it. This study will partly fill this gap. Under the military regime period, political influence was minimal and excessive military counterinsurgency effort was used to resolve the crisis with little or no civil counterinsurgency effort. Under the subsequent democratic administration, political pressure from Niger Delta politicians led to minimal military counterinsurgency efforts and increased civil counterinsurgency efforts. This thesis will argue that the strategies adopted failed to resolve the crisis during either period because of the level of political influence; it was too low under the military regime as a result of low civil and excessive military engagements, and has been overly high under the democratic regime resulting in very high civil and low military

⁸ L. Atakpu, "Resource-Based Conflicts: Challenges of Oil Extraction in Nigeria," (Paper presented at the African Network for Environment and Economic Justice, Benin, Nigeria, March 29, 2007), 1.

⁹ Su Umosen, "Security Situation in the Niger Delta," (Brief to the CNS at NHQ, Abuja, Nigeria, November 18, 2005), 1.

¹⁰ Ibid., 2.

engagements. During the democratic dispensation, pressure groups both from inside and outside the Niger Delta region stalled government efforts to take decisive action in resolving the conflict at the state and national levels. Other political groups, again mostly indigenous groups within the Niger Delta region with substantial support of their people, used other forms of political pressure such as the media and propaganda to influence government decisions on the Niger Delta issue. Therefore, for this research, pressure group activity will be the independent variable, and government strategy will be the intervening variable. The hypothesis is that the absence of political pressure during the military regime (1990–1999) led to an overly aggressive military response, while during the democratic regime (1999–2009) political pressure at local, state and national levels led to an overly cautious military response. The study will consider agitation to be any action that is intended to stimulate public feeling, interest, movement or support for or against a matter of controversy such as a political or social issue. While insurgency will be considered as a protracted violent conflict in which one or more groups uses political resources and violence in an effort to fundamentally change the political or social arrangement in a state or region and reformulate the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics.¹¹

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Theories of Counterinsurgency

There is a consensus in the literature that insurgency is one of the most difficult challenges for a state to overcome, and that the end state of any strategy adopted by a government is “to separate the insurgents from their popular support base and neutralize them through social, political, economic, and military actions that reduce their grievance

¹¹ R. Scott Moore, *The Basics of Counterinsurgency*, accessed September 8, 2007, Small Wars Journal: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/moorecoinpaper.pdf>; O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc 2005), from Gordon H. Bradley, “Framework for Countering Improvised Explosive Devices,” *Naval Postgraduate School, Lecture Notes Part 4 OS3640*, 20–21.

or kill the insurgent leadership, thereby ending the threat.”¹² There is a debate about the factors that determine a state’s counterinsurgency effectiveness. One camp argues that the key factor is *strategic design*, while another argues that the key factor is *strategic implementation*.

Bottiglieri, representing the first camp, notes that there are three main operational approaches to counterinsurgency: direct, outside-in, and inside-out.¹³ The direct method involves the employment of military forces to engage insurgents using conventional tactics. A government deploys its military forces in areas where insurgents are operating to carry out search and destroy operations. This approach is best suited to situations in which insurgents are well organized, have some form of support, and are able to control territory and establish fixed bases of operation, but lack substantial popular support. The outside-in approach involves attacking the outlying borders of the insurgency and working towards the center. This approach is applied where the insurgency has considerable popular support. The government adopts strategies such as “winning the hearts and minds,” and political and economic concessions, geared towards separating the insurgency from its popular support. The inside-out approach involves attacking insurgent leadership, then working down through lower levels of command until the group’s coherence is lost. This approach is used against insurgencies with political and ideological grievances closely identified with its leadership. The logic of this approach is that when there is no leadership, followers will lose the will to fight.¹⁴

¹² Edward Novack, “Criminals and Insurgents: The Role of Ethnicity in State Response to Internal Resource Competitors,” (Master’s Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, June 2007), 9; John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing, 2005); Eric P. Wendt Lt.Col, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” *Special Warfare*, ‘Counterinsurgency: Achieving Popular Support, 18:2, (September 2005); David C. Gompert et al., “Reconstruction under Fire: Unifying Civil and Military Counterinsurgency,” *RAND Corporation* (2009), accessed January 16, 2010, <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG870>; William Rosenau and Austin Long, “The Phoenix Program and Contemporary Counterinsurgency,” *National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation* (2009), accessed January 16, 2010, http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP258.

¹³ Michael A. Bottiglieri, “How to Defeat Insurgencies: Searching for a Counter-Insurgency Strategy,” (Master’s Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, December 2000), 4–5.

¹⁴ Michael A. Bottiglieri, “How to Defeat Insurgencies: Searching for a Counter-Insurgency Strategy,” (Naval Postgraduate School: Master’s Thesis, December 2000), 4–6.

The question for the *strategic design* camp is why governments and their security forces fail to adopt the most effective approach, and/or do not adjust their approach in the light of learning on the ground. Nagl, for instance, highlights how organizational culture of the state and its armed forces affects their ability to learn from unforeseen conditions, based on his study of the success and failure of the British and Americans in Malaya (1948–60) and Vietnam (1950–75), respectively.¹⁵ He argues that the British successfully adopted the conventional doctrine of organizational learning cycle (Figure 2) in combination with flexibility, good leadership with a strategic vision, intelligence, and past experience to produce a strategic design that was effective in Malaya. On the other hand, Nagl argues that the Americans failed to produce the appropriate strategic design in Vietnam, and thus failed, due to a strong institutional culture favoring the use of fire power and maneuver, to engage the enemy. The Americans failed to accept that their superior weapons, technology and organization could not even find the enemy, talk less of destroying it, and this cognitive dissonance was a major factor in their failure.¹⁶

¹⁵ John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 190–197.

¹⁶ Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 198–199; Andrews, R. W., *The village war: Vietnamese communist revolutionary activities in Dinh Tuong province, 1960–1964* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1973); Galula, D., *Counterinsurgency warfare theory and practice*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International 1964); Grubbs Lee and Michael Forsyth, "Is There a Deep Fight in Counterinsurgency?" *Military Review* July–August (2005), 28–30.

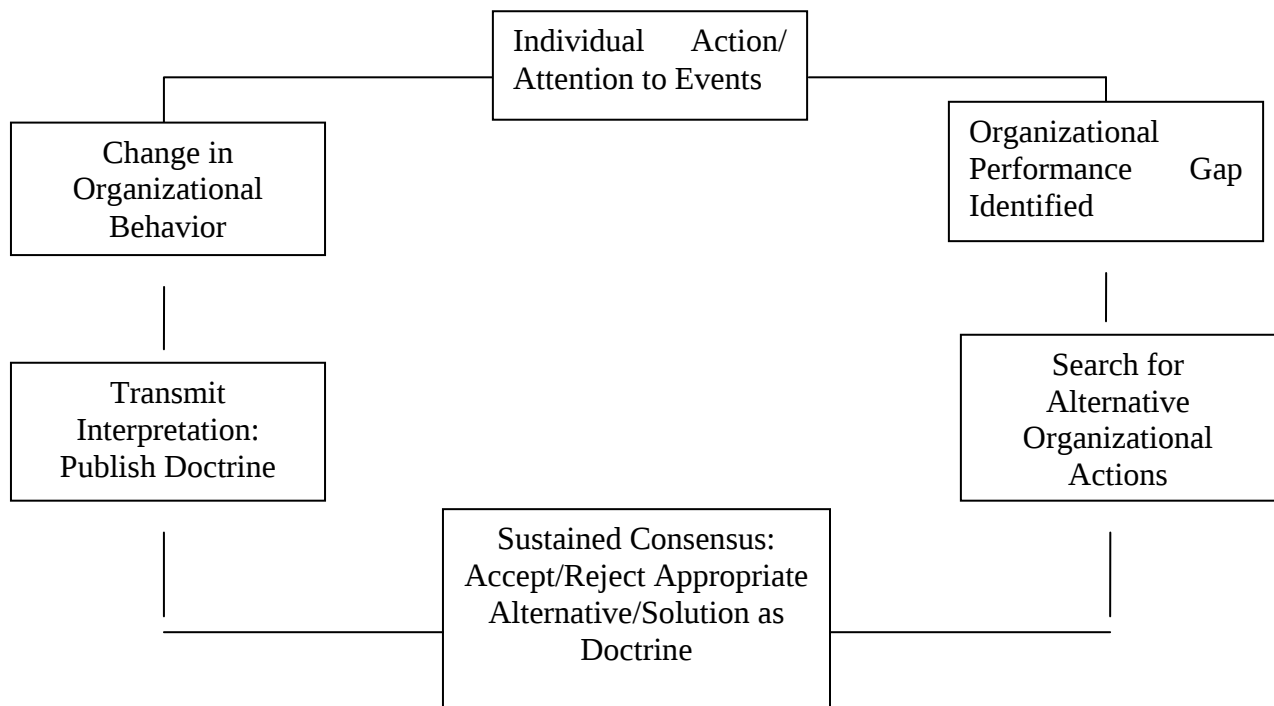


Figure 2. The Institutional Learning Cycle: The Process of Doctrinal Change¹⁷

The *strategic implementation* camp highlights the efficient use of available resources as the key explanatory factor in counterinsurgency success or failure. Wendt studies five models of counterinsurgency, arguing that counterinsurgency success depends on operational efficiency or using minimum resources required for maximum success. In his “area of influence” model, the support of the local populace is acquired using “sticks and carrots” in a way similar to moving the bubble on a level.¹⁸ The government’s challenge is find the correct proportion of sticks and carrots to convince the populace to expose the insurgents who will then be either captured or killed (Figure 3).¹⁹ The “insurgent origins and flow of support” model suggests that attacking active insurgent groups, which is the conventional approach, is less effective than attacking the

¹⁷ Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 193.

¹⁸ Lt Col Eric P. Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” 3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

members that form the insurgent infrastructure (Figure 4).²⁰ The “equivalent response” model proposes using equal quality and intensity of violence in countering the insurgency laying emphasis on a band of excellence with a maximum and minimum boundary within which the counterinsurgency effort must stay (Figure 5).²¹



Figure 1. Area of Influence Model

Figure 3. Area of Influence Model²²



Figure 2. Insurgent Origin and Flow of Support Model

Figure 4. Insurgent Origins and Flow Support Model²³

²⁰ Lt Col Eric P. Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” 3–4.

²¹ Ibid., 4–5.

²² Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” 3.

²³ Ibid., 4.

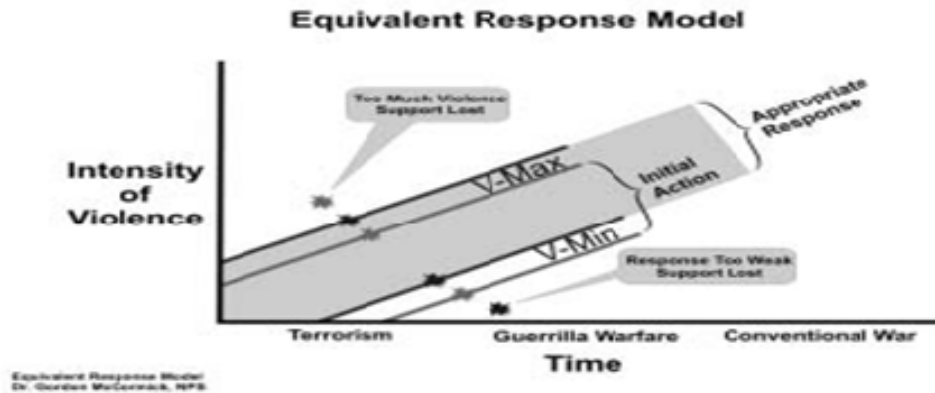


Figure 3. Equivalent Response Model

Figure 5. Equivalent Response Model²⁴

The “McCormick diamond model” involves building government’s legitimacy and control of the population while lowering that of the insurgents, and building legitimacy in the eyes of international actors while reducing or destroying the insurgent’s external support (Figure 6).²⁵ Wendt’s last model requires three “desired components” for a successful counterinsurgency operation: a constabulary made up of Special Forces, a Quick Reaction Force (QRF), and Movement to Contact (MTC) force (Figure 7).²⁶ The study argues that applying all five models simultaneously is the most effective approach to counterinsurgency, and that the more models are applied, the more likely the counterinsurgency effort is to be successful.

²⁴ Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” 5.

²⁵ Ibid., 5–6.

²⁶ Ibid., 7–8.



Figure 4. Diamond Insurgent / COIN Model

Figure 6. Diamond Model²⁷

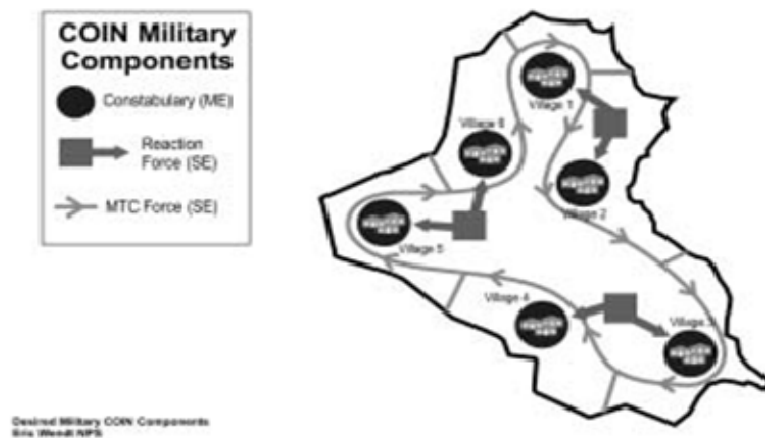


Figure 5. Wendt's Three Desired COIN Military Components

Figure 7. Desired Component Models²⁸

Gompert et al. focuses more specifically on the relative timing of implementation of civil and military counterinsurgency initiatives. They note that civil counterinsurgency is usually disrupted by insurgent threats and security risks causing its postponement, thereby increasing reliance on the use of force (military counterinsurgency) until the

²⁷ Wendt, "Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling," 6.

²⁸ Ibid., 7.

territory is free of insurgency, before resuming to civil counterinsurgency.²⁹ They argue that the simultaneous implementation is more effective in ending insurgency, and can be achieved by improving security in the area of insurgency to allow for civil counterinsurgency (human services, political reform, physical reconstruction, economic development, and indigenous capacity building) before insurgent threats have been eliminated. They maintain that this is critical to success because civil counterinsurgency during active insurgency helps win the hearts and minds of the local populace and turn them against the insurgents, making the overall counterinsurgency efforts more effective (combination of military and civil tools).³⁰

To secure these civil counterinsurgency activities, Gompert et al. recommends prioritizing civil counterinsurgency activities, making a basis for allocating security forces and mixing civil counterinsurgency staff with military personnel. They also recommended setting up networks consisting of nodes and hubs, then linking their movements (Appendix A, Table 1), integrating and collocating these networks with security measures (securing all hubs and nodes and movements among them), thereby reducing the risk and vulnerability of civil counterinsurgency efforts to insurgent threats.³¹

Table 1. Civil Counterinsurgency Hubs and Nodes³²

Sector	Hubs	Nodes
Health	Hospitals, medical training	Clinics
Government administration	Provincial	District and municipal
Education	Secondary, teacher training	Primary, adult
Justice	Superior courts, prisons	Lower courts, jails

²⁹ Gompert et al., *Reconstruction under Fire*, 10–16.

³⁰ Ibid., 62–70.

³¹ Gompert et al., *Reconstruction under Fire*, 74; Gompert, David. C and John Gordon IV, “War by other means: building complete and balanced capabilities for counterinsurgency,” *National Defense Research Institute RAND*, (2008), 76–77; Zaalberg W. Thijs Brocades, *Soldiers and civil power: supporting or substituting civil authorities in modern peace operations*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

³² Gompert, et al., *Reconstruction under Fire*, 74.

Finance	State and large banks	Branches and micro-lenders
Telecommunications	Central switches	Towers
Markets	Wholesale, international	Retail, local
Enterprise	Large, heavy	Small, light
Construction	Equipment procurement	Site work
Electricity	Power generation	Users

The strategic design and implementation camps both provide useful frameworks for studying the Niger Delta case. However, neither goes far enough in considering explanations of why governments and security agencies fail to adopt appropriate designs and/or implementation strategies and why they fail to adjust design and/or implementation in light of learning. Organizational culture is a plausible explanation for strategic design failures, but there are other potential constraints on design adjustment. Similarly, Wendt's insights into how to maximize the efficiency of strategic implementation, Rosenau et al.'s combined civil/military counterinsurgency style (discussed below), and Gompert et al.'s civil military insight are all useful, but do not pinpoint why governments do not implement such strategies in the light of feedback from initial efforts. Here again, organizational culture is a plausible explanation, but not the only possible one.

2. Counterinsurgency in the Niger Delta

Most of the research on the Niger Delta conflict has been on the causes of the insurgency, rather than the effectiveness of counterinsurgency efforts.³³ Most broadly, scholars point to the lack of national integration, inter-group antagonism, lack of

³³ M. A. Muye, "Protection of Oil Installations in Nigeria and its Implications on National Security," *Armed Forces Command and Staff College Nigeria*, (College Paper, SC 30, 2008), 94; Osahor MC, quoted in Adeniyi PS, "Deep Sea Oil Exploitation: Security Implications to Nigeria," (Paper delivered at the CONSAC 2006 at Offa, Kwara State, Nigeria, on 8 March 2006), 11; AE Ekoku and MA Vogt, *Nigeria Defence Policy: Issues and Problems*, (Lagos: Malt House Press, 1990), 224.

economic development, and socio-economic disparities as the underlying factors.³⁴ Focusing on the economic dynamics of resource-induced conflicts, Oyefusi argues that oil-dependence led to civil conflict in Nigeria through two major mechanisms: political struggles over oil revenue allocation at the national level and the Niger Delta conflicts.³⁵ However, Oyefusi does not address the links between these two mechanisms, and thus does not touch upon the politics of counterinsurgency. Instead, he links the Niger Delta crisis to weak institutional arrangements, deficiency in enforcement, an ineffective security system, a mix of interest between states and oil companies resulting in oppressive measures on communities by states during dispute situations, looting, and rent seeking competition within local members, amongst others, without addressing the deeper roots of these factors.³⁶

In other research, Oyefusi argues that individual level factors (low income, low literacy, lack of assets and absence of marital engagement) increase the tendency of people to take up arms, and that most of these factors can be addressed through a combination of economic policies and effective counterinsurgency presence in all parts of the region.³⁷ Onasoga identifies the lack of social amenities, operation of oil companies below the acceptable international standard of environmental safety (including gas flaring), political dominance, marginalization or economic deprivation, and the inadequacies of the country's police force to secure life and properties of the citizens as contributing factors to insurgency.³⁸ All three studies make reasonable recommendations

³⁴ Aprezi A.F.K, "Threats to Internal Security in the Niger Delta: Challenges for the Nigerian Armed Forces," (National War College Nigeria, Research Paper June 2000), 24; Kasfir N, "The Shrinking Political Arena," quoted in Yakubu AM, *Crisis and Conflict Management in Nigeria Since 1980, Volume One Causes and Dimensions of Conflict*, (Kaduna: Nigerian Defence Academy, 2005); Imobighe TA, "Introduction: Civil Society, Ethnic Nationalism and Nation Building in Nigeria," *Civil Society and Ethnic Conflict Management in Nigeria*, ed. Imobighe, (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd, 2003); Suberu RT, *Ethnic Minority conflicts and Governance in Nigeria*, (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1996).

³⁵ Aderoju Oyefusi, "Oil-dependence and Civil Conflict in Nigeria," *The Centre for the Study of African Economies Working Paper Series*, Centre for the Study of African Economies, 268: (2007), 1–3.

³⁶ Oyefusi, "Oil-dependence," 5–12.

³⁷ Aderoju Oyefusi, "Oil and the Propensity to Armed Struggle in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," *Post-Conflict Transitions Working Paper No. 8*, World Bank Policy Working Paper 4194, (April 2007), 1–4.

³⁸ Onasoga AK, "Effects of Ethnic Militia on National Security," (Armed Forces Command and Staff College Nigeria, College Paper SC 28, 2006), 75–76.

about counterinsurgency policies based on their assessment of the causes of the insurgency, but fail to consider how politics constrains counterinsurgency design and implementation.

Looking at the Niger Delta conflict from an international perspective, Rosenau et al. examine efforts by multinational corporations (MNC) to end violence and promote stability through social development and security measures, which they call “Corporate Counterinsurgency.”³⁹ They argue that Shell Nigeria’s adoption of a range of measures including social development were ineffective because some of the communities in the region felt marginalized over development projects, distribution of social funds, and employment slots offered by the MNCs causing an increase in conflicts rather than reducing them.⁴⁰ Overall, this study highlights how MNCs could have been used to reduce insurgency but that they did not consider the politics of the Nigerian government’s management of the MNCs, which resulted in the failure of the MNC’s counterinsurgency measures in the Niger Delta.

This study will begin to fill the gap identified in both theoretical and case specific literature by exploring the politics of strategic design and implementation. Its findings will advance understanding of how politics have affected strategic design and implementation by the Nigerian democratic administration on the Niger Delta crisis and the implications of this for national security. It will identify appropriate reforms to the policy process in light of these findings, and suggest options which the government could adopt in the formulation of policies towards implementing an effective strategy for improving the security and development of Nigeria’s oil industry. However, the implementation of these reforms and recommendations will be constrained by the very political processes the thesis highlights.

³⁹ William Rosenau et al., “Corporations and Counterinsurgency,” *National Security Research Division, RAND Corporation* (2009), accessed January 16, 2009, http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP259, 1–4.

⁴⁰ Rosenau et al., “Corporations and Counterinsurgency,” 9–16.

D. METHODS AND SOURCES

The research uses process tracing and a within case comparison. It will analyze the Nigerian government's responses to the Delta region's instability during military (1990–1998), and democratic regimes (1999–2009), showing how the presence of politics at local, state, and national levels has either limited the government's ability to adopt and implement an effective strategy or how its absence allowed adoption of extreme measures to resolve the conflict. Furthermore, the study will be limited to analyzing strategies and policies adopted by the Nigerian central government; strategies, initiatives and policies implemented by states will not be considered. The study will consider security force and political efforts in relation to the rise or decline of conflicts in the Niger Delta within these regimes. Political efforts to be highlighted will include influence of public opinion through propaganda, organization appointment implementation, and pressures within pressure groups on disapproval of certain government actions for settling the crisis. Although the political activity indicates that the democratic process is working better than often acknowledged in Nigeria, this study will point out how the same process limits government response to resolving the Delta crisis. Data collection will be mostly qualitative, relying heavily on Nigerian news outlets. The sources are supplemented by discussions with security officers who participated in internal security operations in the Niger Delta, as well as secondary sources.

E. THESIS OVERVIEW

The thesis is divided into four chapters. After the first introductory chapter, Chapter II will examine the military regime period (1990–1998), while Chapter III examines the democratic regime (1999–2009) highlighting how the level of political pressure affected the design and implementation of counterinsurgency strategies.

Chapter IV will be an analysis of the effectiveness of the strategies discussed in chapters two and three; the non-democratic regime's high military and low civil engagement, and the democratic regime's low military and high civil engagements, in order to understand why both strategies failed. It will then draw together insights of the preceding chapter, showing how political pressure has affected the democratic

administration's design and implementation of strategies resulting in weaker strategies at the military and diplomatic levels contributing to failure to resolve the crisis. It will also offer recommendations on how the Nigerian government could reduce or possibly eliminate political interference on its strategic design and implementation capabilities and hopefully provide the way forward for the Nigerian government for resolving the Niger Delta conflict.

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II. MILITARY ADMINISTRATION 1990–1999

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the strategy for the Delta region by the Nigerian military governments of 1990–1999, which relied heavily upon deployment of law enforcement agents and the military to suppress agitators and enforce order. It explains why COIN strategies failed during military regimes, highlighting how Nigerian governments' repressive measures with little or no civil engagement not only failed to contain or reduce agitation, but aggravated what had been a political conflict in the early 1990s into a violent one by the end of the decade. Due to their over reliance on the use of force (military COIN), military regime's approach highlights the hypothesis of Gompert et al., however, their failure to resume to civil COIN after suppression of agitation ignoring all civic pressure group demands made it ineffective.

Poorly trained police and military sometimes killed innocent civilians, provoking further mobilization by Delta civil society groups, which were then also repressed, attracting international sympathy to the cause of those agitators.⁴¹ At the same time, agitators, mainly the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), and Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), exaggerated claims of violent oppression by the state in order to push security forces out of the region and justify their own adoption of increasingly violent tactics. However, this had little effect as the military administrations were impervious to political pressure coupled with the fact that both MOSOP and IYC were non-violent groups at this time. This differentiated the MOSOP and IYC from other non-violent political groups because they transformed and became violent while others remained non-violent. This chapter shows how the near absence of *effective* political

⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, "The Ogoni Crisis: A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria," *UNHCR*, July 1, 1995, accessed July 18, 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a7d8c.html>; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Nigeria: The conflict between Itsekiri and Ijaw ethnic groups in Warri, Delta region," NGA32676.E: (March 1997–September 14, 1999), accessed July 18, 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6ad6864.html>.

influence⁴² from the Niger Delta on security strategy during the 1990s led to the maintenance of the government's overly repressive approach, low levels of civil engagement by the government, and failure to contain the insurgency. This failure contributed to the turn to violence by MOSOP and IYC beginning in 1998.

The percentage of oil revenue allocated to the Niger Delta was at its lowest level during the 1990s. It had been reduced from 50 percent to 45 percent by the Distributable Pool Account Decree of 1970, then to five percent by the 1979 Constitution, as oil revenue had grown dramatically, from a marginal contributor to public finance in 1970 to virtually the only source of public finance by the end of the decade. By the time General Babangida assumed power in 1985, it had been reduced to a two percent sharing arrangement. Babangida created the Presidential Task Force for the Development of Oil Producing Areas in 1985, allocating 1.5 percent of oil revenues for development of oil producing areas, but then cut the general revenue share from two percent to one percent. Later on, allocation to mineral producing areas was increased to three percent but returned to one percent less than six months later, where it remained until the 1999 Constitution increased it to 13 percent where it remains to date.⁴³ The depreciation of the Nigerian Naira against the U.S. dollar throughout these years (Appendix A, Table 1) was to have cushioned the impact of the reduction, but inflation wiped out the anticipated cushioning effect.⁴⁴ This systematic stripping of the proceeds of oil produced in the Delta region eventually provoked agitation for a reversal.

⁴² Non violent pressure groups of the Niger Delta could not influence strategies adopted by the government in the region because of the autocratic nature of the military administrations of that period.

⁴³ Ilufoye Sarafa Ogundiya, "Domestic Terrorism and Security Threats in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," *Journal of Social Science* 20 (2009), 38; Emmanuel M. Akpabio, and Nseabasi S. Akpan, "Governance and Oil Politics in Nigeria's Niger Delta: The Question Of Distributive Equity," Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Uyo Nigeria (2010), accessed July 22, 2010, http://www.krepublishers.com/02_Journals/JHE/JHE-30.

⁴⁴ Timeline Results for Naira Dollar Exchange Rate History 1970–2010, accessed August 23, 2010, <http://www.google.com/search?q=naira+dollar+exchange+rate+history>.

The Niger Delta struggle started with agitation by small groups of people organizing minor demonstrations. This grew into intermittent agitation by larger groups over environmental degradation and/or resource distribution issues during the 1970s and 1980s, before insurgency began to gather in the late 1990s.⁴⁵

The first significant mobilization was the February 1966 “12 Day War,” led by Isaac Adaka Boro, who formed a small armed militia, the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), to protest against political and economic marginalization and demand a fairer share of oil wealth.⁴⁶ When its demands were ignored, Boro’s group declared the southern part of the Niger Delta the independent “Niger Delta Peoples Republic.”⁴⁷ However, there was little local political mobilization in support of the movement or engagement with the government’s response to it. In 1966, government revenue was generated largely from indirect taxes on cash crops grown in other parts of Nigeria (palm oil and cocoa in the south west, and groundnut/peanuts in the north), which meant that the Delta actually received more revenue from the federal government than it generated for it, even with only 50 percent of oil revenues returning to the Delta.⁴⁸ Thus, agitation for regions to keep a greater percentage of their income generation would not have benefited the Delta. This likely explains the lack of political mobilization in response to Boro’s cause. The movement was squelched, its supporters arrested and jailed with no response from the Niger Delta people.⁴⁹ (Thirty years later, however, activist scholars, such as Saro Wiwa, and the leaders of the Association of Minority Oil States [AMOS], political, and insurgent groups, such as AMOS, MOSOP, IYC, and Movement for the

⁴⁵ Akinyele R.T., “States Creation in Nigeria: The Willink’s Report in Retrospect,” *African Studies Review*, 39:2, (September 1996), 71–94.

⁴⁶ Courson, Elias, “The burden of Oil: Social Deprivation and Political Militancy in Gbaramatu Clan, Warri South West LGA Delta State, Nigeria,” *Institute of International Studies*, Working Paper No. 15 (Berkeley: University of California, USA 2007), accessed September 9, 2010, <http://geography.berkeley.edu/ProjectsResources/ND%20Website/NigerDelta/WP/15-Courson.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Ilufeye Ogundiya, “Domestic Terrorism and Security,” 34.

⁴⁸ Solomon C. Madubuike, “Ethnic Conflicts: Social Identity and Resources Control Agitations in the Niger Delta,” Sociology Department, Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria, accessed September 15, 2010, <http://www.ifra-nigeria.org/IMG/pdf/Solomon>, 11.

⁴⁹ Asoya Sylvester, “From Adaka Boro to Henry Okah,” *The News*, June 30, 2008, accessed July 17, 2010, <http://thenewsng.com/cover-story/from-adaka-boro-to-henry-okah/2008/06>.

Emancipation of the Niger Delta [MEND], would revive the incident, and memories of Isaac Boro himself as a martyr, for purposes of mobilizing support for the cause.)⁵⁰

After a decade long gap, in the late 1970s, Niger Delta civil society groups again started minor agitation over the equity of resource distribution in response to the rapid growth of oil revenue, and the reduction in the percentage allocated to the region. The group AMOS, mostly made up of young academicians (university lecturers, graduates, and students), emerged with a peaceful academic approach, claiming that the principle of equity was neglected in support of other considerations in distributing the country's resources, which did not favor the Delta community. The group AMOS therefore demanded an equitable formula for sharing oil revenues through consultations and negotiations with stake holders, including multinational oil companies, and federal and state governments. The military government paid no attention to AMOS' grievances. There was no significant political mobilization behind AMOS, and no significant response against the government strategy of firm action. Again, a struggle against the government was easily suppressed.⁵¹

After several years of calm, agitation returned, and this time escalated into insurgency, after the government adopted even more repressive measures against agitators leaving them with no option of showing their grievances apart from resorting to violence. In 1990, Ken Saro Wiwa founded the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), which remained the only active organization until near the end of the military regime. The short period of transition to democratic governance (1998–1999) then saw a proliferation of similar, but more clearly insurgent, organizations. Saro Wiwa's international environmental strategy was successful in bringing the Niger Delta into the international limelight, which in turn increased MOSOP's membership and the

⁵⁰ See for example a Niger Delta agitation website dedicated to Boro at; Youpele Banigo, "Isaac Adaka Boro," *Bayelsa State Union of Great Britain and Ireland Journal*, July 2005, accessed February 25, 2010, <http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.bayelsa.org.uk>; Isaac Boro J.A, *Twelve Day Revolution*, Edited by Tony Tabekaemi, accessed February 25, 2010, <http://www.adakaboro.org/the12dayrev>; Adaka Boro Center, "Documenting the Niger Delta Struggle," accessed February 25, 2010, <http://www.adakaboro.org/>. The official Niger Delta Struggle website is named Adaka Boro Center.

⁵¹ Ilufoye Ogundiya, "Domestic Terrorism and Security," 35.

group's agitation. As a former president of the Association of Nigerian Writers, Saro Wiwa had access to many of his colleagues abroad and used them to publicize the Ogoni struggle through journals, news, reports, and some of his own publications. His two books, and his prison diary, smuggled to his friend William Boyd in England and made available to the international media by mobilizing PEN (an organization that campaigns for release of writers detained for the power of their writing), further aroused international awareness of the Niger Delta situation.⁵² Wiwa's first self published book *Sozaboy (Soldier Boy)*, focused on arming the minds of the Ogonis and rejuvenating their pride, contributed to increasing agitation by Ogonis as well as encouraging other ethnic groups in the region to mobilize.⁵³ Nevertheless, the MOSOP remained the most prominent group. Its strategy included large marches and demonstrations to highlight what it saw as unfair distribution of oil revenues, underdevelopment in the region, and environmental devastation caused by operations of multinational petroleum industries, all of which undermined local livelihoods.⁵⁴ The MOSOP adopted an Ogoni Bill of Rights in 1990 agitating against oil-related suffering of the Ogoni people, government neglect, lack of social services, and political marginalization. Demands of the bill included political autonomy to participate in the affairs of the country as a distinct and separate unit to guarantee political control of Ogoni affairs by Ogoni people, the right to control and use a fair proportion of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development, adequate representations of Ogoni people in all Nigerian national institutions, and the right to protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation.⁵⁵ In response, President Babangida issued Decree No 21 in May 1992, which banned MOSOP and other Delta associations. However, this did not end MOSOP activities.

On January 4, 1993, MOSOP staged a march of 300,000 declaring the day as Ogoni Day in commemoration of the declaration of 1993 as the International Year of the

⁵² Phil Jenkins, "Nigerian Writer Treated Shamefully," *The Ottawa Citizen*, April 9, 1995, accessed August 21, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ogundiya, "Domestic Terrorism and Security," 35; AMOS was eventually banned alongside other sectional political groups under Decree 21 of 1992.

⁵⁵ Ogoni Bill of Rights, "Presented to the Government and People of Nigeria," November 1990, accessed 15 September, 2010, <http://www.waado.org/nigerdelta/RightsDeclaration/Ogoni.html>.

World's Indigenous People; the march was also a protest against Shell Oil Company activities and the environmental destruction of Ogoni land. Several other protests were staged at oil company offices throughout 1993 (Appendix A, Table 2). Once again responding to the growing agitation by MOSOP, the Nigerian government passed the Treasonable Offences Law in May 1993, imposing the death penalty on supporters of ethnic autonomy who connive with groups within or outside the country to threaten the sovereignty of Nigeria.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, in June 1993, MOSOP boycotted the presidential elections, the first time a Niger Delta civic organization inserted its grievances into national political discourse.⁵⁷ The banning of ethnic based secessionist groups in the region reduced the possibility of pressure groups materializing to press for change of government strategy. Traditional leaders in the region became further marginalized, viewed as traitors who accepted pleasantries from the government, because they failed to stress on government's repressive strategies on behalf of their people, thus they became targets of violent youthful activists. This situation resulted into the murder of four traditional leaders by youth activists in 1994. Saro Wiwa and eight other MOSOP leaders were arrested, charged, convicted, and executed for allegedly instigating the murder of the four traditional authorities in 1995. Subsequently, the executions created a leadership vacuum in which Delta communities supported any leader who would *fight* for their rights. Protestors/demonstrators became much more violent, picking up arms, conducting insurgent activities, kidnapping, and becoming involved in illegal oil bunkering to fund their activities. By 1996 agitation was giving way to insurgency.

⁵⁶ Dokubo Charles, "Ethnic Minority Problems in the Niger Delta," accessed July 8, 2010, se1.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/98711/.../en/Chapter4.pdf; The other Delta associations include the Association of Minority Oil Producing States (AMOP), Common Wealth of Oil Producing Areas (CWOPA) and other sectional political associations that would be discussed later in the thesis.

⁵⁷ Africa News, "Nigeria: Resolving the Ogoni Impasse," *Africa News*, June 11, 2005, accessed August 21, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>; The Human Rights Blog, "Human Rights news, actions, announcements, opinions and miscellanea," accessed March 1, 2010, http://www.humanrightsblog.org/2009/06/shell_settles_saro_wiwa_lawsui.html.

B. SECURITY AGENCIES ENGAGEMENTS UNDER THE MILITARY REGIME

This portion of the chapter assesses operations by the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), Nigerian Navy (NN), Nigerian Army (NA), and Nigerian Air Force (NAF) to show that military engagements far outweighed civil engagements that the specific strategies adopted reflected the absence of input by political actors inside and outside government, and that these operations faltered as a result.

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) was tasked to maintain peace and order during the early stages of the struggle in the early 1990s which involved protests and demonstrations, with support from the military as needed. However, the NPF became overwhelmed when MOSOP agitation and protests escalated, as protestors/demonstrators became more violent, picking up arms, conducting insurgent activities, kidnapping, and becoming involved in illegal oil bunkering to fund their activities.⁵⁸ The police force's inability to contain the emerging insurgency was attributable to shortage of manpower, inadequate equipment and skills, inflow of illegal arms to the militants, insufficient funding, and most importantly lack of discipline and corruption, leading to loss of confidence in the police by the public.⁵⁹ Many of these weaknesses could have been addressed by the government, but instead the military administrations were inclined to shift responsibility for maintaining law and order to the military, and invest instead in its capabilities because they wanted quick solutions.⁶⁰ Shell attempted, unsuccessfully, to

⁵⁸ Agbonifo John, "Oil, Insecurity, and Subversive Patriots in the Niger Delta: The Ogoni as Agent of Revolutionary Change," *Journal of Third World Studies*, 26:2 (Fall 2009), accessed August 26, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?>, 71.

⁵⁹ Nwamba GU, "The Effects of Ethnic Militia on National Security," (College Paper Armed Forces Command and Staff College Nigeria, 2008).

⁶⁰ Priye S. Torulagha, "The Politics of Force Deployment and Nigeria's National Security," *Niger Delta Congress*, accessed September 17, 2010, http://www.nigerdeltacongress.com/particles/politics_of_force_deployment_and.htm.

compensate for government neglect of the police, attempting to purchase arms for NPF forces attached to its facilities, as well as provide funding; this was revealed after one of Shell's arms suppliers sued Shell for breach of contract.⁶¹

The rules of engagement required use of minimum force to achieve the mission, but security forces systematically unleashed maximum violence. They also illegally arrested, detained, and tortured innocent people, and raped women in the name of maintaining law and order. Their actions were counterproductive to achieving the mission, leading instead to more aggression in the Delta and an international outcry over the repression.⁶² Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported abuses by personnel of the NPF, including indiscriminate shooting, arbitrary arrests and detention, floggings, rapes, looting, and extortion, all of which violated international law and the Nigerian Constitution. These acts of violence went unchecked, as the government remained impervious to community pressure groups, which only encouraged more abuse by the security forces.⁶³ The NPF was clearly not "winning hearts and minds," and there was no one or no group within the region capable of making the government check these abuses by checking NPF excesses and adopting more diplomatic civil means.

The Nigerian Navy (NN) has the constitutional responsibility of policing the nation's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), including protection of

⁶¹ Human Rights Watch, "The Price of Oil: Corporate Responsibility and Human Rights Violations in Nigeria's Oil Producing Communities," *HRW 1999*, accessed July 22, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/nigeria/>; Capitol Hill Hearing Testimony, "Extracting Natural Resources: Responsibility and the Law," *CQ Congressional Testimony*, Statement of Nnimmo Bassey Executive Director Environmental Rights Action Committee on Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law (September 24, 2008), accessed August 26, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do>.

⁶² Capitol Hill Hearing Testimony, "Extracting Natural Resources."

⁶³ Mistilis Kia, "The Niger Delta Crisis: We Want the World to Know What is Happening to Us," *Counter Punch*, 17–19 July 2009, accessed July 8, 2010, <http://www.counterpunch.org/mistilis07172009.html>; Human Rights Watch, "The Ogoni Crisis: A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria,"; Naagbanton Patrick, "Conflicts Resolution and Peace Building in the Niger Delta: The Role of Government Institutions and Civil Society Organizations," *Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development*, accessed July 8, 2010, www.cehrd.org/.../Conflicts_Resolution_and_Peace_Building_in_the_Niger_Delta.doc; Ojakorotu Victor and Whetho Ayo, "Multinational Corporations and Human Rights Abuses: A case study of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People and Ijaw Youth Council of Nigeria," accessed 8 July 2010, http://rsmag.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/06/multinational_200802.html.

the country's oil and gas resources, both onshore and offshore.⁶⁴ The NN patrols the territorial waters and EEZ using all available ships and aircraft. It is structured into two operational commands, the Western Naval Command (WNC) based in Lagos and the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) in Calabar. The WNC has two operational ships, Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT in Lagos and NNS DELTA in Warri. The ENC also has two ships, NNS PATHFINDER in Port Harcourt and NNS VICTORY in Calabar. The WNC's area of responsibility (AOR) lies between the border with the Benin Republic and longitude 6° E while the ENC's AOR lies between longitude 6° E and the borders with Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe. The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) supports the NN with joint air patrols of the EEZ with the NN Air Branch. Due to the nature of the Delta terrain (mangrove vegetation interspersed with creeks) and potential oil bunkering and arms supply routes through the waters, it was natural for the government to employ the NN for COIN duties.

Decree No 23 of 1992, established the first military COIN outfit in the Niger Delta: Rivers State Internal Security Task Force (RSISTF) in response to the rising agitation in Ogoniland by MOSOP and failure of the NPF to effectively control the situation and maintain peace in the region. The RSISTF was also used to respond to the Ogoni crisis of May 1994 (when the four Ogoni chiefs were murdered). Its mission was initially to suppress Ogoni protests and later to maintain peace, law and order in Rivers State.⁶⁵ The Nigerian Army (NA) was deployed to the Delta at this time to conduct COIN operations in line with its constitutional role of defending territorial integrity and other core interests of the of the nation, as part of RSISTF.⁶⁶ The RSISTF was made up of one NA brigade (2nd Amphibious Brigade), Nigerian Navy Ship PATHFINDER, supported by 97th Special Operations Wing of the Nigerian Airforce (NAF) and elements of the NPF.

⁶⁴ Armed Forces Act CAP A20, *Laws of the Federation of Nigeria*, 2001, 12.

⁶⁵ RSISTF was initially deployed only in Rivers State to conduct internal security duties. After the crisis spread and developed into a Delta-wide insurgency, RSISTF's AOR was expanded, and it was converted into a Joint Task Force. Charles Ukeje, et al., "Oil and Violent Conflicts in the Niger Delta," 8.

⁶⁶ Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, "Armed Forces of the Federation," accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.nigeria-law.org/ConstitutionOfTheFederalRepublicOfNigeria.htm>.

The RSISTF also applied violence indiscriminately.⁶⁷ Following the arrest of MOSOP leaders in connection with the murder of Ogoni chiefs, security forces raided over 60 Ogoni villages to punish for supporting MOSOP. Both the NN and NA were involved in the RSISTF obliteration of these villages during the military offensive of May 1994.⁶⁸ Six hundred people, including children, were detained and beaten, women raped, villages looted, and shots fired indiscriminately resulting in about 50 deaths.⁶⁹ On Ogoni Day (January 4, 1996), six civilians were killed, hundreds injured, and over 50 arrested in a crowd dispersal operation carried out by the NA.⁷⁰ By June 1994, military operations had destroyed more than thirty villages with about 2,000 civilian deaths and 100,000 internally displaced persons.⁷¹ Although these human rights violations were covered by the international press and led to international reaction (Appendix A, Table 3), the national media was largely intimidated into self-censorship. Nigerian journalists who did cover the abuses were arrested and imprisoned and as a result political pressure was muted, and the military regime continued with its own sided approach.⁷²

The pace of military engagement in the Niger Delta increased throughout Abacha's tenure, as his government dispatched the military and other security agencies to suppress each manifestation of discontent as it arose.⁷³ Although, this approach helped to

⁶⁷ Dokubo Quaker Charles, "Ethnic Minority Problems in the Niger Delta."

⁶⁸ The villages included Oloko I, Oloko II, Gbaeken, Tumbe, Mumba, Eemu, Agbeta, Nwenkova, Boobee, Ledor, Nomaban, Gaagoo, Kemkora, Nweol, Giokoo, Biara, Barako, Deeyor, Bera, Nwebiaru, Deken, KDere, B-Dere, Mogho, Kpor, Lewe, Bomu, Bodo, Chara, Barobara, Bunu, Koroma, Itoro, Kpite, Korokoro, Ilegen, Gbenue, Botem-Tai, Semi, Bane, Bori, Wiyakara, Kono-bue, Buan, Yeghe, Okwali, and UegwerelBo-ue; Human Rights Watch, "The Ogoni Crisis: A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria."

⁶⁹ Capitol Hill Hearing Testimony, "Extracting Natural Resources: Responsibility and the Law."

⁷⁰ Kretzmann Steve, "Hired Guns," Third World Traveler, *These Times Magazine* February 3–15, 1997, accessed July 23, 2010. http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Transnational_corps/Hired_guns.html.

⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, "The Niger Delta; No Democratic Dividend," HRW, 14:2 (October 2002), accessed September 24, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/2002/nigeria3/index.htm>, 19; The four Chiefs Killed were: Chief Albert BADEY, Chief Edward KOBANI, Chief Samuel ORAGE, Chief Theophilus ORAGE, while the eight others executed together with Saro Wiwa are: Saturday Dobee, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbooko, Paul Levera, Felix Nuata, Baribor Bera, Barinem Kiobel, and John Kpuine.

⁷² CPJ, "Journalists Imprisoned in Nigeria (11)," *Committee to Protect Journalists*, accessed July 23, 2010, http://www.cpj.org/imprisoned/1997/confirmed/Nigeria_imprisoned.html.

⁷³ Ikelegbe, Augustine, "Encounters of Insurgent Youth Associations with the State in the Oil Rich Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," 22:1 (ISSN: 8755–3449), accessed September 18, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21>, 151.

check MOSOP activities temporarily (after MOSOP and IYC were suppressed, no other group protested against the government or oil companies until late 1990s), it paved the way for the explosion of militant groups when Abacha's repression gave way to liberalization in 1998.⁷⁴ By 1999, there were over 150 militant groups in the Delta region each claiming to be the voice of its ethnic community further exacerbating the security management problem (some of the more significant ones are listed in Appendix A, Tables 4 and 5). These groups competed with each other for influence and relevance to state governments and oil companies causing conflicts amongst themselves. For example, Ijaw and Itsekiri militias fought each other in 1998 over control of the commercial city of Warri, the largest in Delta State and a major source of patronage.

After the death of Abacha, General Abubakar Abdulsalami led a short-lived transitional government (1998–1999) that actively pursued national reconciliation and a real transition to elective civilian rule. However, President Abdulsalami also declared a state of emergency in Bayelsa State and sent two naval ships and over 10,000 troops and NPF to Bayelsa and Delta States. Over the next two weeks, security operations resulted in deaths, missing persons, over 25 villages burnt, and properties destroyed. About 300 civilians were reported dead, among them the son of the King of Kaiama.⁷⁵ There was a huge outcry by human rights organizations against the Nigerian government, which became a weapon of propaganda used by the militants to further justify their actions. These operations provoked the first unequivocal act of insurgency when the IYC retaliated by unleashing a series of coordinated attacks against oil installations and destruction of oil pipelines in the following months.⁷⁶

Repressive COIN strategies not only failed to resolve the Delta agitation, they inflamed the grievances, which then exploded into insurgency with the onset of the liberalization associated with the transition to democratic civilian rule. As this chapter

⁷⁴ Solomon Madubuike, "Ethnic Conflicts," 7–8.

⁷⁵ Ilufoye Ogundiya, "Domestic Terrorism and Security," 40.

⁷⁶ Suleiman Tajudeen, "Drumbeats of War," *All Africa*, January 11, 1999, accessed July 24, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/199901110183.html>. Oil installations around Warri area were attacked by militants in January 1999 in response to military operations conducted in the region a month earlier.

has revealed, from the onset of agitation by MOSOP in 1990, the government⁷⁷ responded by adopting highly repressive measures to contain the situation, a trend that continued despite the fact that it was clearly not working. It did work in terms of temporarily quenching an uprising, but never worked in providing a lasting solution to the Delta question. Civil engagement strategies were given little priority. This caused their failure. The suppression of political groups that could pressure the government to reduce its repressive strategies, restrict their security agencies from human rights abuses, and adopt more civil strategies, limited options available to the Niger Delta community and led them to resort to violence.

C. CIVIL ENGAGEMENTS UNDER THE MILITARY REGIME

The Nigerian government created five new states in the Delta (three in 1991 and two in 1996) to facilitate an increase in revenue allocation and development (Figure 8).⁷⁸ This was in direct response to demands by MOSOP and other pressure groups across the country (for which states were also created) for development and increased revenue allocation. The creation of these new states was expected to reduce agitation since state creation comes with establishment of bank headquarters, government agencies, commissions, development of state hospitals, airports, universities, and many other employment and infrastructural development tools.

⁷⁷ All the regimes during the period covered in the chapter were autocratic military dictatorships and therefore are likely to perceive non-diplomatic COIN strategies to be more effective with little or no regard to humanitarian abuses or their repercussions, thus explains their preference and reluctance to put more efforts in civil COIN strategies.

⁷⁸ A total of 15 states were created nationwide, nine in 1991 and six in 1996, bringing the total to 36. Neureus I. Nwosu, "The Politics of State Creation in Nigeria," *African Study Monographs*, 16(1): 1–8, June 1995, accessed March 12, 2010, http://jambo.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp/kiroku/asm_normal/abstracts.

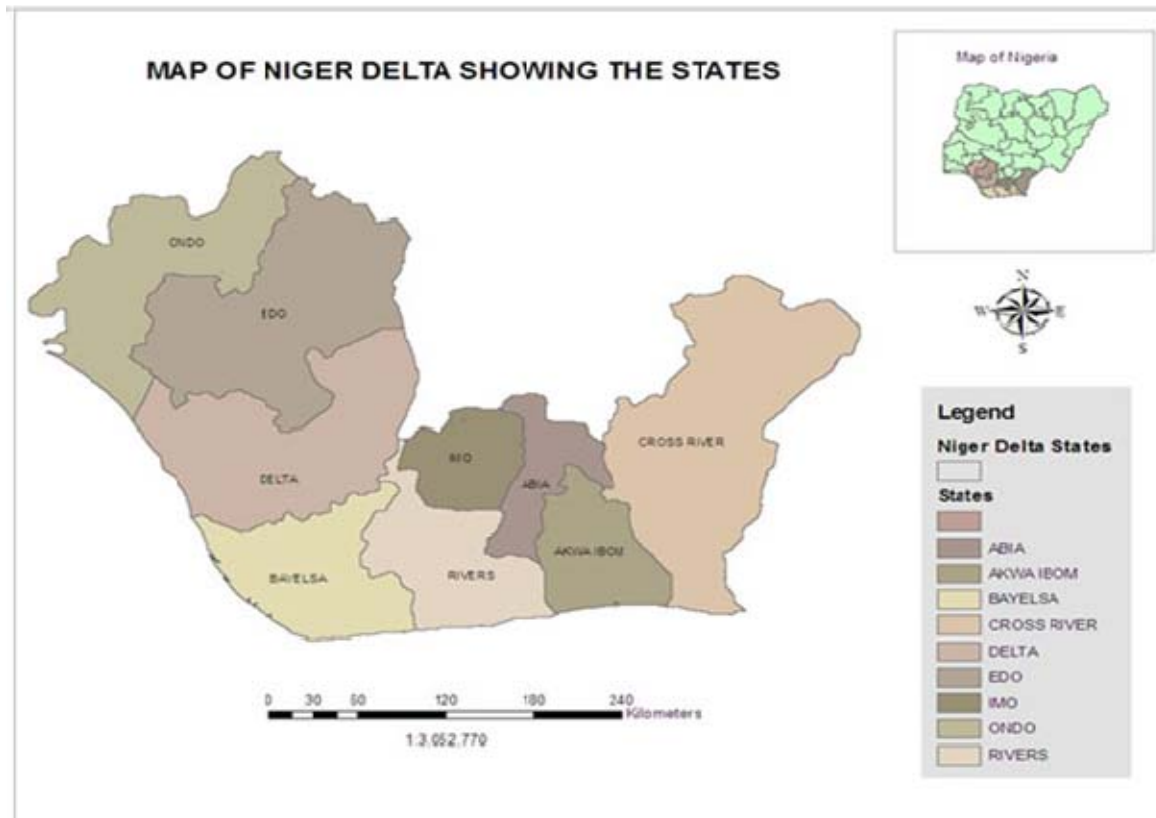


Figure 8. Nine States of the Niger Delta Region Nigeria⁷⁹

Furthermore, the new states were included in federal government sponsored projects, revenue allocation, and budget; more states in a region translate to more resource allocation to the region from the federal account.⁸⁰ Nonetheless, agitation continued, with smaller ethnic communities within the new states (which felt marginalized by the majority ethnic groups in the new states) demanding their own states (to enable them gain from the advantages of state creation). Agitation for new states also began in other areas that had previously seen none. Thus, by increasing awareness of the revenue allocation formula, the policy actually increased demand for local control of

⁷⁹ Robinson Tombari Sibe, "Challenges of Mapping Applications in Health and Academic Research in the Underdeveloped World: Case Study of The Niger Delta Region (Nigeria)," *GIS Development*, December 2009, accessed July 1, 2010, <http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.gisdevelopment.net/application/health/overview/images/Map-of-the-Niger-Delta.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.gisdevelopment.net>.

⁸⁰ Shola Omotola, "The Next Gulf? Oil Politics, Environmental Apocalypse and Rising Tension in the Niger Delta," *The African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes*, Occasional Paper Series, 1:2 (2006), 17.

resources in the Delta.⁸¹ The “South-South” political leaders from central southern Nigeria (including the Niger Delta) started demanding state local resource control, to enable their states to capture more oil revenue.⁸² Hence, the policy of state and local government creation reinforced more local ethnic, cultural, and political identities instead of reducing grievances and agitation in the region.

In addition to new states, the federal government established the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) in July 1992, under decree No. 23, committing three percent of oil revenue to the commission for development projects in the Delta region.⁸³ This doubled the previous allocation of 1.5 percent dispersed through the Presidential Task Force for the Development of Oil Producing Areas.⁸⁴ The OMPADEC was widely criticized for inefficiency, lack of transparency, inadequate or irregular funding, a lack of accountability, official wastefulness, and excessive overhead expenditures, all of which contributed to its failure to reduce agitation. The first two leaders of OMPADEC, Albert K. Horsfall and Professor Eric Opia, were both dismissed for corruption. The OMPADEC leaders carried out their duties in an authoritarian style, failing to consult with the Delta populace as to how its funds should be spent.⁸⁵ A struggle between Niger Delta state governments over which should provide the candidate for the OMPADEC chairman also limited engagement with the population and the effectiveness of OMPADEC.⁸⁶ The organization’s performance only worsened under the

⁸¹ Ekwuruke Henry, “State Creation and Resource Control Politics in Nigeria,” *Africa News*, AfricaFront.com, accessed July 7, 2010, http://www.africafront.com/news/136/state_creation_and_resource_control_politics_in_nigeria.html.

⁸² Kayode Samuel, “Nigeria: Give Niger Delta its Oil,” *Vanguard Daily*, 21 July 2010, accessed August 21, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>.

⁸³ Akpa AJ, “Ethnic Pluralism and Nation Building in Nigeria: A case Study of Selected Ethnic Pressure Groups,” (Research Project Submitted to the National War College Nigeria, July 2, 2005), 51.

⁸⁴ Joab-Peterside Sofiri Dr, “Oil Transparency in the Niger Delta: Improving Public Sector Oil Derived Resource Flows and Utilization in Abia State, Nigeria,” *Economies of Violence*, Working Paper No.20, accessed June 29, 2010, <http://geography.berkeley.edu/ProjectsResources/ND%20Website/NigerDelta/WP/20-Joab-Peterside.pdf>, 18.

⁸⁵ Respondents from the interview in Table 1 stated that OMPADEC carried out projects without consulting with the local populace (them) on where and what type of project they urgently needed, and in that way they felt it was not effective in addressing their immediate needs; Ogundiya, “Domestic Terrorism and Security,” 39.

⁸⁶ Shola Omotola, “The Next Gulf?,” 18.

Abacha administration (1993–1998) as its allocation was reduced to one percent of oil revenue, with resources shifted to implementation of military strategies to resolve the crisis provoked by the execution of the MOSOP leadership (Saro Wiwa and eight others).⁸⁷ These weaknesses of OMPADEC highlighted were as a result of lack of attention from the government because it was more focused on its military COIN strategies. Abdulsalami restructured OMPADEC, appointed new leadership, and promised that the commission would be more responsive to the yearnings and ambitions of the people. However, within a few months, as the transition to civilian authority was in progress, political parties emerged, election campaigns began, and focus on the Niger Delta was again reduced as the administration focused on its transition to democracy.

Un-kept promises and the political space provide by liberalization also contributed to the emergence of several new, more assertive, pressure groups. Agitation was increasingly displaced by violence, especially in the Ijaw areas. The All Ijaw Youth Conference (AIYC) of December 1998 reinforced the Ijaw Youth Council; IYC had earlier reformed NDVF in October 1998 as the Ijaw Youth Community militant wing and was tasked to conduct insurgent activities and provide protection to the Ijaw communities.⁸⁸ Subsequently, IYC's NDVF launched an armed struggle against the government and multinational oil companies after their "Kaima Declaration." They declared to stop recognizing all "undemocratic" decrees, including the Land Use Decree of 1978, which vested control of all lands and any resources on them to the State, and the Petroleum Act Decree of 1969 (as revised by the 1979 Constitution), which vested ownership and control of petroleum resources to the State, on the grounds that they had been enacted without the participation or consent of the Ijaw people. Further, they demanded that all multinational oil companies stop production and withdraw immediately

⁸⁷ Victor Anya, "Niger Delta and Failed Commissions," *Daily Independent*, May 30, 2010, accessed August 22, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do>. Shell Shocked, "Ogoni Refugee Report, Report on Ogoni Refugees," accessed July 18, 2010, <http://www.relufa.org/programs/economicjustice/documents/shellshocked.pdf>, 5.

⁸⁸ Transnational and Non-State Armed Groups, "Niger Delta Volunteer Force," accessed September 9, 2010, <http://www.armed-groups.org/6/section.aspx/ViewGroup?id=80>.

from Ijaw land.⁸⁹ In response to this development, the Abdulsalami administration froze OMPADEC's accounts just four months after its reform, and reemphasized repressive military strategies, deploying more soldiers to suppress IYC activities.⁹⁰

A field survey by Adebisi and Aina in April 2000 on 186 respondents in three Niger Delta states indicates that OMPADEC was perceived to have been ineffective. Only 15.6 percent of respondents believed it had had any impact (Appendix A, Table 6).⁹¹ Failure to appoint indigenes of the Niger Delta as members and chief executive of OMPADEC and failure to consult the local populace were identified as the biggest causes of its perceived ineffectiveness.⁹² However, the next chapter will show how democratic governments would appoint indigenes and consult the local population, yet there was no improvement of effectiveness.

D. CONCLUSION

The absence of effective civic counterpart strategies alongside military strategies coupled with deficiencies of security forces operations identified in this chapter contributed to the failure of resolving the Niger Delta conflict. COIN operations were out of control with excessive violence. More political engagement could have forced security forces to conduct COIN operations without massive collateral damage and human rights violations, because pressure groups could have identified with and stressed these abuses and demanded more diplomatic strategies. These would have eventually compelled the Nigerian government to check its security forces on violations of human rights abuses

⁸⁹ Ogundiya, "Domestic Terrorism and Security," 40. Ijaw Youths of the Niger Delta, "The Kaiama Declaration: Communiqué Issued at End of the All Ijaw Youths Conference," *Dawodu Net*, accessed July 24, 2010, <http://www.dawodu.net/kaiama.htm>. Erich Marquard, "The Niger Delta Insurgency and its Threat to Energy Security," *The James Town Foundation*, Global Terrorism Analysis, 4:16 (August 7, 2007) Terrorism Monitor, accessed August 26, 2010, <http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single>; Nigeria Daily News, "Ijaw Tribe," accessed July 21, 2010, <http://www.onlinenigeria.com/finance/?blurb=669>.

⁹⁰ Odeyula Seyi, "OMPADEC On Hold," *All Africa*, March 25, 1999, accessed July 7, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/199903250206.html>.

⁹¹ Although this is an indication of failure, the results for this survey is only a representation of the region because 186 respondents are too small, and also the survey was conducted in only three states of the nine states of the region.

⁹² Charles Ukeje, Adetanwa Odebiyi, Amadu Sessay, Olabisi Aina, "Oil and Violent Conflicts in the Niger Delta," *Center for Development and Conflict Management Studies*, Ile-Ife Nigeria, Obafemi Awolowo University Press (2002), 32–33.

and also to adopt more civic methods of resolving the crisis as will be seen in the next chapter. In the long run, high repression only succeeded in dousing the crisis temporarily, while simultaneously blocking peaceful options available for demonstrating agitation, thereby inducing Niger Delta activist groups to resort to insurgency.

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III. DEMOCRATIC REGIME 1999–2009

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the strategies (civil and military) adopted by the two democratic governments between 1999 and 2009. It explains why COIN strategies failed during the democratic regime, highlighting how the Nigerian governments' over-responsiveness to pressure group demands from both inside and outside the Niger Delta undermined the effectiveness of its own COIN strategies. The civil strategies adopted by the Obasanjo administration (1999–2007) include the creation of the Niger Delta Development Commission (July 2000) and the National Political Reform Conference (February 2005). The Yar'Adua administration (2007-2009) established the Delta Summit (June 2007), Niger Delta Technical Committee (September 2008), Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (September 2008), and Amnesty Offer (August 2009), while retaining the previous government's Niger Delta Development Commission. The civilian government's strategies were similar to "McCormick's diamond model"; they were all aimed at building government legitimacy both internally and externally (in the eyes of international actors) and as a result they became over responsive to political pressure group demands which then reduced the effectiveness of their strategies. Pressure groups' demands interfered with government strategies because some of their demands to address grievances (environmental degradation, marginalization etc) transformed to unfair and unrealistic demands (50 percent revenue allocation), the groups also publicly condemned government's strategies even before commencement of the initiatives, gathering enough support that made the government incapable of implementing most of its COIN strategies. Both administrations maintained the military COIN strategy while adding significant civil engagement elements to it, creating a balanced and potentially effective strategy. However, the chapter will show that where the complete insulation of the military governments from political pressure led to overly aggressive and thus ineffective responses to political mobilization in the Delta, the near complete lack of insulation of the democratic governments from political pressure adversely affected the design and

implementation of their strategies. Thus, this chapter, like Chapter II, suggests that more moderate levels of responsiveness and autonomy would lead to more effective COIN strategies.

The transition to elective government brought politicization of local ethnic differences in the Delta (between Ijaw, Itsekiris, and Urhobo, among others) and regional/ethnic tensions between different parts of the country. Politicians exploited these differences at election time. Election rigging, hooliganism, and violence became a major trend at election time all over the country, but especially the Niger Delta, which has more violent groups than any other part of the country. Many Delta politicians surrounded themselves with members of militant groups, which they used to advance their political careers.⁹³ Nigerian politicians also acquired campaign funds from illegal activities and the “political godfathers” and militia that operate such enterprises. In the Delta, political elites established patron-client relationship with members of emerging militant groups and their leaders,⁹⁴ such as Alhaji Asari Dokubo of the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer force (NDPVF) and Ateke Tom of Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), and NDVF (militant wing of IYC). These groups were used to deliver votes for local government candidates in 2003 and 2007, through threats and act of violence against opponent politicians and their supporters.⁹⁵ Through these alliances politicians got access to power while militant

⁹³ Chikwem Roy, “The Emerging Trends of Politics, Cultism and Gangs in Nigeria,” *National Association of Seadogs*, accessed July 5, 2010, http://www.nas-int.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=274&Itemid=38.

⁹⁴ Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*, The International African Institute, (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 1999), 27–29.

⁹⁵ Chikwem Roy, “The Emerging Trends of Politics, Cultism and Gangs in Nigeria.” Favuor Ojiabor, “Mayhem in Warri,” *Newswatch*, April 6, 2003, Lagos Nigeria, From the June 2003 issue of *World Press Review* 50:6, accessed September 22, 2010, <http://www.worldpress.org/Africa/1083.cfm>. Human Rights Watch, “Criminal Politics: Violence, ‘Godfathers’, and Corruption in Nigeria,” *Human Rights Watch*, October 11, 2007, accessed September 22, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/10660/section/2>. Coventry Cathedral, “The Potential for Peace and Reconciliation in the Niger Delta,” *Coventry Cathedral*, February 2009, accessed July 4, 2010, <http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/downloads/publications/35.pdf>, 179; Militant groups such as the Niger Delta Strike Force (NSF) and Outlaws were recruited by ‘political godfathers’ and used to intimidate political rivals in the 2007 Rivers State elections. Similarly, many polling stations in the Delta region stopped voting almost as soon as they started or were postponed to the following day because of this kind of interference by militant groups.

groups gained protection from their elected political sponsors.⁹⁶ Between election campaigns, the militants offered protection to illegal oil bunkerers. Over time they became more directly involved in other illegal activities, often in alliance with politicians who used profits of oil theft to fund their campaigns.⁹⁷ Thus, the interests of local politicians, like those of the criminal/insurgent groups that support their campaigns, quickly came to depend upon maintaining sufficient disorder to facilitate continuation of illegal oil bunkering after the 1999 transition to democracy.⁹⁸ This transformed the political situation in the Niger Delta; groups that previously had no influence on the federal government now had a direct line to politics through local politicians.

Thus, while legitimate civic groups gained new access to government through political pressure after 1999, indicating healthy democratic politics, a strong current of abuses of democratic institutions and principles also emerged. As civil society groups emerged (ethnic, national, international civil, and human rights groups), the armed struggle in the region also increased (Appendix B, Table 8).⁹⁹ Civil society groups increased awareness and forced the Niger Delta problem onto national agenda. They mobilized and coordinated a struggle for self determination, equity, and civil and environmental rights (Appendix B, Table 9).¹⁰⁰ This harmonized struggle reinforced civil society pressures of the region which is necessary, legitimate, and appropriate for democratization, however, the problem was that government over responded in general to such pressures thereby undermining its COIN strategies by making them ineffective.

⁹⁶ Mashood Omotosho, "Electoral Violence and Conflict in Nigeria: The 2007 Elections and the Challenges of Democratisation," (A section of the paper presented at the 27th Annual Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA) Conference, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria 16th–19th 2008), accessed July 5, 2010, <http://www.apsanet.org/~africaworkshops/media/Mashood>.

⁹⁷ Stephen Davis, "The Opportunity for Peace in the Niger Delta," *GEEI Green Paper Series*, No.2 Summer 2009, accessed July 4, 2010, http://www.saisjhu.edu/centers/geei/Papers/The_Opportunity_for_Peace_in_the_Niger_Delta.pdf.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Augustine Ikelegbe, "Civil Society, Oil and Conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria: Ramifications of Civil Society for a Regional Resource Struggle," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*; (39:3 September 2001), Research Library Core, "Civil Society, Oil and Conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," 440–444.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 437, 465.

B. SECURITY AGENCY ENGAGEMENTS (1999–2009)

When Obasanjo took over the mantle of leadership from the military in May 1999 he initially embraced the existing engagement strategy, involving a high level of military operation supplemented by limited civil engagement. In November 1999 he ordered the NA and NN to invade the Ijaw town of Odi in Bayelsa State in response to the murder of twelve members of the NPF by a gang. “Operation Hakuri II” resulted in about 2,000 deaths and the reduction of the town to rubble. The town’s bank, church, and health center remained standing, but every other building was burnt. There were also reports of human rights abuses, including rape by soldiers.¹⁰¹ The government’s stated objective was to investigate the incident and bring the offending youth to trial. However, sending military units did not tally with a mission of investigation and arrest, which are clearly police responsibilities. (The indiscipline of the NPF was matched by the military, so this cannot explain the choice of forces.) The government’s deployment of a large number of military troops indicates its initial intention to retain the previous governments’ highly coercive COIN strategy.

The perpetrators were not apprehended, and the brutality of the operation drew anger and criticism locally, nationally, and internationally. Human rights groups, environmental rights groups (e.g., Climate Justice Program, and Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria), Civil Society Groups (NDEF, NLC, and NDTLA)¹⁰², Senators (including the Senate President Okadigbo), and members of the Federal House of Representatives all visited Odi after the incident and criticized how the

¹⁰¹ Ilufoye Sarafa Ogundiya, “Domestic Terrorism and Security Threats,” 40. Human Rights Watch, “The Destruction of Odi and Rape in Choba,” *HRW*, December 22, 1999, accessed July 15, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/pres/1999/dec/nibg1299.htm>. Bassey Nnimmo, “Trade and Human Rights in the Niger Delta of Nigeria,” *Pambazuka News*, accessed July 15, 2010, <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/34801>.

¹⁰² Front Line, “Nigeria: Defending Human Rights: Not Every Where, Not Every Right; International Fact Finding Mission Report,” *The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders*, April 2010, accessed September 28, 2010, http://www.omct.org/pdf/Observatory/2010/Nigeria_mission_report.pdf.

government handled the situation.¹⁰³ Local and international pressure groups, including Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Directorate for Citizen's Rights (DCR), and the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) called upon the Nigerian government to initiate criminal proceedings against soldiers responsible for the atrocities in Odi.¹⁰⁴ There were also calls to keep the military in the barracks by both insurgent groups and human rights groups. Although such calls were not new, the democratic government proved far more receptive to such pressure than its predecessors. It responded to the demands of pressure groups by drastically reducing military operations. There was not another major military COIN operation until 2009 when 'Operation Restore Hope' was launched to rescue abducted security personnel (see chronology/timeline of Niger Delta events Appendix B, Tables 10 and 11).

However, there were still complaints of corruption, violence, and human rights abuses committed by the security forces, especially the NPF.¹⁰⁵ In response the government adopted initiatives to better coordinate and control the application of force in the Delta. In 2002, it created the Integrated Oil Producing Areas Security and Safety System (IOPASS) panel, chaired by Chief of Defense Staff General Ogumudia, which required all military COIN operations to be cleared by the central government and in

¹⁰³ Talbot Chris, "Army massacres civilians and police shoot to kill in Nigeria," International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), December 8, 1999, accessed July 15, 2010, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/dec1999/nig-d08.shtml>.

Omotola Shola, "The Next Gulf? Oil Politics, Environmental Apocalypse and Rising Tension in the Niger Delta," Occasional Paper Series 1:3 (2006), The African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, 17.

¹⁰⁴ Human Rights Watch, "HRW Call for Action against Abuses in the Niger Delta," *Human Rights Watch*, December 21, 1999, <http://allafrica.com/stories/199912210189.html>, accessed July 16, 2010. Ransome-Kuti Beko Dr., "The Niger Delta crises and Nigeria's future," *Human Rights Server*, accessed July 15, 2010, http://www.humanrights.de/doc_en/countries/nigeria/background/niger_delta_crisis.html. Amnesty International, "Nigeria: Fears of Human Rights Violation after Troops Deployed in Bayelsa State, Niger Delta," *Amnesty International Public Statement*, March 8, 2005, accessed 2 October 2010, <http://asiapacific.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR>.

¹⁰⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Nigeria: Events of 2008," *Human Rights Watch*, accessed September 28, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/79250>; Moses Ihonde, "Corruption and the Nigerian Police," *Guardian Newspaper*, August 9, 2006, accessed September 28, 2010, <http://www.dawodu.com/ihonde1.htm>; Human Rights Watch, "Corruption and Fuelling Police Abuses," *Human Rights Watch*, August 14, 2010, accessed September 28, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/08/17/nigeria-corruption-fueling-police-abuses>.

some situations the Senate and House of Representatives as well as the executive.¹⁰⁶ Further restrictions on NPF were put in place by a Presidential Committee on Police Reform (PCPR) in 2008. It set up complaints procedures, developed a code of conduct for the NPF, and required NPF to get clearance from a central control system before reacting to anything, which takes two to five days.¹⁰⁷ These delays militated against the needed quick response action in COIN operations, and further reduced their effectiveness. For example, while on patrol in December 2004 a platoon of 73 Battalion Elele came under sniper fire from a small settlement along the creeks in the outskirts of Port Harcourt city, but could not respond without clearance from higher headquarters. Therefore, on return to base an incidence report was forwarded to higher authorities requesting clearance for a search operation in the suspected militant settlement. The report and request was forwarded by the unit commander to the Brigade Headquarters onwards through the bureaucratic system set up to control these operations. It took two days to get the clearance. This delay gave insurgents time to move from that location, and the operation was called off.¹⁰⁸ Thus, government overreaction to political pressure hampered the effectiveness of military and police COIN operations (while also improving their human rights records).¹⁰⁹ Insurgency and oil theft both increased after these ‘reforms’, and especially after the May 2003 elections when insurgents were abandoned by their political godfathers and sought other sources of funding. Between September 2003 and September 2004 amount of oil stolen increased from about 50,000 to 200,000

¹⁰⁶ Sampson Akanimo, “Militants Tackle FG Over Delta Security,” *Scoop World Independent News*, March 2, 2009, accessed July 12, 2010, <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0903/S00027.htm>; Etukudo Joe, “JTF Needs Reorganization: Interview with Joe Etukudo Leader of Niger Delta Christian Movement Akwa Ibom State Chapter,” *Sunday Vanguard Newspaper*, October 5, 2008, allAfrica.com, accessed February 7, 2010, <http://allAfrica.com/stories/200810100589.html>.

¹⁰⁷ UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), “Nigeria: Police Abuses Rife Despite Anti-Corruption Efforts,” *Africano The Norwegian Council for Africa*, accessed September 28, 2010, <http://www.afrika.no/Detailed/19819.html>.

¹⁰⁸ Personal experience of the author with a colleague who was serving in 73 Battalion and was involved in the planned search operation, up to the time it was called off.

¹⁰⁹ Kuku, “How JTF Hurt Niger Delta Peace Process,” *Guardian News*, June 4, 2009, accessed February 7, 2010, <http://www.nguardiannews.com/news/article04/indexn3>.

barrels per day (Figure 9). The NDPVF led by Mujahid Asari-Dokubo and NDV led by Ateke Tom were both formed in July 2003 respectively, signaling the geographic expansion of the insurgency.

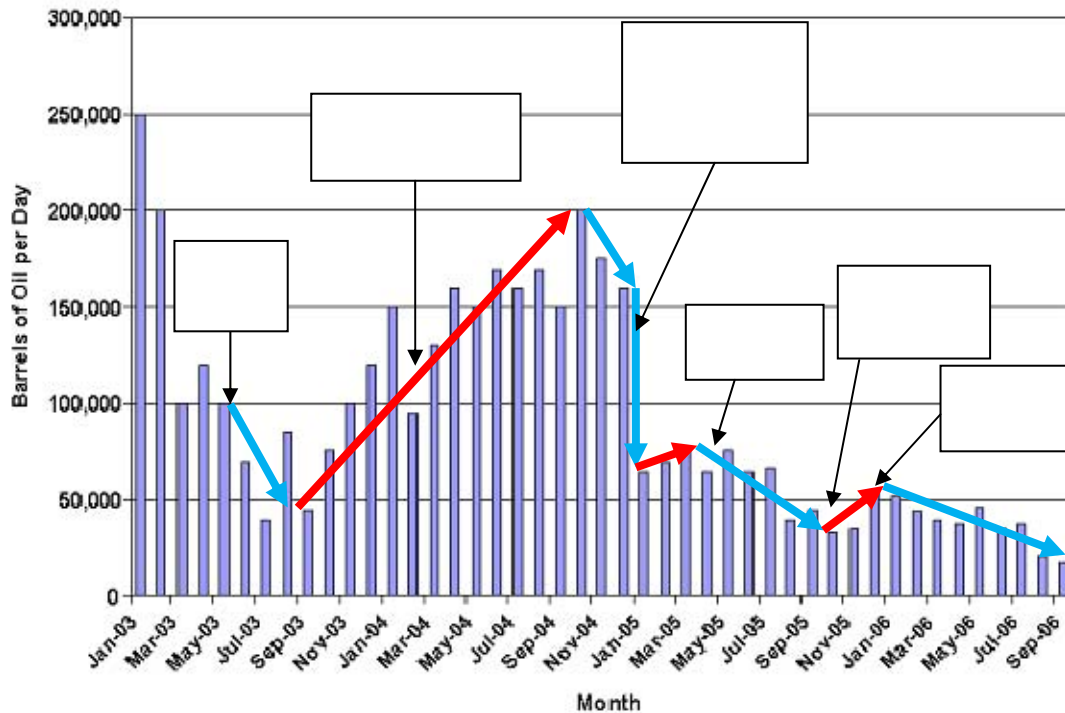


Figure 9. Level of Crude Oil Theft in the Niger Delta and Conflict Events 2003–2006¹¹⁰

In response, the government established a Joint Task Force (JTF) in Niger Delta in August 2003. JTF was initially tasked to secure oil installations and facilities, but combating armed militants was added to its mandate in 2006 as the situation worsened and more aggressive insurgent groups like MEND emerged. It is made up of the Nigerian Army, Navy, Air Force, and Police Force deployed over the whole Delta region (divided into sectors) with headquarters in Warri city of Delta State. JTF's mission currently includes safeguarding oil installations, counterinsurgency, and responding to other

¹¹⁰ Base figures from Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation NNPC, Coventry Cathedral, "The Potential for Peace and Reconciliation in the Niger Delta," *Coventry Cathedral*, February 2009, accessed July 4, 2010, <http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/downloads/publications/35.pdf>, 168.

criminal acts disrupting oil production in the region.¹¹¹ It has destroyed hundreds of illegal oil refineries, seized equipment used in bunkering, arrested many suspected oil thieves, and intercepted and captured many ships and boats carrying stolen crude and refined products out of the region.¹¹² However, its personnel (including its commanders) have been involved in human rights violations and participation in illicit transactions, including oil bunkering.¹¹³

Nonetheless, JTF successes significantly outweighed its failures when it was permitted to operate. Some of the constraints were temporarily relaxed for ‘Operation Restore Hope,’ which was approved by the government in May 2009 to rescue about 12 security personnel abducted by militants.¹¹⁴ During ‘Operation Restore Hope’ JTF conducted a major offensive search and rescue operation in Oporoza community of Gbaramatu Kingdom, Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta State, which was later expanded to other parts of the region raiding all known militant camps. (Operations against these camps had previously been denied clearance on the grounds that they were noncombatant villages.) “Operation Restore Hope” lasted for several weeks, during which the abducted security personnel and other hostages (Filipinos, Ukrainians, and Nigerians) were rescued, several militant camps dislodged, large quantities of arms and ammunition captured, and militant group members and leaders arrested.¹¹⁵ The operation caused about 65 civilian deaths (attributable to both security

¹¹¹ Andrew Walker, “Thousands Flee Nigeria Delta Fighting,” *BBC News*, Warri May 21, 2009, accessed 1 October 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8062315.stm>.

¹¹² Emma Amaize and Akpokona Omafuaire, “JTF Destroys 500 Illegal Refineries, Arrests 6 Suspected Oil Thieves,” *Vanguard Newspaper* March 10, 2010, *AllAfrica*, accessed July 16, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201003100951.html>.

¹¹³ Oronto Douglas, Ike Okonta, Dimieari Von Kemedi, and Micheal Watts, “Oil and Militancy in the Niger Delta: Terrorist Threat or Another Colombia,” *Economies of Violence*, Niger Delta Working Paper 4, accessed October 1, 2010, <http://geography.berkeley.edu/ProjectsResources/ND%20Website/NigerDelta/WP/4>. “Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta,” *International Crisis Group*, Africa Briefing No.60 April 30, 2009, 4.

¹¹⁴ Asuni Burdin Judith, “Blood Oil in the Niger Delta,” *United States Institute Special Report*, accessed July 15, 2010, http://www.usip.org/files/resources/blood_oil_nigerdelta.pdf, 7. Adebayo Sola, “Niger Delta: 18 Soldiers Feared Dead, Eight Others Injured,” *Punch*, May 26, 2009, accessed November 10, 2010, <http://www.punchng.com/Article.aspx?theartic=Art20090526292848>.

¹¹⁵ Tunke-Aye Bisina, Emma Gbemudu, and Harris-Okon Emmanuel, “War in Niger Delta – Military Extends Offensive to Rivers State,” *Daily Independent Newspaper*, May 25, 2009, accessed February 5, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200905250315.html>.

forces and militants) and 30,000 displaced persons, most of whom left their homes due to fear of getting caught in the crossfire. Although complaints were lodged by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and Niger Delta Traditional Leaders Association (NDTLA),¹¹⁶ reports of violations of human rights were down significantly from previous operations.¹¹⁷ The capture of militant equipment, armaments (publicly displayed) and rescue of hostages including foreign expatriates by JTF attracted some commendation by the government outside the Delta. Therefore, Operation Restore Hope shows that security forces can be effective if constraints are moderate.

Nevertheless, after Operation Restore Hope the government returned to maximum constraints on the security forces in response to NDTC declarations that the operation upset the peace process it was coordinating and the demands from prominent political pressure groups in support of its position. The Senate committee on petroleum threatened to investigate the impact of Operation Restore Hope on civilians in the region,¹¹⁸ while the Southern Senators Forum (SSF) accused Yar'Adua's administration of discrimination in handling crisis in the southern part of the country condemning the use of brutal force in addressing the Niger Delta question. Despite renewed constraints, demands for JTF withdrawal grew. In November 2009, a spokesman of Bayelsa State Governor Adeyi Asara in an interview with Voice of America officially demanded JTF withdrawal.¹¹⁹ Similarly, the Northern Union, Ijaw Community leader Chief E.K Clark, and IYC called

¹¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Abusers Reign at Midterm," *Africa News*, June 7, 2009, accessed October 25, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21>; States News Service, "Tens of Thousands Caught in Cross Fire in Niger Delta Fighting," *States News Service*, May 21, 2009, accessed October 25, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21>; VOA News, "Some Niger Delta Residents Call for Troops Withdrawal," *Voice of America* November 18, 2009, accessed October 25, 2010, <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2009-11-18-voa31-70423847.html>; Omon-Julius Onabu, "Niger Delta War—Human Casualties and Other Costs," *This Day*, May 24, 2009, accessed November 10, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200905250136.html>. SomaliPress.com; "War in the Creeks of Nigeria – Stop the Carnage Say Niger Delta Leaders," *Somali Press*, May 18, 2009, accessed November 10, 2010, <http://www.somalipress.com/news/2009-may-18/war-creeks-nigeria-stop-carnage-say-niger-delta-leaders.html>.

¹¹⁷ Mistills Kia, "Niger Delta Standoff," *Foreign Policy in Focus* July 9, 2009, accessed February 5, 2010, http://www.fpif.org/articles/niger_delta_standoff.

¹¹⁸ All Africa, "Senate to Probe Impact of Military Operations," *This Day*, June 22, 2009, accessed November 18, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21>

¹¹⁹ VOA News, "Some Niger Delta Residents Call for Troops Withdrawal."

on the government to suspend further military action against the militants in the region.¹²⁰ JTF remained deployed, but constrained by the government to the point of ineffectiveness because it still required clearance from higher authorities such as IOPASS before launching any COIN operation. Unable to insulate itself from pressure group demands the government demobilized JTF even in the face of clear evidence of its effectiveness, thus undermining its own military COIN strategy. Meanwhile, losses from oil bunkering and other economic crimes at sea by militants grew from less than \$1 billion per annum in the 1990s, to \$4 billion in 2000, and \$34 billion in 2008 (Appendix B, Table 12).¹²¹

C. CIVIL ENGAGEMENTS UNDER OBASANJO (1999–2007)

1. Niger Delta Development Commission

The first civil strategy adopted by the Obasanjo government was the creation of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to replace the failed OMPADEC on 12 July 2000. The NDDC was established under Act 2000 Act No.6, and its objective was to enhance quick, even, and sustainable development toward an economically prosperous, environmentally regenerative, socially, and politically stable Niger Delta to satisfy demands of restive populations in the region.¹²² NDDC Act 2000 set up a structure for financing NNDC that requires the federal government to contribute 15

¹²⁰ Somali Press, “Military Continues Offensive Against Militants of Nigeria,” *Somali Press*, June 6, 2009, accessed February 5, 2010, <http://www.somalipress.com/news/2009-jun-06>.

¹²¹ Nigerian Navy, *Nigerian Navy Order*, NNO/04, 2004, 1; Asuni Burdin Judith, “Blood Oil in the Niger Delta,” 7; Igwe Uche, “Digging Deeper: Can NEITI Contribute to Conflict Management in the Niger Delta Region?,” *Bon International Center for Conversion Bulletin* January-March 2010, accessed July 15, 2010, <http://www.bicc.de/>; Nigeria Village Square, “Nigeria Doesn’t Know Exact Oil Productions – NEITI Boss,” *Economic Confidential*, April 12, 2010, accessed July 15, 2010, <http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/articles/economic-confidential>; Agbiti FE, “Evolving Strategies for Coastal Operations to Combat Emerging Maritime Threats: Lecture delivered in Lagos during Navy Week Celebrations”, May, 2004, 24.

¹²² Niger Delta Development Commission Act 2000 Act No.6, Laws of the Federation, Part I Section 2 Sub (1), accessed September 24, 2010, http://www.commonlii.org/ng/legis/num_act/ndcea504/.

percent of its oil revenue, Niger Delta state government 10 percent of their monthly budget, 50 percent of ecological funds due to Delta states, and three percent of oil companies' budget.¹²³

MOSOP rejected NDDC before it was even legally established. In August 1999, after the NDDC establishment bill was submitted to the National House of Representatives (NHR) for approval, MOSOP issued a fourteen point communiqué criticizing the bill for including states it did not consider part of the Delta region,¹²⁴ with an unacceptable composition of NDDC council. The communiqué further highlighted that NDDC was only aimed at implementing measures approved by the government in the Niger Delta area which they felt did not comply with the needs of the Delta populace. Within the same period in (August 1999), a conference was held by state house of assembly speakers from six states of the Delta region who also rejected the bill.¹²⁵ There were also some groups and individuals who criticized the commission with more reasonable and legitimate reasons such as the Bayelsa State Governor Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, who claimed that the federal government lacked the political will to implement NDDC's master plan. The Niger Delta Civil Society Coalition (NDCSC), made up of

¹²³ Africa News, "Obasanjo Wants NDDC Law Amended," *This Day*, April 17, 2004, accessed November 16, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexus.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/>; United Nations Development Report, "Niger Delta Human Development Report," *UNDP*, (2006), Abuja, Nigeria, 11–13.

¹²⁴ According to MOSOP and several other militant groups like MEND, NDPVF, and NDV only six states belong to the core Niger Delta people as against the nine states officially recognized i.e. they exclude Ondo, Abia, and Imo states from being part of the Delta region (figure 1).

¹²⁵ BBC News, "Ogoni Movement, South Speakers Reject Niger Delta Bill," *Radio Kudirat Nigeria*, BBC Summary of World Broadcast August 7, 1999, accessed September 23, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>; The six speakers conference demanded for stronger federalism instead and demanding that sections of the bill that contradicted the section 162 subsection 2 of the 199 constitution (federal revenue allocation principles) be expunged.

about 50 civil society organizations from the Delta region, also demanded a legal framework to strengthen NDDC, which it claimed had been starved of funds by Senate and House of Representatives.¹²⁶

Niger Delta pressure groups and politicians (including Bayelsa State governor, speakers of Niger Delta states houses of assembly, and NDCSC caused state governments to withhold funds. Between 2001 and 2004 the federal government contributed 78 percent of the \$341 million dispersed to NDDC, while Delta state governments failed to contribute anything and oil companies were inconsistent in their payments.¹²⁷

2. National Political Reform Conference

In response to agitations by ethnic pressure groups all over the country, and especially the Niger Delta, President Obasanjo convened the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) in February 2005. The conference was to reach a consensus on aspects of the federal structure, resource control, devolution of power to federating units, and explicit recognition of ethnic nationalities as a means of finding a lasting solution to perennial problems in various parts of the country, including the Delta.¹²⁸ NPRC membership was made up of 354 persons. Fifty (the top senior members) were nominated by the president, 218 nominated by state governors, and 86 selected from different groups again by the government (Appendix B, Table 13). The president and 28 of 36 states governors were Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) members.¹²⁹ The organization of the conference was on several occasions modified by the government in

¹²⁶ Africa News, "Nigeria: Alamieyeseigha Faults NDDC Master Plan," December 3, 2004, *LexisNexis Academic*, accessed September 23, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>; Africa News, "In NDDC another OMPADEC?," October 23, 2001, *Vanguard*, *LexisNexis Academic*, accessed September 23, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>; Africa News, "Why NDDC is Not Performing," *This Day Newspaper* October 24, 2004, *LexisNexis Academic*, accessed September 23, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>.

¹²⁷ United Nations Development Report, "Niger Delta Human Development Report," 12; Annual federal allocation to NDDC from 2000 to 2004 respectively were \$7.3, \$77.5, \$107.8, \$69.8, and \$108.5 million, however member states (Niger Delta states) failed to contribute anything within this period.

¹²⁸ National Political Reform Conference Nigeria, *Main Report of the Conference*, July 2005, 13.

¹²⁹ Mobolaji E. Aluko, "The NPRC and the PNC- Thoughts on the Opposing National Conferences," Burtonsville, MD, USA January 29, 2005, *DAWODU.COM*, accessed September 25, 2010, <http://www.dawodu.com/aluko108.htm>.

response to new demands from pressure groups over perceived biases in its composition. After the appointment of Justice Nike Tobi and Reverend Father Mathew Kukah, both Christians, as NPRC's chairman and secretary respectively, a delegation of politicians, Muslim clerics and traditional rulers from northern Nigeria met with President Obasanjo to complain about the underrepresentation of Muslims in the conference.¹³⁰ The president immediately responded by appointing a Muslim, Professor Ishaq Oloyede as co-secretary of NPRC. Other civil pressure groups followed suit.¹³¹ As the government complied with pressure group demands by appointing their representatives as delegates, delegates became more concerned with protecting their group's interest than working toward a consensus, which was the main objective of NPRC. Delegates maintained unrealistic stances in support of their group's interests and were not prepared to compromise. Delegates from the Niger Delta boycotted the last part of the conference after their demand for an immediate increase of revenue allocation from 13 percent to 25 percent with an annual five percent increase for five years to 50 percent was opposed and a recommendation of an increase to only 17 percent approved. The delegates' action was supported by MOSOP, IYC, and prominent politicians including Rivers State Governor Peter Odili, who advocated an increase to 25 percent.¹³² The demand for 50 percent, or even 25 percent, of oil revenue to be allocated to the Delta States was unreasonable and uncompromising. Oil revenue constitutes more than 90 percent of government revenue, while the Delta comprises only 20 percent of the population (30 million of 150 million).

¹³⁰ Martins Olojah, "Tobi, kukah to Head National Dialogue," *Guardian*, February 19, 2005, accessed November 8, 2010, http://www.nigerianmuse.com/projects/SNCProject/?u=Tobi_Kukah_head_NPRC.htm&PHPSESSID.

¹³¹ Chuks Okocha, "Obasanjo Appoints More Muslims," *This Day*, April 14, 2005, accessed 18 November 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200504140546.html>; Abubakar Umar Dangiwa, "Abubakar Umar's Position on Alleged Muslim Marginalization at the NPRC," *Daily Champion*, Lagos April 4, 2005, accessed July 2, 2010, http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20061228125132zg/opessays/Umar_marginalization_Muslims_NPRC; Africa News, "Muslim Leaders Allege Marginalization," *This Day Newspaper*, March 29, 2005, accessed 21 October 2010, <http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/>.

¹³² Africa News, "S-South Pegs Derivation at 25 Percent to End Boycott," *Vanguard Newspaper*, June 16, 2005, accessed October 21, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/>; Africa News, "South Hails Own Confab Delegates at Rally," *Daily Champion Newspaper*, July 31, 2005, accessed October 21, 2010, <http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/>; Biafra Nigeria World News, "Obasanjo, Tobi, declare confab a success: Why We Shunned Dinner by South-South Delegates," *BNW News & Archives*, accessed July 2, 2010, <http://news.biafranigeriaworld.com/archive/guardian/2005/07/25/>.

Fifty percent allocation was reasonable in the 1960s, when oil revenue was less than 50 percent of government revenue, meaning that 50 percent distribution to the Delta was generally proportionate to the size of the population.¹³³ The NPRC submitted its report and recommendations to President Obasanjo in July 2005 with no Niger Delta delegate present because the recommendations did not satisfy their region's demands. The absence of buy-in from the Delta doused any hope that the NPRC recommendations would resolve the crisis. Government's over-responsiveness to pressure groups transformed the conference from a national dialogue into a sectional debate, encouraging groups that failed to impose their interest on NPRC such as Niger Delta delegates to boycott the conference.

Civil society groups that had been lobbying for a sovereign national conference to address the many issues that came to the fore with democratization opposed the NPRC as a diversion from this goal. These groups, including the Ethnic Nationalities Forum (ENF) and Peoples National Conference (PNC), formed a civil society conglomerate, the Pro-National Conference Organizations (PRONACO), which attacked NPRC and its recommendations because they were of the opinion NPRC had turned into a sectional battle between pressure groups' representatives from all parts of the country at the conference each pursuing their group's interest.¹³⁴ The influential Supreme Royal Council of Traditional Rulers in Nigeria (SRCTRN) came out against NPRC on the grounds that it had devolved into a forum for regional groups fighting for local interest that threatened national unity, demanding that it be dissolved.¹³⁵ Because of these pressures, the Obasanjo administration was unwilling to go against these pressure groups by implementing NPRC's recommendations. Therefore, in the end, the government

¹³³ World Bank Report, "State and Local Governance in Nigeria," *The World Bank Africa Region August 2001*, accessed September 25, 2010, http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/5783/State_and_Governance_Nigeria.htm; Nigerian Compass, "Constitution Review and Electoral Reforms in Nigeria: The Journey So Far [2]," *Compass Newspaper*, June 20, 2010, accessed July 5, 2010, http://www.compassnewspaper.com/NG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61298.

¹³⁴ Sheriff Balogun, "Nigeria; ENF Alleges Plot to Subvert PRONACO," *This Day*, AAGM, September 6, 2005, *Africa News*, accessed September 25, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb>.

¹³⁵ All Africa, "NPRC May Break Up Nigeria: Monarch," *This Day News Paper*, July 15, 2005, accessed July 2, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200507150436.html>.

attempted to avoid displeasing any of the pressure groups by doing nothing. This shows how over-responsiveness to civic demands undermined the efficaciousness of the government's own civic engagement/COIN strategy. Sectional pressure led to government action (making changes to NPRC's composition) that undermined the design of the strategy, which then led to civic opposition, which government again over-responded to by failing to implement any recommendations. The Nigerian government's lack of political insulation from its COIN strategies undermined its ability to implement its own program.

D. CIVIL ENGAGEMENTS UNDER YAR'ADUA (2007–2009)

1. Delta Summit

The Yar'adua administration undertook several potentially efficacious initiatives to resolve the crisis. The first was the Delta Summit, announced less than a month after Yar'Adua took power in June 2007, which was designed to bring all stake holders to the table to discuss and proffer solutions to the Niger Delta situation.¹³⁶ By narrowing the national focus of the NPRC to a region-specific one, this initiative preempted the sectional struggle that had undermined NPRC. Nevertheless, the composition of the summit was again challenged from the outset. The government meant for it to be led by a national figure, but ethnic leaders and militant groups of the Niger Delta demanded that it be overseen by an international body, such as the United Nations (UN), to guarantee a neutral and unbiased approach. The government immediately responded to these demands by appointing former advisor to the United Nations Secretary General Ibrahim Gambari as chairman of the summit.¹³⁷ Gambari was a long-serving and well-respected UN official, who had also served as a Nigerian government official. Vice President Goodluck Jonathon publicly stated that although there were more capable people to steer the summit, the government had “settled for the UN man” to satisfy demands from the

¹³⁶ Africa News, “Nigeria: Hopes as ‘45 Wise Men’ Get Set to Mend N-Delta,” *Vanguard Newspaper*, October 12, 2008, accessed October 5, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21>.

¹³⁷ The Punch, “Niger Delta Summit: Nigeria asks UN for Gambari,” *The Punch Newspaper*, April 26, 2008, accessed July 6, 2010, <http://www.punchng.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art20080426154667>.

Delta.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, Delta leaders criticized him on the grounds that he was from one of the country's major ethnic groups (Yoruba) and therefore presumed biased, insisting the chairman be from the Delta if he were to be a Nigerian.¹³⁹ The Nigerian Labor Congress (NLC) Union, a dominant national political pressure group, opposed Gambari's leadership on the grounds that he lacked credibility as a result of having defending Saro Wiiwa's execution when he was UN ambassador in 1995.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, NDTLA, along with other groups, insisted that the summit was unnecessary and the government should simply review the recommendations of earlier committees (from Willink to the NPRC) and select the most feasible ones for implementation.¹⁴¹ MEND claimed that the summit was a 'jamboree' that was bound to fail.¹⁴² The Yar' Adua government, like Obsanjo's government before it, was immobilized by these pressures. After drafting a program to convene the Summit, Gambari withdrew in the face of opposition that promised to derail the Summit without more forceful government action.¹⁴³ The government then postponed the Summit in deference to Delta political leaders request for discussions prior to appointment of a new chairman. There was a lull that dragged on for a year before the government finally cancelled the Summit on 16 July 2008 in response to continuing opposition from pressure groups. Once again government's lack of insulation from pressure groups undermined its ability to implement its civic COIN strategy.

¹³⁸ Adedola Tokunbo, "Niger Delta Summit – Jonathan Explains Choice of Gambari," *This Day*, July 15, 2008, *All Africa*, accessed July 6, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807150372.html>.

¹³⁹ Bosen and Li Huailin, "Vandalism Rampant Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," *China View*, July 12, 2008, accessed July 6, 2010, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-07/12/content_8535454.htm.

¹⁴⁰ Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," *International Crisis Group*, Africa Briefing No.60, April 30, 2009, accessed November 24, 2010, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/west-africa/nigeria/B060>, 6.

¹⁴¹ Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 6; Mudiaga Affe, "Niger Delta the New Path to Peace," *The Punch Newspaper*, August 25, 2008, accessed September 26, 2010, <http://www.punchng.com/Article2 Print.aspx?theartic=Art20080825193940>.

¹⁴² Ibanga Isine, "Niger Delta Summit is Diversionary - MEND," *The Punch Newspaper*, July 6, 2008, accessed September 26, 2010, <http://www.punchng.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art200807060561959>.

¹⁴³ Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 7.

2. Technical Committee

Having abandoned its own initiative, the Yar'Adua administration pursued the Delta groups' preferred alternative. In September 2008, it established the Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC) with the task of collating reports and recommendations from all previous committees.¹⁴⁴ Using these reports the Committee was to provide the government a summary of short, medium, and long term initiatives to bring peace, stability, and development to the region.¹⁴⁵ The Committee's 45 members were drawn exclusively and equally from the nine states of the Niger Delta, again in compliance with demands of MEND, MOSOP, and NDTLA.¹⁴⁶ MOSOP President Ledum Mitee was appointed as chairman, and leading Delta civil society activist Nkoyo Toyo as secretary of the Committee. Vice President Jonathan (also a Delta indigene) publicly pledged that the committee's recommendations would be seriously considered. NDTC produced a set of recommendations, including amnesty for militants who would agree to demobilization, disarmament and rehabilitation within six months, increased allocation of oil revenue to 25 percent and provision of infrastructure, social welfare services, regional development, and human capital development. Although, some of the report's recommendations were overly ambitious (like unconditional bail of Henry Okah and provision of 5,000 mega watts to the region by 2010), there were key ones such as amnesty, Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation (DDR), and increased revenue derivation that focused

¹⁴⁴ Ogbeifun Louis Brown, "Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC) and the Peace Process," accessed July 8, 2010, <http://louisbrownogbeifun.com/?p=50>.

¹⁴⁵ Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 7.

¹⁴⁶ Kalu Idika Kalu, "Niger Delta Technical Committee Members – Who Are They?," *This Day*, September 5, 2008, *allAfrica.com*, accessed July 8, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200809050950.html>; Niger Delta youth organizations including IYC and Isoko National Youth Movement (INYM) now complained that NDTC's composition did not give fair representation to Delta youth, who suffered the worst impact of the region's predicament; Ogbeifun Louis Brown, "Niger Delta Technical Committee (NDTC) and the Peace Process."

on the challenges of resolving the unrest and also met the major Niger Delta demands. If these three recommendations had been accepted by the government NDTC would likely have had a positive impact on the crisis.¹⁴⁷

However, political groups from outside the Niger Delta, especially from the North and West, again quietly warned that implementation would cause a reaction in other regions that could create problems bigger than the Niger Delta crisis.¹⁴⁸ Meanwhile, MEND criticized the report for being too cautious about accommodating the northern elites, and thus failing to address vital issues such as the control of resources by the central government under fiscal federalism.¹⁴⁹ Some civic organizations, including the Conference of Ethnic Nationalities of Niger Delta (CENND), also claimed that the report failed to address aspirations of ethnic nationalities of the region (i.e., equity, fairness, and justice), maintaining demands for 50 percent revenue allocation and eventual full control of resources with payment of appropriate taxes to the government.¹⁵⁰ Other Delta civic groups, including NDTLA and NDCSC supported NDTC recommendations, recognizing their potential to improve the situation in the region. However, the government again failed to proceed with implementation, despite support from some civics. Even though it now had some civic allies, it was still immobilized by competing demands of more politically influential groups inside and outside the Delta, demonstrating that it lacked the autonomy to step back from these pressures and govern. Yar'Adua caved on creating the

¹⁴⁷ Okey Ndiribe, "Ahead Vanguard's Post – Amnesty Dialogue – Highlights of Niger Delta Technical Committee Report," *Vanguard*, March 11, 2010, accessed September 26, 2010, <http://w3.nexis.com/new/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21>; "Report of the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta," November 2008, accessed July 8, 2010, <http://www.stakeholderdemocracy.org/uploads/Other%20publications/Nigeriareport.pdf>, 56–91.

¹⁴⁸ "Crisis Group Interview, official of Arewa Consultative Forum, Kaduna, March 28, 2009," in Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 9.

¹⁴⁹ Fiscal federalism has been an obstacle to Delta pressure groups' demands for resource control because according to the Nigerian constitution fiscal federalism gives full control of mineral resources to the central government and authorizes the central government to distribute revenue acquired from the resources the way it deems fit. MEND opposed fiscal federalism because it was of the opinion that it was created to suit military regimes and was placed in the 1999 constitution by a military regime; Crisis Group correspondence, Jomo Gbomo, MEND, 20 February 2009, in Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta"; Peter Ozo-Eson, "Fiscal Federalism: Theories, Issues, and Perspectives," *Daily Independent*, August 29, 2005, accessed November 8, 2010, <http://www.dawodu.com/eson1.htm>.

¹⁵⁰ Statement by the steering committee of CENND at the end of its meeting in Uzere, Delta State, December 17, 2008, in Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 9.

Committee as the Delta groups wanted it, but did not carry through and accept the recommendations because his government was unwilling to confront more daunting opposition by pressure groups from Northern (Arewa Consultative Forum) and Western (Afenifere) parts of the country, as well as Delta insurgents, whose interests were in maintaining disorder thus responded by not implementing NDTC recommendations. When the NDTC report was submitted to the government on 1 December 2008,¹⁵¹ President Yar'Adua announced that "acceptable" recommendations would be identified and implemented.¹⁵² After two months of inaction, prominent members of the NDTC, including Tony I. Uranta, and concerned elders of the region under Niger Delta Elders Forum (NDEF) demanded government action on the report.¹⁵³ In response, a special advisor to the Vice President disclosed that yet another committee had been convened to study the recommendations of the NDTC.¹⁵⁴ In March 2009, the President officially announced the creation of the new committee.¹⁵⁵ Since then no decision has been taken on the NDTC report, and nothing has been said about the new committee. The government made these announcements to ease tension and stall the issue because, like the Obasanjo government before it, it cannot come up with a COIN policy that satisfies all pressure groups and is unable or unwilling to adopt a policy that does not satisfy everyone. Once again, the government was unable to insulate its COIN strategy from pressure groups and eventually responded by failing to implement NDTC recommendations.

3. Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs

In an effort to address environmental degradation and unemployment, presumed root causes of insurgency, the Yar'adua administration created the Ministry of Niger

¹⁵¹ Vanguard Newspaper, "Niger Delta Technical Committee Submits Report Tomorrow," *Vanguard*, November 30, 2008, accessed September 26, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200812011074.html>.

¹⁵² Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 10.

¹⁵³ Orivri Hope Afoke, "FG Wanted Niger Delta Committee to Fail," *Nigerian Compass Newspaper* January 6, 2009, accessed July 9, 2010, <http://www.compassnewspaper.com/NG/index.php>.

¹⁵⁴ Reuters Alert Net, "Timeline of Unrest in Niger Delta Region," *Reuters*, accessed February 5, 2010, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenewsdesk/IRIN/>, 3.

¹⁵⁵ Reuters Alert Net, "Timeline of Unrest in Niger Delta Region," 2.

Delta Affairs (MNDA) in September 2008. MNDA was designed to undertake youth empowerment initiatives, and tackle the challenges of infrastructural development and environmental protection in the region by providing economic growth, developmental projects (including roads, electricity, and other utilities) addressing communities' peculiar needs and enhancing environmental preservation for the developmental transformation of the Niger Delta.¹⁵⁶ NDDC, which was initially an independent freestanding organization, was now placed under MNDA as one of its parastatals.¹⁵⁷ Niger Delta indigene Ufot Ekaette was appointed Minister.

Although it is too soon to evaluate the efficaciousness of MNDA, the early evidence suggests that it too is highly susceptible to pressure group demands. Soon after being appointment minister, Ekaette went round the nine states of the Delta to discuss and seek views of various political groups.¹⁵⁸ This 'consultative approach' was intended to create opportunities for Delta groups to influence policy. However, the influence that was exerted was again sectional rather than substantive. MEND and NDPVF demanded that greater part of MNDA contracts be awarded exclusively to Niger Delta companies. In a follow up in December 2009, a group of ex-militant commanders (that accepted amnesty see below) led by Chief Government Ekpomukpolo (Tompolo) made similar demands to Vice President Jonathan, threatening to disrupt the operations of non-indigenous companies already in the region if the demands were not met.¹⁵⁹ The government caved in to this pressure, and MNDA started awarding most contracts to Niger Delta companies, which are often less qualified than those outside the region.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ World Resources Institute, "Niger Delta Development Master Plan," *WRI Special Projects*, accessed September 28, 2010, <http://projects.wri.org/sd-pams-database/nigeria/niger-delta-development-master-plan>.

¹⁵⁷ Taiwo Juliana, "Yar'Adua Creates Ministry of Niger Delta," *This Day*, September 11, 2008, accessed July 9, 2010, <http://all africa.com/stories/200809110015.html>.

¹⁵⁸ Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 11.

¹⁵⁹ Odiegwu Mike, "Niger Delta Ministry Contract Row Deepens," *Punch Nigeria*, December 23, 2009, accessed July 9, 2010, <http://punchng.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art200912235192832>.

¹⁶⁰ Ugeh Patrick, "Niger Delta Plans IPPs, Rail Projects," *This Day*, May 25, 2009, accessed November 9, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200905250207.html>.

4. Amnesty

The last civil engagement measure adopted by the Yar'Adua government was the offer of amnesty to militants who would surrender their arms and cease participation in violence and the release of militant leaders from prison.¹⁶¹ The president's announcement of the amnesty/release to the national executive of his ruling PDP in April 2009 was accompanied by another announcement: that the government was purchasing new equipment for the security forces operating in the Delta region to enable the military fight the militants more effectively. In August, amnesty along with training and employment assistance was officially offered to Niger Delta militants willing to disarm.¹⁶² MEND agreed to take part in the amnesty only if its leader Henry Okah was released from jail, development and revenue allocation issues were resolved, and a well coordinated peace arrangement was set up under the supervision of a respected international mediator.¹⁶³ Government agreed to negotiate on these issues and Okah accepted amnesty and was released in July 2009, after which he was invited for dialogue with government officials on regional development. MEND leader Ebikabowei Victor Ben also accepted the amnesty offer after Okah was released.¹⁶⁴ Other insurgent leaders, including Jonjon Oyeinfe of IYC, demanded withdrawal of military forces as part of the amnesty, claiming to fear that they and their forces would be killed by the military if they disarmed while JTF was deployed in the region.¹⁶⁵ At the end of the disarmament exercise in October 2009, over 20,000 insurgents had accepted the amnesty offer, although only 2,760 arms and 18 gun boats had been collected. The ratio of arms collected to militants surrendered

¹⁶¹ Ahamefula Ogbu, "MEND Hails Presidential Meeting With 'Aaron Team'."

¹⁶² Reuters Alert Net, "Timeline of Unrest in Niger Delta Region," 1.

¹⁶³ Policy Briefing, "Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta," 13.

¹⁶⁴ Rice Xan, "Nigeria Begins Amnesty for Niger Delta," *The Guardian*, August 6, 2009, accessed July 10, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/aug/06/niger-delta-militants-amnesty-launched>; Olukoya Sam, "Slow Start for Niger Delta Amnesty," *IPS*, accessed July 10, 2010, <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48029>.

¹⁶⁵ Abubakar Kaura Abdullahi, "Nigeria Offers Militants Amnesty," *BBC News Nigeria*, accessed July 10, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/aug/06/niger-delta-militants-amnesty-launched>; Fabi Randy, "Niger Delta Amnesty Plans hangs in Balance," *Mail & Guardian News*, September 11, 2009, accessed July 10, 2010, <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-09-11-niger-delta-amnesty-plan-hangs-in-balance>.

suggests that arms were maintained, or left with others who did not disarm. Media reports suggest that the vast majority of militants including those that showed up for amnesty program were still fully armed. The insurgency spiked immediately after the amnesty program, suggesting that the acceptance of the offer was a pragmatic move to collect the payment of 65,000 Naira (\$432) a month for three months (during rehabilitation, August 6 to October 4, 2009) offered by the government before returning to violence.¹⁶⁶ During the disarmament period, MEND continued operations, attacking pipelines at Billie/Krakama while Russian President Medvedev was visiting Nigeria, to discourage his investment in them.¹⁶⁷ In response to these developments, the government decided to keep security forces in the Delta. Complying with MEND's demands to release their leader (Henry Okah) before reaching an agreement and completing disarmament enabled them to abandon the amnesty program and continue insurgency without any loss. Government's over-responsiveness to insurgent groups' demand undermined its COIN strategy.

E. CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted how the civilian administration initially started on the same footing as the military regime it took over from in addressing the Niger Delta crisis, however, was more sensitive to political pressure than its predecessors and thus adopted more diplomatic strategies while reducing the military ones within the first year of democratic rule. Security forces were less engaged in COIN operations during this period than previously because elected governments generally gave more emphasis to civil engagement, and were more responsive to pressure group demands to restrain the application of force. However, the inability of the government to manage its own response to competing demands by pressure groups inside and outside the Delta

¹⁶⁶ Wale Oladepo, "Amnesty: As Ex-militants Begin a New Phase of Life," *The Nation*, March 7, 2010, accessed October 23, 2010, <http://thenationonline.net/web3/news/4353.html>; Abiodun Adelaja, Adekunle Adesuji and Sylvester, "Amnesty: 8,299 Militants Registered," *Daily Champion*, October 9, 2009, accessed October 23, 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910090504.html>; Tume Ahemba, "Nigeria Oil Militants Disarm Slowly, Government Hopeful," *Reuters*, August 20, 2009, accessed November 17, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSLK619020>.

¹⁶⁷ Abubakar Kaura Abdullahi, "Nigeria Offers Militants Amnesty."

undermined its civil and military COIN initiatives. The government lacked the capability of insulating itself from pressure group demands thus continued adjusting, deferring, and introducing new COIN initiatives and strategies while their recommendations were not being implemented because it was trying to satisfy all groups. Similarly, governments over-responded to complaints against security forces' COIN operations by constraining their operations in the Delta region making them even less effective. As a result no tangible peace effort was made by the democratic governments (1999–2009), which therefore failed to resolve the Niger Delta problem.

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IV. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws together insights from the analysis of the military and democratic regimes on how political pressure has affected the design and implementation of strategies to resolve the Niger Delta crisis. The chapter also proffers recommendations on how the Nigerian government can insulate itself from such pressures that interfere with its strategic design and implementation capabilities in order to enable a successful COIN strategy under democratic regimes, and thus the way forward in resolving the Niger Delta conflict.

B. SECURITY AGENCY ENGAGEMENTS

The main thrust used in addressing the Niger Delta agitation during military regimes as would be expected was an overly high non-diplomatic COIN strategy. Most military dictatorships often confront insurgency with force to squelch it, because they have a culture that is unresponsive to civilian demands. Pertinent to this, Nigerian military regimes also had limited tolerance to pressure groups, then again the few pressure groups that existed were apprehensive in challenging these autocratic governments; groups like NDTLA, Delta Oil Producing Communities Association (DOPCA), and SMF never challenged any of the regimes. This situation enabled the government to use more of non-diplomatic COIN strategies in suppressing agitation while ignoring the few pressure groups' that were able to make demands. The application of force was too much, and not balanced by civil engagements which enabled security forces mainly the NPF and military to commit human rights abuses while conducting COIN operations in the region. This was due to absence of pressure groups capable of challenging military regimes and compelling them to control their security forces during COIN operations; the few groups that tried, such as HRW, MOSOP, and IYC were ignored. The government remained impervious to these community pressure groups, which subsequently encouraged more abuse. The Nigerian Armed Forces who were

initially deployed as RSISTF in the Delta region to fill in for NPF ineffectiveness also failed to resolve the crisis. Owing to their over repressive COIN operations and absence of dominant political pressure groups that can compel the government to reduce military and adopt more civil COIN strategies, the effect of the repressive strategy on the perceptions and behaviors of the people in the region was insignificant. Because the military governments were insensitive to pressure groups' who identified and stressed on these abuses and subsequently demanded a check on RSISTF excesses by the Nigerian government, security forces were never checked.

Unlike the military regimes period where the government ignored complaints on security forces' brutality and human rights abuses, similar complaints from now more influential pressure groups, were consistently responded to by democratic governments (1999–2009). However, the response was so much that the security forces became over constrained to a level that they could not be effective in COIN operations. Consequently, security forces COIN strategies failed in the two periods however, due to different reasons. The military governments allowed too little input from civil society while the democratic governments allowed too much.

C. CIVIL ENGAGEMENTS

Throughout Military regimes' period, only two diplomatic COIN strategies were adopted (state creation and OMPADEC) while the democratic regimes adopted more than six initiatives within the same time frame. Because military regimes ignored Delta pressure groups' agitation, the civic COIN strategies they employed were created in isolation from Delta people. Strategies were therefore designed to address what the military governments believed were the key issues instead of addressing what the Delta populace considered to be central to their agitation such as environmental degradation, higher percentage of oil revenue, and marginalization. Consequently, military governments, like their democratic counterparts, generated social pressures with their attempt to use material 'carrots' and then caving into them afterwards. Consequently, state creation was used by military regimes as a COIN strategy because it comes with employment, developmental tools, and federal revenue allocation, however, it failed to

resolve the crisis because it increased awareness of federal revenue allocation formula causing rise in demand for state creation and agitation for local control of resources within the Delta region. Furthermore, smaller ethnic communities within new states felt marginalized by the majority ethnic groups and therefore they also started demanding for their own states. Consequently, as more states were created in 1996 in addition to those created in 1991, instead of quenching agitation, it further reinforced local ethnic, cultural, and political identities.

OMPADEC was established in July 1992 and was maintained until end of military period in 1999. Most of the complaints against OMPADEC and its authoritarian leadership style was mainly due to absence of pressure groups capable of compelling the government to encourage engagement and consultation between OMPADEC and the local populace of the Niger Delta on development requirements of the region. In addition, lack of effective pressure groups that would have acted as an oversight on OMPADEC permitted a particular kind of corruption in the program. Because of military governments' insensitivity to Niger Delta civic groups' demands, OMPADEC operated without consulting with the Delta populace on prioritizing its projects, its leadership was able to pursue individual interests by awarding contracts to the highest bidder (company), earmarking projects at preferred areas. This affected OMPADEC's effectiveness because the Niger Delta populace felt OMPADEC was not addressing their immediate problems since the government ignored them and executed its projects the way it deemed fit without consulting the Delta people, thus did not have much impact in addressing grievances. Towards the end of the military regime some reasonable modifications were made to OMPADEC by Abdulsami's administration in an effort to resolve the Delta agitation but due to the short time the administration had, nothing was achieved.

Contrary to this, was the case during civil regimes, political pressures did not only influence projects to be executed in the region, but also compelled the leadership to award majority of the contracts to Niger Delta indigenous companies who were not always as efficient as other companies outside the Niger Delta, thus made democratic governments' COIN strategies less effective because they could not isolate the design and implementation of the strategies from pressure group interference. However, the

commonality between the two periods is that the tendency toward abuse was always there, although exacerbated by the over-responsiveness of the democratic regimes, thus suggest that state weakness affects implementation of strategies in both cases. Military regimes employed only two diplomatic COIN strategies and because they were so insensitive to pressure groups demands, the strategies adopted had limited likelihood of addressing the Niger Delta question because the governments did not consult with the Niger Delta people during design of the strategies thus did not address what the local populace considered as vital issues and need to be addressed immediately. This eventually resulted into the military regimes relying on mostly non-diplomatic COIN strategies to address the Niger Delta question which instead of quenching the crisis ended up blowing it into greater dimensions.

After transiting to democracy in 1999, the Obasanjo government (1999–2007) responded to pressure group activity much more than the military regimes, which was evident from the increase in varieties of diplomatic efforts, initiatives, and strategies adopted with reduced military COIN strategies. This was the outcome of influence of pressure groups that due to democratic liberalization were now capable of challenging the government on strategies it used in addressing the Niger Delta problem and also the increased sensitivity of democratic governments to pressure groups which made them more willing to satisfy their demands. However, in an effort to satisfy all parties involved, democratic governments became over responsive to a level that they could no longer insulate its own COIN strategies' design and implementation from pressure group interference thereby making the strategies less ineffective. Public outcry from political, civil, and ethnic pressure groups all over the country against NPRC ended up preventing any of NPRC's recommendations to be adopted. The Nigerian government was unable to implement its own COIN strategy because it was not willing to go against the interest of any pressure group. Therefore, the government over responded to pressure groups' demands by making changes to NPRC's composition which undermined the design of the strategy, and drove the process by which everyone rejected it, then the government again bowed to popular pressure and over responded by abandoning NPRC's recommendations. Similarly, opposition to NDDC by prominent Delta pressure groups

encouraged Niger Delta state governments to shy away from contributing their own quota to NDDC because they were unwilling face possible challenges from these political groups, if they support an initiative that has been condemned by the groups. In the long run failure of state governments to contribute their own quota undermined the effectiveness of NDDC, because it lacked the required funds to carry out its tasks. The Yar'Adua administration (2007–2009) introduced other new diplomatic strategies including the Delta Summit, NDTC, and the Amnesty program. However, by the time Yar'Adua's administration took over, pressure groups had become more influential and politically relevant. Insurgency level was also high because attacks on oil installations, oil companies, military locations, kidnappings, and oil theft were concurrently ongoing at this period (Appendix B, Table 11 timeline). These pressure groups interfered with government strategic implementation just because they did not believe it was going to work. They were able to rally against its implementation and because the government was incapable of insulating its own COIN strategies from pressure group interference, the situation again resulted into dissolution of Delta Summit and formation of a flawed strategy the NDTC that is least likely to resolve anything. Thus, it also ended up like the earlier strategies; its implementation was interfered by pressure groups outside the Niger Delta because the government responded to their demands by failing to adopt any of its recommendations.

The Amnesty offer which was the last diplomatic COIN strategy undertaken by Yar'Adua administration was not fully accepted by insurgent groups most especially MEND. Opposition was mainly from insurgent leadership because they were not ready to lose their forces they used to accrue funds through oil theft and kidnappings. Due to existing distrust between the two parties (government and insurgents), insurgent leadership was able to convince many of their forces not to disarm using government's failure to withdraw JTF as a threat to what could happen to them if they disarm. Suspicion was further intensified when MEND refused to accept amnesty and disarm after the government responded and complied with their terms of accepting amnesty by releasing their leader Henry Okah. The slow and unimpressive disarmament process of the amnesty program also confirmed the success of interference of the amnesty offer by

insurgent groups' leadership; many remained armed. Yar'Adua government's premature over-responsiveness in complying with MEND's demands (releasing their leader) before commencement of amnesty program gave the group the advantage they needed, thus continued insurgency, which eventually sabotaged the government's COIN strategy. Furthermore, Yar'Adua's medical evacuation out of the country for more than three months further complicated the problems militating the amnesty program. Subsequently, as early as January 2010 groups like MEND returned to insurgency, attacking oil installations violating the amnesty cease fire agreement, few weeks later other insurgent groups followed suit.

Unlike the military period, pressure groups turned out to be very effective during the democratic regimes because the democratic governments were more sensitive to their demands, and as a result adopted high levels of diplomatic COIN strategies while maintaining a very low level of military COIN strategies. Pressure groups were able to influence state policies mainly because it is a democratic government, which like most democratic regimes is trying to satisfy everyone in order to secure votes. This situation enabled pressure groups to stall government efforts in taking decisive action in resolving the conflict at both state and national levels by interfering with design and implementation of governments' own strategies.

Due to the reasons highlighted above, the Nigerian government has been unable to contain and eliminate this threat to its vital economic and security interest to date. The government has adopted some of the *strategic design* and *strategic implementation* counterinsurgency models explained in the literature review however, because little attention has been paid to the influence of political pressure to these strategies they turned out to be ineffective, thus proving the hypothesis of the study that the absence of political pressure during the military regime (1990–1999) led to an overly aggressive military response, while during the democratic regime (1999–2009) political pressure at local, state and national level has led to an overly cautious military response. Therefore, the major challenge of the Nigerian government now is how to improve the effectiveness of

these strategies by finding the correct proportion of sticks and carrots that will convince the Niger Delta populace to stop supporting insurgency and become committed to finding a permanent way of resolving the crisis.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigerian democratic governments have been over-responsive to pressure group demands because it is trying to accommodate everyone and therefore have not been able to insulate its COIN strategies from pressure group interference that make the strategies ineffective. Democratic dispensation offers the best possible situation for adopting a successful COIN strategy; however, the government will have to find a way of listening to all input from civil society, and then design and implement its own policy without trying to accommodate everybody or trying to avoid going against the interest of everyone. Engaging Delta groups in a sustained transparent dialogue is crucial to the Delta dilemma possibly with the objective of breaking up the pressure group interference. This can be achieved by bringing together genuine civic groups both within and outside the Niger Delta to resolve issues while empowering them to counter adverse influence of sectional/insurgent interests that are likely to interrupt government's COIN strategies. Allowing genuine civic groups to participate in the design and implementation of government strategies will help expose the negativity of pressure group interference on government strategies, furthermore, if supported by the government these civic groups could be used to counter groups against government strategies by forming a pro-government strategies group that would press against sectional/insurgent group interference. Presence of opposing pressure groups who are pro effective strategies and against the interference could help in balancing the pressure thus allow the government to implement effective strategies whether civil or military engagements or a mixture of both, for example exploiting the situation where genuine pressure groups (NDCSC and NDTLA) supported NDTC. This will help protect government COIN strategies from pressure group interference.

To earn public confidence, security agencies should devote greater attention to improving its image in order to elicit better cooperation from the Niger Delta citizenry. Since often times small problems can be blown up into major human rights abuse issues that usually attract government over responsiveness (constraining security forces) that renders them ineffective, security agencies would benefit by maintaining its own capability to educate the public about what it is doing, why, and how; including what it is doing to discipline abusers amongst its personnel and how citizens can report abuse committed by members of security forces. Furthermore, there should be more vigorous, sophisticated and sustained public relations campaign with a view to projecting the force more positively and with greater integrity in the public eye. All security forces especially the police would require more professional training when conducting their operations especially on political and humanitarian issues to avoid of human rights abuses. Although non-diplomatic COIN strategies are not likely to resolve the crisis, they will still be required to counter insurgent groups that have become more inclined to criminality than grievances and are therefore not likely to accept any meaningful/realistic solution. However, for other insurgent and agitating groups that have legitimate grievances, diplomatic strategies could be designed and implemented while preventing any political interference or the already existing strategies could be reformed by expelling political issues highlighted in this study which made their design and implementation deficient. This will increase likelihood of resolving the Niger Delta question within a short time.

The Nigerian Federal Government should as much as possible avoid being too responsive to political pressures and be able to stand up to political demands by isolating its COIN strategies from their impact. It should try to contain the overbearing influence of pressure groups by restricting its response to only legitimate, positive, and realistic demands from such groups that will enhance its strategies rather than make them obsolete. While implementing its strategies, adopting the practice of true federalism, spreading power and responsibilities down to state and local government levels in the Niger Delta would also assist the government in successfully resolving the crisis. This could be done by creating bipartisan commissions at state and local government levels in the region or by placing already existing Delta state governments' initiatives such as the

Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (DESOPADEC) and Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA)¹⁶⁸ under central government strategies. In this way responsibility will be spread, federal government will have reduced pressure from sectional groups against its own strategies, and thus will be able to implement the strategies without fear of being blamed for any issues or having to satisfy everyone since states will be left to resolve such issues with their individual local pressure groups. Furthermore, impact of opposing pressure groups on government strategies could be reduced by ensuring bureaucrats form larger part of the composition of federal government agencies executing the COIN strategies. Since bureaucratic cadre is a group that is more inherently insulated from political pressure, establishing agencies composed of mainly professional civil servants rather than interest group representatives will isolate government COIN strategies from political interference and lead to effective decisions that the government can accept and then blame the bureaucrats when responding to any pressures against such decisions. The newly created MNDA provides a good opportunity for adopting these recommendations. State and local government initiatives could be placed under the ministry similar to how NDDC was made one of the ministry's parastatals, while ensuring staff are mainly composed of bureaucrats, and then federal government can implement its strategies via the ministry, through state and local government initiatives in the Niger Delta region. However, the government will need to spell out the relationship between NDDC, MNDA, local, state, and other actors so that all their efforts can be harmonized and organized towards one direction for efficiency and to reduce interference of pressures groups. This will help bring the ministry back on a better track for resolving the crisis with limited pressure on federal government design and implementation its own COIN strategies.

Politics in Nigeria is still at its prime, the democratic process is not yet an ideal democracy, and just like anywhere politics in Nigeria requires considerable amount of funding; wealth and power has become distinct in the country's political dimension,

¹⁶⁸ Chatham House, "State Government Solutions to the Niger Delta Troubles: Key Challenges, Needs and Strategies," Meeting Summary, *Chatham House*, February 26, 2009, accessed November 20, 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13602_260209nigerdelta.pdf; Emma Amaize, "DESOPADEC to Commission N10.2bn Projects," *Vanguard*, November 25, 2009, accessed November 20, 2010, http://tribunenrworld.com/DESOPADEC_to_commission_N10_2bn_projects-2517006.htm.

therefore politicians seek for funds from all sources including illegal activities and political sponsors. These funds are used to rig elections and buy support of militias especially in the Delta region who are also employed as political thugs. This trend of politics is today embedded in Nigerian politics; unfortunately democratization has led to few controls on corruption. Therefore, it has become imperative to end Niger Delta politicians/insurgent relationship that is helping to fuel the Delta crisis since politicians place pressure on government's COIN strategies to protect their allies (insurgents). Measures have to be taken that would prevent all forms of illegal political gains. Constitutional amendment to remove immunity to political office holders such as president, vice president and state governors and empowering anti corruption bodies such as Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to investigate political office holders both at local, state and national levels will likely eliminate illegal financial benefits from political offices, make politicians more weary of their actions, and become more cautious on interfering with strategic decisions in the Niger Delta based on individual or group interests. If politicians cannot buy office, they will not support militias and if they cannot benefit financially from holding office, then the office is less valuable, and they will not go to such lengths to attain and keep it by interfering with government COIN strategies that do not favor the insurgents they often rely on for votes and countering political opponents during elections.

The present democratic government could also respond to pressures against its strategies by involving third parties like the UN or eminent persons from different countries to negotiate with militant and pressure groups' leaders. This would demonstrate to the Delta populace government's readiness to address the Niger Delta question on a neutral ground without favor to any pressure group from any part of the country. In addition, it will also assist in isolating government COIN strategies from pressure groups because persons from outside the country are less likely to be influenced by any pressure group within Nigeria.

Finally, the Nigerian Senate and National House of Assembly should also be involved in all arrangements so that they can monitor the peace process in the Niger Delta. Unlike NDTC that was conducted without any representative from the National

House of Assembly, members of senate and house of assembly should participate in government COIN initiatives so that as pressures groups start condemning the initiatives and making demands that will evidently reduce its effectiveness if responded to by government, they will be able to appreciate how these groups interfere with government COIN strategies. This will hopefully expose the negative impact of pressure groups on government COIN strategies to fellow politicians at the national level and would probably initiate a political counter action against pressure groups interference that could result to protecting and strengthening the effectiveness of government strategies.

The Nigerian democratic government can effectively resolve the Niger Delta crisis but will have to balance its diplomatic and non-diplomatic COIN strategies to a more moderate level that is just right. The study revealed how military regimes' COIN strategies failed to resolve the Niger Delta crisis because they were insensitive to Delta pressure groups ignoring their demands and as result implemented overly high military engagements with low civil/diplomatic engagements. In the same vein, democratic regimes' COIN strategies also failed however, the opposite was the reason for their failure, they were too sensitive to pressure group demands and thus adopted high civil engagements with low military engagements. Both regimes failed as a result of imbalance of strategies they adopted. Therefore, since a blend of high military with low civil engagement failed, and low military with high military engagement also failed, the study recommends a balanced approach; a moderate civil with moderate military engagement to successfully address the Niger Delta question. One way of doing this is relaxing some of the constraints placed by democratic government on its security forces that have made them ineffective, similar to what was done during "Operation Restore Hope" when security forces proved to be effective if not over constrained. In addition, democratic governments will also need to provide the correct level of autonomy on its civil COIN strategies that would enable the government insulate their design and implementation from pressure group interference.

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APPENDIX A

Table 2. Historical Value of One U.S Dollar to the Nigerian Naira¹⁶⁹

Date	Naira per US \$	Date	Naira per US \$
1972	0.658	1991	8.04
1973	0.658	1992	9.91
1974	0.63	1993	17.30
1975	0.616	1994	22.33
1976	0.62	1995	21.89
1977	0.647	1996	21.89
1978	0.606	1997	21.89
1979	0.596	1998	21.89
1980	0.550	1999	21.89
1981	0.61	2000	85.98
1982	0.673	2001	99-106
1983	0.724	2002	109-113
1984	0.765	2003	114-127
1985	0.894	2004	127-130
1986	2.02	2005	132-136
1987	4.02	2006	128.50-131.80
1988	4.54	2007	120-125
1989	7.39	2008	115.50-120
1990	7.39	2009	145-171

¹⁶⁹ Timeline Results for Naira Dollar Exchange Rate History 1970–2010, accessed 23 August 2010, <http://www.google.com/search?q=naira+dollar+exchange+rate+history>.

Table 3. Timeline of the Ogoni Conflict¹⁷⁰

1993 January 4: 300,000 Ogoni protest against Shell Oil activities and the environmental destruction of Ogoni land. February 15-16: Shell International advisors meet with the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) in London and the Hague to consider strategies for countering the "possibility that internationally organized protest could develop" over Shell's activities in Ogoni. April 18: Ken Saro-Wiwa, chairman of the resistance group "Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)," is held by the Nigerian State Security Service at Port Harcourt Airport for 16 hours without charges, is released, but then arrested 5 days later. April 30: Construction work on Shell's Rumuekpe-Bomu Pipeline destroys freshly planted Ogoni farmland sparking a peaceful demonstration of approximately 10,000 Ogoni villagers. Nigerian Federal government soldiers open fire on the crowd of demonstrators, wounding at least 10. May 1: Mass demonstrations along Bori Road against the pipeline construction continue. Shell decides to withdraw American workers and equipment. May 3: Agbarator Otu is shot and killed by members of the Nigerian military while protesting work on the pipeline at Nonwa. May 16: Mr. Saro-Wiwa has his passport seized while trying to leave for London. May 19: Amnesty International issues an Urgent Action concerning the extra-judicial killing of Mr. Otu and the Nigerian government's use of force against peaceful Ogoni protests. May 24: Mr. Saro-Wiwa begins a European tour and succeeds in drawing attention to the struggle of the Ogoni people. June 12: Presidential elections are boycotted by the Ogoni. A ruptured pipeline begins to spray oil in Bunu Tai, Ogoni land. Forty days later, the flow is yet to be stopped. Mr. Saro-Wiwa is prevented from travelling to the UN conference in Vienna by Nigerian SSS, and his passport is seized. June 21: Mr. Saro-Wiwa and other MOSOP officials are arrested. June 22: Ogoni people march in Bori, in protest against MOSOP arrests. In reaction, Federal government soldiers are moved from Port Harcourt and stationed in Bori. Indiscriminate beatings and arrests of Ogoni people by 'heavy[ly] armed and unfriendly Nigerian soldiers and police' are frequent. June 30: Amnesty International issues a Fast Action concerning Mr. Saro-Wiwa. July 9: At least 60 Ogoni people are killed by Andoni when arriving back from the Cameroon Republic by boat. This 'incident' marks the beginning of Ogoni-Andoni violence. Mr. Saro-Wiwa is moved to a hospital and later released on bail, but charges still stand. August 5: Kaa is the first village attacked in the Andoni-Ogoni conflict, resulting in 33 deaths and 8,000 refugees. Over the coming months, similar incidents occur in over 20 other villages. MOSOP accuses Shell of being behind the Andoni-Ogoni violence. August 31: MOSOP leaders are summoned to Abuja for a meeting with the Interim government, installed by former head of state Babangida after the annulment of the June 12 election results. This is the first time that the Nigerian government officially discussed the situation in Ogoniland with MOSOP. Early September: Mr. Saro-Wiwa, Senator Birabi, and representatives of the Rivers State Security Council visit the destroyed village of Kaa and urge Governor Ada George to take measures to curb Andoni-Ogoni violence. Meetings are arranged between Andoni and Ogoni

¹⁷⁰ *ICE Case Studies*, Case Number: 64, Case Mnemonic: OGONIOIL, Case Name: "Ogoni and Nigeria conflict over Oil," <http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/ogonioil.htm>, accessed 16 September 2010.

leaders and government representatives. This leads to the creation of a Peace Committee, headed by Professor Claude Ake.

September 15: General Sani Abacha promises Mr. Saro-Wiwa that Federal troops will be sent to Ogoniland to help curb Andoni-Ogoni violence.

October 6: A Peace Agreement is signed concerning the Ogoni-Andoni troubles, but without the signature of Mr. Saro-Wiwa, or the 'consultation of the communities involved.'

October 17: An oil spill at Korokoro oil fields in Ogoni, operated by Shell. Baritonle Kpormon is shot dead at a checkpoint in Bori by a Federal soldier who has been sent to ensure peace at the Ogoni-Andoni border; however Bori is not at the border. A MOSOP Steering Committee meeting accepts the Peace Agreement but for two paragraphs, and calls for a Judicial Commission of Inquiry to be installed by the Federal government.

October 19: Professor Ake, chairman of the Peace Conference, send a letter to Governor Ada George, stating that he does not agree with the Peace Agreement. According to him, it was drafted in haste and without proper consultation of the communities involved.

October 23: Two fire trucks from SPDC are seized at Korokoro by local inhabitants.

October 25: Three Ogoni men are shot at Korokoro oil fields by Federal government soldiers accompanying Shell workers who went back to retrieve the fire trucks. One man dies (Uebari Nna), and two are wounded (Pal Sunday and Mboo Ndike).

November 17: The interim government resigns. General Abacha becomes the new Nigerian head of state.

December 13: Governor Ada George is replaced by Lt. Col. Dauda Komo. Violent clashes between Ogoni and Okirika over crowded land at waterfronts, Port Harcourt. Over 90 people are reported dead, many more wounded.

December 28: Probably to prevent the start of the Ogoni Week, MOSOP leaders Dr. Owen Wiwa and Ledum Mitee, a lawyer, are arrested without being charged. The Ogoni Assembly is dispersed by Nigerian soldiers. Lt. Col. Komo states that Ogoni Week was aborted because MOSOP didn't apply for a permit.

1994

January 2: Mr. Saro-Wiwa is placed under house arrest.

January 4: Dr. Owen Wiwa and Mr. Ledum are released and Mr. Saro- Wiwa's house arrest is lifted.

January 11: A seven member Commission of Inquiry is installed by the Rivers State government to investigate Ogoni-Okirika clashes, and starts public sittings in Port Harcourt.

January 20: A three-member ministerial team starts a two-day tour of Rivers State to investigate the hostilities between the communities there, as part of a general inquiry of community clashes. The Nigerian government is especially worried about troubles in oil producing areas.

January 21: A \$500 million contract is signed in Port Harcourt between Shell Nigeria and ABB Global Engineering UK, allowing the latter to collect gas from 10 flow stations in Rivers State.

January 24: The three major oil companies in Port Harcourt estimate to have lost over \$200 million during 1993, due to "unfavorable conditions in their areas of operation" and call for urgent measures to combat the situation.

Early April: A small conflict between Ogoni and Okoloma leads to serious clashes; Lt. Col. Komo is reported to have said that soldiers have been directed to deal with aggressive communities, and if necessary shoot trouble makers. Fifteen Ogoni people are arrested without being charged, including Dr. Owen Wiwa.

Table 4. International Reaction to Ogoni Conflict¹⁷¹

-	Protest marches at Nigerian embassies and Shell offices all over the world.
-	Suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth of Britain (a group comprised of Britain and its former colonies).
-	The withdrawal of ambassadors by several countries.
-	Calls for a multilateral oil embargo and other sanctions by world leaders.
-	Plans for a United Nations General Assembly resolution condemning the executions.
-	Protest actions by human rights groups such as Amnesty International and environmental groups such as Greenpeace.
-	Calls by the European Union to impose economic sanctions.
-	Imposition of a ban on arms sales to Nigeria by a number of countries.
-	Protests in Nigeria by thousands of students and other individuals.
-	Under extreme pressure, the International Finance Corporation cancels a proposed \$100 million loan and \$80 million equity deal to Nigeria LNG, a company owned by the Nigerian government and the top oil producers in Nigeria (Shell, Elf, and Agip), to produce a gas plant and pipeline in the Niger delta.

Table 5. Key Militant Groups in the Niger Delta Region¹⁷²

S/No	Militant Group	Abbreviation	Remarks
1.	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People	MOSOP	Formed 1990 by late Saro-Wiwa

¹⁷¹ ICE Case Studies, Case Number: 64, Case Mnemonic: OGONIOIL, Case Name: "Ogoni and Nigeria conflict over Oil," accessed 16 September 2010, <http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/ogonioil.htm>.

¹⁷² Table compiled by author based on a combination of the following sources: Ilufoye Sarafa Ogundiya, "Domestic Terrorism and Security Threats in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria," *Journal of Social Science* 20 (2009), Updated. Augustine Ikelegbe, "Civil Society, Oil and Conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria: Ramifications of Civil Society for a Regional Resource Struggle," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*; Sep 2001; 39, 3; Research Library Core, 444–451, Updated.

S/No	Militant Group	Abbreviation	Remarks
2.	Supreme Egbesu Assembly	SEA	Formed 1996
3.	Chicoco Movement	CMT	Formed August 1997 rally at Aleibiri
4.	Itsekiri National Patriots	INP	1997 During Ijaw/Itsekiri Conflicts
5.	Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities	FENDIC	Led by Oboko Bello emerged 1998 after Ijaw/Itsekiri conflicts
6.	Movement For Survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationality	MOSIEN	Formed 1998
7.	Niger Delta oil Producing Communities	NDOPC	1998
8.	Niger Delta Volunteer Force	NDVF	Reformed October 1998 (Initially formed 1966)
9.	Egbesu Boys of Africa	EBA	Formed December 1998, Ijaw Warri ethnic groups
10.	Isoko National Youth Movement	INYM	Formed 16 December 1998
11.	Niger Delta Volunteer Force	NDVF	1998
12.	Ijaw Youth Council	IYC	Formed 1 January 1999
13.	Niger Delta Freedom Fighters	NDFP	Formed 1999
14.	Atangbala Boys	TAB	Formed 1999
15.	Ikwere Youth Movement	IYM	1999

S/No	Militant Group	Abbreviation	Remarks
16.	Urhobo Youth Movement	UYOMO	1999
17.	Bayelsa Youth Federation of Nigeria	BYFN	1999
18.	Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra	MASSOB	South East (Igbo); formed 1973, resurfaced 1999
19.	Niger Delta Vigilante	NDV	Formed 2003; led by Ateke Tom (Ijaw); HQs in Port Harcourt
20.	Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force	NDPVF	Formed 2004; led by Mujahid Asari Dokubo (Ijaw)
21.	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta	MEND	Formed January 2006; alliance with NDPVF

Table 6. Civil Pressure Groups (Non Violent) in the Niger Delta¹⁷³

S/No	Pressure Group	Abbreviation	Remarks
1.	Niger Delta Traditional Leaders Association	NDTLA	Formed 1960s
2.	Association of Minority Oil Producing States	AMOP	
3.	Common Wealth of Oil Producing Areas	CWOPA	
4.	Ijaw National Congress	INC	1991 (Ethnic)
5.	Movement for Reparation to Ogbia	MORETO	Formed 1992; Oloibiri Clan of Ijaw Nation

¹⁷³ Table compiled by author based on a combination of the following sources: Courson Elias, "Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta: Political Marginalization, Repression and Petro-Insurgency in the Niger Delta," *Nordic Africa Institute*, Discussion Paper 47, Uppsala 2009, 14, Updated. Augustine Ikelegbe, "Civil Society, Oil and Conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria: Ramifications of Civil Society for a Regional Resource Struggle," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*; Sep 2001; 39, 3; Research Library Core, 444–451, Updated.

S/No	Pressure Group	Abbreviation	Remarks
6.	Delta Oil Producing Communities Association	DOPCA	1993
7.	Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria	ERA	1993 (Environmental)
8.	Southern Minorities Forum	SMF	1994
9.	Traditional Rulers of Oil Mineral Producing Communities of Nigeria	TROPCON	1995
10.	National Human Rights Commission	NHRC	1995 (Human Rights)
11.	Isoko Community Oil Producing Forum	ICOPF	1997 (Ethnic)
12.	Niger Delta Elders Forum	NDEF	1998
13.	Environmental Rights Action	ERA	1998 (Environmental)
14.	Oil Watch Group	-	1998 (Environmental)
15.	Oron National Forum	ONF	Formed 1998
16.	Egi Womens Movement	EWM	1998
17.	Ijaw Council for Human Rights	ICHR	1998 (Human Rights)
18.	Izon National Development and Welfare Association	INADEWA	1998 (Ethnic)
19.	Students of Oil Mineral Producing Areas	SOMPA	1998
20.	Egbema National Congress	ENC	1998 (Communal)
21.	Niger Delta Human and Environmental Rescue Organization	ND-HERO	1998 (Environmental/Human Rights)
22.	Egi Peoples Coalition	EPC	Formed 1999
23.	Niger Delta Women for Justice	NDWJ	1999

S/No	Pressure Group	Abbreviation	Remarks
24.	Directorate for Citizen's Rights	DCR	1999
25.	Ikwere Youth Convention	IKYC	Formed 1999
26.	Niger Delta Civil Society Coalition	NDCSC	1999
27.	Niger Delta Peace Forum	NDPF	1999
28.	Ijaw Elders Forum	IEF	1999 (Ethnic)
29.	Bayelsa Indigenes Association	BIA	1999 (Communal)
30.	Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law	IHRHL	1999 (Human Rights)
31.	South – South Peoples Conference	SSOPEC	2000
32.	Union of Niger Delta	UND	2000
33.	United Niger Delta Energy Development Security Strategy	UNDEDSS	2008

Table 7. Has OMPADEC Been Able to Promote Peace, Stability, and Development in Oil Communities¹⁷⁴

Yes/No	Delta State		Akwa-Ibom State		Bayelsa State		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	19	26.4	7	14.9	3	4.5	29	15.6
No	53	73.6	40	85.1	64	95.5	157	84.4
Total	72	100	47	100	67	100	186	100.0

¹⁷⁴ Charles Ukeje, Adetanwa Odebiyi, Amadu Sessay, Olabisi Aina, "Oil and Violent Conflicts in the Niger Delta," *Center for Development and Conflict Management Studies*, Ile-Ife Nigeria, Obafemi Awolowo University Press (2002), 33.

APPENDIX B

Table 8. Selected Cases of Abductions/Kidnapping for Ransom (2002–2003)¹⁷⁵

Date/Action	Company	Group/Ethnic State	Purpose of Action	Reported Outcome
June-July 2003 Staff Kidnapping	Oil Servicing Company/Shell Contractor	Militant Youth Gang, Ekeremor LGA, Ijaw/ Bayelsa State	Ransom of 3.1 million NG Naira	State government intervention-release of hostages after 14 days
November 11- 13 2003 Oil Barge Kidnapping of Staff (9) and Military Escorts (4)	Shell barge contractor	Ijaw youth militants in Bomadi/Burutu Lgas/ Delta State	Ransom demand of 24.5 NG Naria	Release after 2 days after threats from state and associated security agencies
November 2003 Kidnapping of 14 staff	Chevron Texaco	Militant Ijaw youths/Bayelsa State	Ransom demand	State intervention
Kidnapping of 19 staff	Nobel Drilling	Ijaw Militias/ Delta State	Ransom demand	State intervention
November- December 2003	Bredero Shaw Oil Servicing Co. (Shell)	Militant Ijaw Youths/ Delta State	Ransom demand \$5 million	State intervention/negotiation

¹⁷⁵ Augustine Ikelegbe, 2005, “The Economy of Conflict in the Oil Rich Niger Delta Region of Nigeria”, *Nordic Journal of African studies* 14(2):208–234 and the NNPC Annual Statistical Bulletin 2007/Anyakwee Nsirimovu, 2009.

Table 9. Delta Violations and Reaction of the Government and that of Affected Communities¹⁷⁶

Violation	Oil Company Response	State Response	Community Response
Water Pollution	Launch community development project(s)	Militarization of communities	Make representation/grievance to government
Farmland Destruction	Supply small arms to government for protection of facilities	Divide community groups	Advance dialogue with government
Destruction of Aquatic Life	Non-responsive	Separate settlement with community elites	Public demonstrations
Wildlife Destruction	Non-responsive	Offers Weak institutional response	Hostage Taking has occurred
Poor Living Conditions	Offer of part-time employment to community members	Interventionist agency response: OMPADEC NDDC	Armed confrontation/Outreach to International Community

Table 10. Chronology of Attacks (2006–2008)¹⁷⁷

January 10, 2006: Militants kidnap 4 foreign oil workers from Shell's offshore E.A. oilfield. Shell shuts 115,000 bpd E.A. platform. They also blow up crude oil pipelines, cutting supplies to Forcados export terminal by 100,000 bpd.

January 30, 2006: Militants free all hostages kidnapped January 10, but threaten wave of new attacks.

February 18, 2006: Militants attack a barge operated by US oil services company Willbros in speedboats and abduct 9 oil workers. The militants also blow up a Shell crude oil pipeline and a gas pipeline operated by Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), and bomb

¹⁷⁶ Ojaborotu Victor, "Militancy and Oil Violence in the Niger Delta," *Journal of Energy and Security*, Thursday, 27 August 2009, accessed 5 July 2010, http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=211.

¹⁷⁷ *Nigeri/ Africa Master Web News Report*, "Chronology of Nigerian Militants' Attacks," <http://www.africamasterweb.com/AdSense/NigerianMilitants07Chronology.html>, accessed 28 September 2010.

Shell's Forcados tanker loading platform, forcing the company to suspend exports from the 380,000 bpd facility. Closure of Forcados affects other companies, cutting further 100,000 bpd output. Shell shuts 115,000 bpd E.A. platform as precaution.

March 1, 2006: Militants release 6 of the hostages kidnapped February 18; they include 1 American, 2 Egyptians, 2 Thais and a Filipino.

March 18, 2006: Militants blow up oil pipeline operated by Italian oil company Agip, shutting down 75,000 bpd.

March 27, 2006: Militants release remaining three hostages kidnapped February 18 - 2 Americans and a Briton.

May 10, 2006: An oil executive of Baker Hughes(an American Co.) employee is killed by unidentified gunmen in Port Harcourt. MEND denies responsibility.

May 11, 2006: 3 workers of Italian oil contractor Saipem are kidnapped.

June 2, 2006: 6 Britons, 1 Canadian and an American are abducted from Bulford Dolphin oil rig owned by Norwegian oilfield services group Fred. Olsen Energy. Hostages are released two days later.

June 7, 2006: Militants attack a Shell-operated natural gas facility in the Niger Delta, killing 6 soldiers and kidnapping 5 South Korean contractors.

June 20, 2006: 2 Filipinos with Beaufort International kidnapped in Port Harcourt and freed 5 days later.

July 6, 2006: Gunmen kidnap Michael Los, a Dutch oil worker in Bayelsa State. He is released 4 days later.

July 25, 2006: Niger Delta mob seize Agip Ogbainbiri flow station, taking 24 workers hostage. Hostages released and flow station abandoned July 31 after paid-off by Nigerian government.

August 3, 2006: German oil worker, Guido Schiffarth, a 62-year-old employee of Bilfinger and Berger snatched from his car in Port Harcourt by armed men dressed as soldiers. .

August 4, 2006: Gunmen abduct 3 Filipino oil workers from a bus near Port Harcourt. They are released 10 days later.

August 9, 2006: 2 Norwegian and 2 Ukrainian oil workers kidnapped.

August 10, 2006: A Belgian and Moroccan contractors kidnapped in Port Harcourt. Both released on August 14.

August 13, 2006: 5 foreign oil workers(2 Britons, a German, an Irish and a Pole.) kidnapped from a nightclub in Port Harcourt. An American also kidnapped earlier the same day.

August 15, 2006: 2 Norwegian and 2 Ukrainian oil workers kidnapped on August 9 freed.

August 16, 2006: Lebanese man kidnapped.

August 19, 2006: German oil worker, Guido Schiffarth is released. Nigerian army launch crackdown on militants. Soldiers fired in the air, sending men and women screaming through the streets of Port Harcourt.

August 24: An Italian oil worker employed by Saipem is kidnapped by gunmen in Port Harcourt. He is freed after five days.

October 2, 2006: 25 Nigerian employees of a Royal Dutch Shell contractor seized after an ambush of boats carrying supplies to Shell facilities in the Cawthorne Channel. They are released two days later.

October 3, 2006: 7 foreign oil workers(four Britons, one Indonesian, one Malaysian and a Romanian) kidnapped in a raid on a compound for expatriate contractors working for Exxon Mobil. The 3 British among the released 7 foreign oil workers arrived back in Scotland October 23, to tell of their hostage ordeal in the hands of Nigerian delta militants. One of the men, Graeme Buchan, revealed how he was beaten and forced to call the chief executive of his employers to falsely say that his colleague Paul Smith was dead. Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, Mr Buchan described how they were beaten with sticks, slapped with machetes and feared they might never see their families again.

October 21, 2006: 7 foreign oil workers kidnapped October 3 are released.

November 2, 2006: A British and an American employees of Petroleum Geo-Services(PGS) are kidnapped from a survey ship off the coast of Bayelsa.

November 7, 2006: British and American employees of Petroleum Geo-Services(PGS) kidnapped on November 2 freed.

November 22, 2006: A British oil worker is killed during an attempt by Nigerian soldiers to free 7 hostages abducted by militants earlier the same day.

December 7, 2006: Gunmen kidnap three Italians and one Lebanese from a residential facility. Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) claims responsibility.

December 14, 2006: Gunmen invade the Nun River logistics base in Bayelsa State operated by Royal Dutch Shell and hold 5 people hostage.

December 18, 2006: 2 car bombs explode in Port Harcourt, one near Agip compound and the other in Shell residential compound. There were no casualties.

December 21, 2006: Militants storm the Obagi field facility in Rivers State, operated by Total, killing 3 people.

January 5, 2007: Gunmen kidnapped 5 Chinese telecom workers. Militants plant a car bomb in the Shell residential compound in Port Harcourt. Shell evacuates some staff from compounds in Port Harcourt, Bonny Island and Warri.

January 10, 2007: Gunmen attacked a base operated by South Korea's Daewoo Engineering and Construction in the Bayelsa state kidnapping 9 South Korean and one Nigerian oil workers.

January 12, 2007: 9 South Korean workers and one Nigerian are freed after being kidnapped when gunmen attacked a base operated by South Korea's Daewoo Engineering and Construction in the Bayelsa state capital Yenagoa on Jan. 10.

January 16, 2007: 3 people including a Dutch oil worker are killed when their boat, operated by South Korean firm Hyundai, was attacked by gunmen on its way to the Bonny Island export terminal.

January 18, 2007: Gunmen free 5 Chinese telecom workers, kidnapped January 5. An Italian is also released in Bayelsa state. 3 foreign hostages remain in captivity.

January 20, 2007: Militants seize German shipping line Baco-Liner cargo ship on its way to Warri port taking all 24 Filipino crew members hostage.

January 23, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 2 engineers, an American and a Briton, in Port Harcourt, on their way to work.

January 25, 2007: 9 employees of Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) working in Bayelsa state under contract with Shell are kidnapped.

February 4, 2007: 9 employees of Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) kidnapped on January 25 released.

February 6, 2007: Gunmen kidnap a Filipino oil worker on Port Harcourt - Owerri road.

February 7, 2007: A Filipina woman is kidnapped by gunmen in Port Harcourt. This apparently is the first abduction of a woman in the region. The same day, a French oil worker (an employee of Total Oil Co), identified as Gerard Laporal, married to a Nigerian woman is kidnapped by gunmen as he returned home around 9:00 pm.

February 13, 2007: Militants release 24 Filipinos kidnapped on January 20.

February 17, 2007: 4 young Nigerian men serving as missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints abducted from their apartment in Port Harcourt.

February 18, 2007: 3 Croatian oil workers of Hydrodrive Nigeria abducted in Port Harcourt.

March 4, 2007: Gunmen kidnap a German construction worker and killed a soldier in the Niger Delta.

March 14, 2007: Militants release 2 Italian workers Being held since December 7.

March 23, 2007: A Dutch manager for German building contractor Bilfinger Berger, kidnapped in Port Harcourt.

March 31, 2007: A British worker abducted from the Bulford Dolphin oil rig.

April 2, 2007: 2 Lebanese employees of Setraco abducted in Bayelsa.

April 4, 2007: Dutch manager kidnapped on March 23 is released. British worker abducted on March 31 released and 2 Lebanese employed by Setraco abducted on April 2 also released.

April 7, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 2 Turkish engineers from their car in Port Harcourt.

April 27, 2007: Gunmen kill 2 policemen in a failed kidnap attempt in Port Harcourt as the officers were escorting a convoy of vehicles carrying expatriate staff to work.

May 1, 2007: An American, 4 Italians and a Croat are kidnapped from an offshore oil facility operated by Chevron in Bayelsa State.

May 3, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 20 foreign workers in three attacks, but eight are freed within hours. Saipem reduces output by about 50,000 barrels a day.

May 5, 2007: Gunmen abduct a British oil worker from Trident 8 rig operated by U.S.-based Transocean off the coast of Bayelsa. In a separate incident, gunmen abduct a Belarusian woman who works as a manager of Britain's Compass Group from outside her home in Port Harcourt.

May 8, 2007: 3 South Koreans and 8 Filipinos are freed after being held for five days. Rebels blow up three oil pipelines in the Niger Delta, forcing Italian oil giant Eni to halt production of 150,000 barrels per day feeding its Brass export terminal. MEND claims responsibility for the attack.

May 9, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 4 U.S. oil workers from a barge off the coast near Chevron's Escravos crude export terminal.

May 16, 2007: Belarusian woman abducted May 5, is freed.

May 19, 2007: 2 Indian staff of Eleme Petrochemical Company are kidnapped by gunmen in Port Harcourt.

May 22, 2007: In Warri Gunmen abduct a Lebanese man, Financial Controller at oil service company Nigercat in the city.

May 24, 2007: Gunmen kidnap a Polish engineer near Warri.

May 25, 2007: Nine(3 Americans, 4 Britons, a South African, and a Filipino) oil workers are kidnapped from a ship in the Niger Delta.

May 28, 2007: Polish engineer kidnapped May 24 is released.

May 30, 2007: 4 U.S. oil workers, kidnapped May 9 are released.

June 1, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 3 senior managers of Indonesian chemical company Indorama from their residential estate in Port Harcourt. In a separate incident, gunmen kidnap 4 workers from Britain, France, Netherlands and Pakistan from their residential compound of oil services company Schlumberger in Port Harcourt. Yet another raid by gunmen took 10 Indian hostages.

June 2, 2007: An American, 4 Italians and a Croat kidnapped May 1, are released.

June 3, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 6 staff of United Company RUSAL (Russian aluminum giant), in Ikot Abasi in the Niger Delta.

June 11, 2007: 5 Britons and 3 Americans are released in Bayelsa State. 2 Indians, a Filipino and a South African kidnapped May 25, all released.

June 15, 2007: Gunmen kidnap 2 Lebanese men, employees of Italian firm Stabilini, in Ogara in Delta State. In a separate incident in Delta State also, gunmen kidnap 2 Indian construction workers.

June 16, 2007: Militants release 10 Indian hostages held since June 1.

June 21, 2007: Troops kill 12 militants and free some hostages in a dawn raid on an Italian-operated Ogbainbiri oil facility.

June 23, 2007: 4 foreign hostages employed by oil services giant Schlumberger kidnapped June 1 are released unharmed.

July 5, 2007: Margaret Hill, a 3-year-old British girl is abducted in Port Harcourt. She is released July 8.

July 7, 2007: Royal Dutch Shell reports one of its teams attacked in Rivers State, 2 Nigerian workers taken hostage. The 2 Nigerians released July 11.

July 8, 2007: A Bulgarian and a Briton, employees of British oil company Exprogroup kidnapped from a barge near Calabar in Cross River state. They were freed August 8, 2007.

July 12, 2007: Francis Samuel Amadi, 3-year-old son of a traditional ruler of Iriebe is kidnapped in Port Harcourt. He was released next day.

July 31, 2007: A Pakistani construction manager with Gitto, an Italian firm is kidnapped near Bodo in the Ogoni area of Rivers State.

August 10, 2007: Gunmen abducts David Ward, a British manager from oil services firm Hydrodive in Port Harcourt.

August 28, 2007: Pakistani construction manager kidnapped on July 31 is released.

September 23, 2007: Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) announces will restart attacks on oil installations and abduction of expatriates following the arrest of its leader, Henry Okah on arms trafficking on September 3.

September 27, 2007: Gunmen raid oil services company Saipem and abduct a Colombian and a Filipino workers of the company, killing another Colombian staff.

October 5, 2007: David Ward, abducted by gunmen August 10, is freed by Nigerian troops.

October 10, 2007: The two Colombian and Filipino workers of oil services company Saipem abducted September 27, are both released.

October 20, 2007: Seven workers, 4 Nigerians and 3 contractors of Royal Dutch Shell(a Russian, a Briton, & a Croat) are seized at EA field off the coast of Bayelsa State by gunmen in speedboats. All are freed October 22.

October 26, 2007: Gunmen in speedboats attack the Mystras vessel at an offshore oil production facility operated by Saipem, seizing six Indian and Polish oil workers hostage. MEND had claims responsibility for the attack.

October 30, 2007: Six Indian and Polish hostages seized October 26 are all freed.

March 4, 2008: A German employee of German-Nigerian construction group Julius Berger kidnapped in Port Harcourt.

May 23, 2008: 2 foreign workers(a Pakistani & a Maltese) are kidnapped at Omoku village of the Niger Delta.

June 3, 2008: Gunmen abduct 2 Lebanese employees of Setraco, a local engineering company in the town of Amassoma of the Niger Delta.

June 19, 2008: Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) attack Royal Dutch Shell's Bonga oilfield , taking Jack Stone, the U.S. captain of a nearby supply ship hostage. Stone was released later same day. "Capt. J. (Jack) Stone, who was captured by our fighters in the early hours of today (Thursday), was released unconditionally to his employers by 1645Hrs," a terse statement from MEND stated. The rebels warn of further attacks.

June 22, 2008: MEND declares ceasefire from attacks following appeal for peace by Niger Delta elders. The group in an electronic email, entitled, "Unilateral Ceasefire":, signed by Jomo Gbomo said, "Effective 12 midnight on Tuesday, June 24, 2008, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) will be observing a unilateral ceasefire in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria until further notice."

June 22 & 23, 2008: Rival Militants In Gun Battle In Bayelsa - Fierce gun battle between militia groups loyal to the peace pact initiated in the state and those against the process. 2 killed in the fight. Fighting erupted when the later, the Niger Delta Vigilante Force (NDVF) led by warlord Ateke Tom attempted to set up a camp in Opuama in the Southern Ijaw council area. The NDVF was formerly based in Okirika but got chased out recently through the combined efforts of the Rivers State Government and the Joint Military Task Force. It therefore decided to set up another camp in Opuama in Bayelsa. A militant commander in the area popularly known as Prince Igodo vehemently resisted the moves, arguing it would threaten the peace initiative in the area. Prince Igodo is a leading member of the peace pact between Bayelsa State Government and 14 commanders of militant camps in the state. Attempt by NDVF to go ahead with its plan led to fierce fighting involving the use of sophisticated weapons by both sides.

June 24, 2008: Death toll from fighting between NDVF militants and Prince Igodo's group put at 20.

June 25, 2008: Militants in the Niger Delta call off their unilateral ceasefire and order resumed hostilities. The Joint Revolutionary Council (JRC), comprising Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Reformed Niger Delta People's Volunteer

Force and the Martyrs Brigade, announced the ceasefire call off in a press statement signed by its spokesperson, Cynthia Whyte.

June 27, 2008: Ateke Tom led NDVF militants capture rival militant warlord. Prince Igodo. His two hands are cut-off and he bleeds to death according to reports. In an unrelated incident, gunmen storm a burial function whisking away Mr. Ekpereba Apiri, a permanent secretary with Bayelsa State oil service, as he hosted guests after his relative's interment in their country home of Okodi in Ogbia local government area. Apiri's corpse was dumped at his doorstep the following morning.

July 11, 2008: 2 German employees of construction firm Julius Berger, Nigerian unit of Germany's Bilfinger Berger kidnapped at Emohua in Rivers state.

July 16, 2008: Thousands of Nigerians flee Niger Delta oil town of Bonny after militants threaten to behead people who are not originally from the area.

Table 11. Timeline of Recent Unrest in Niger Delta Region¹⁷⁸

February 2010

On 2 February Minister of Defence Maj Gen Godwin Abe calls on the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) group to respect the ceasefire members had declared on 25 October 2009 but ended three months later.

January 2010

On 30 January MEND calls off its declared ceasefire threatening an "all-out onslaught" on the oil industry in the Niger Delta oil-producing region and warning of attacks in the weeks to come. Three British workers and one Colombian are released on 18 January, six days after they were abducted by unknown gunmen near the main oil city of Port Harcourt in the Niger Delta.

December 2009

MEND delivers what it calls a "warning" strike by destroying a major crude pipeline in the Niger Delta on 19 December.

The group expresses frustration over stalled peace talks due to the absence of ailing President Umaru Yar'Adua. "A situation where the future of the Niger Delta is tied to the health and well-being of one man is unacceptable," MEND says in a statement.

November 2009

On 15 November top Nigerian officials meet with MEND leaders in the capital, Abuja, to discuss plans for development of the oil-producing region as part of a drive to end the long-running insurgency.

October 2009

On 25 October MEND reinstates an indefinite ceasefire raising prospects for peace in the troubled oil-producing region after nearly three decades of hostilities.

President Umaru Yar'Adua meets for the first time with the leader of MEND, Henry Okah, in

¹⁷⁸ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: Integrated Regional Information Networks Abuja 4 February 2010, (IRIN), Relief Web, accessed September 28, 2010, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900,SID/MUMA-82D2AY?OpenDocument>.

Abuja to diffuse tensions in the Niger Delta on 19 October. The government announces a US\$1.3-billion development package to build roads, schools and hospitals in the Niger Delta. A government amnesty for militants expires on 4 October. Between August and October between 8,000 and 15,000 gunmen have handed in thousands of weapons and renounced violence under the amnesty program, according to the authorities.

September 2009

On 29 September MEND names a team of negotiators that included Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka for talks with government.

On 15 September MEND extends a two-month ceasefire in the oil-producing region by 30 days, but dismisses as a sham the government's amnesty program.

August 2009

The government's 60-day amnesty program for the Niger Delta comes into effect. Under the initiative militants who surrender their weapons within the period are to receive training, employment assistance and a government pardon.

The government announces it will give 10 percent of Nigeria's joint oil ventures to Niger Delta residents.

July 2009

On 15 July MEND announces a unilateral 60-day ceasefire and releases six crew members it had seized from a foreign oil tanker 'Sichem Peace'.

On 12 July the federal government drops all charges against the leader of MEND, Henry Okah, and releases him from jail. He was on trial for treason and gun-running. On the same day MEND commits a rare raid on an oil offloading facility in Lagos, the group's first attack outside the Niger Delta in several months. Five people are killed in the attack.

June 2009

On 26 June President Umaru Yar'Adua formally announces details of an amnesty program for militants in the Niger Delta. MEND rejects the plans by the government and vows to continue attacks on the oil industry until the "injustice" to the oil-rich region is corrected. At least six high-profile attacks on oil well heads, offshore platforms, major pipelines and oil pumping stations are reported in the days following declaration. The group claims at least 20 soldiers were killed in one of the attacks on Shell's Forcados offshore platform in Delta state. Chevron evacuates hundreds of workers from the Niger Delta after the attacks.

Royal Dutch Shell reaches an out-of-court settlement on 8 June with the Ogoni community in eastern Niger Delta to pay compensation for complicity in the execution of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other leaders of the Ogoni tribe.

May 2009

On 25 May Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) says it has destroyed several oil pipelines which oil company Chevron confirms has cut its production by 100,000 barrels per day.

Clashes between government forces (the Joint Task Force) and militants break out on 12 May. Both sides deny initiating the attack. On 14 May militants take at least 15 hostages; the JTF launched a major offensive "Operation Restore Hope" destroyed several insurgent camps and

eventually frees most of the hostages. Rebel leader Tom Polo's compound is destroyed but he is still said to be at large. Thousands of Niger Delta residents are displaced in the fighting.

March 2009

President Umaru Yar'Adua declares the government will consider a conditional amnesty for militants in the Niger Delta.

February 2009

Joint Task Force destroys prominent 'Daroama militants' camp in Bayelsa state.

President Yar'Adua announces the creation of a new government committee to study recommendations of previous Technical Committee set up in September 2008 to recommend solutions for reducing violence in region.

Militants attack a civilian helicopter for first time.

January 2009

Militants call off unilateral ceasefire announced in September 2008, declaring "Hurricane Obama" step-up in attacks, linked to a government offensive on camp of rebel member Ateke Tom.

Civil society group coalition criticizes President Yar'Adua's silence on Technical Committee recommendations for reducing violence.

December 2008

Government forces arrest militant leader Sabomabo Jackrich.

Government Technical Committee issues recommendations to reduce violence in Niger Delta including appointing a mediator to facilitate discussions between government and militants; granting amnesty to some militant leaders; launching a disarmament, demobilisation and rehabilitation campaign; and channeling 25 percent of the country's oil revenue to the Delta, up from the current 13 percent.

November 2008

Military launches crackdown on oil thieves.

September 2008

Militants declare an "oil war" in which they step up attacks on oil facilities and security forces, sparking the heaviest clashes in the region in two years. On 13 September, government security forces allegedly raze three villages in Rivers state in search of MEND member Farah Dagogo. Dozens die in attacks, according to International Crisis Group.

Militants take 27 oil workers hostage, later releasing all but two.

On 10 September 2008, Nigerian cabinet appoints a new minister for the region, the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Obong Ufot Ekaette. Government forms Technical Committee to recommend ways to reduce violence in the Delta.

At end of month militants declare unilateral ceasefire.

June 2008

President Yar'Adua orders a military crackdown in the Niger Delta following persistent rebel attacks.

February 2008

Prominent militant, Henry Okah, arrested in Angola and is extradited to Nigeria.

November 2007

Militants step up oil pipeline attacks.

August 2007

Government troops continue sweep of restive main oil city of Port Harcourt.

May 2007

President Yar'Adua assumes office. Four American oil workers held by militants for weeks released.

December 2006

Criminal gangs release more than 20 hostages seized some 20 days prior.

December 2006

Three Italian oil workers seized.

November 2006

Soldiers and militants clash in Bayelsa state and at least two militants die in the shootout.

October 2006 to June 2007

Kidnapping of oil workers intensifies.

October 2006

Hundreds of villagers occupy four oil pumping stations in the Niger Delta saying oil company Shell reneged on a promise to give supply contracts to the host community.

October 2006

Army confirmed the killing of nine soldiers in a clash with militants.

September 2006

Soldiers invade Okochiri village, near the main oil city of Port Harcourt, said to be a hideout for suspected kidnappers of oil workers.

September 2006

Oil unions launch a three-day strike over deteriorating security situation in the Niger Delta.

May 2006

A Nigerian court orders oil company Shell Petroleum Development Corporation to pay \$1.5 billion in damages to a host community in the Niger Delta for years of environmental pollution. Shell files an appeal and refuses to accept the judgment.

April 2006

President Olusegun Obasanjo inaugurates a forum of Delta activists, elders, officials and youth leaders in bid to end the crisis.

February 2006

The first high-profile seizure of oil workers occurs. Militants of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), a group representing numerous militant factions, abduct nine expatriate oil workers.

Table 12. Value of Nigeria's Average Daily Oil Production Stolen and Shut from 2000–2008¹⁷⁹

Year	Av.Price Bonny Light Crude (USD)	Volume Stolen bpd	Value of Oil Stolen (USD)	Assumed Production Shut-in bpd	Value of Production Shut-in (USD)	Daily Av. Stolen & Shut-in	Total Value (USD)
2000	28.49	140,000	1.5 billion	250,000	\$2.6 billion	390,000	4.1 billion
2001	24.50	724,171	6.5 billion	200,000	\$1.8 billion	924,171	8.3 billion
2002	25.15	699,763	6.5 billion	370,000	\$3.4 billion	1,069,763	9.9 billion
2003	28.76	300,000	\$3.2 billion	350,000	\$3.7 billion	650,000	\$6.9 billion
2004	38.27	300,000	\$4.2 billion	230,000	\$3.2 billion	530,000	\$6.4 billion
2005	55.67	250,000	\$5.1 billion	180,000	\$3.7 billion	430,000	\$8.8 billion
2006	66.84	100,000	\$2.4 billion	600,000	\$14.6 billion	700,000	\$17.0 billion
2007	75.14	100,000	\$2.7 billion	600,000	\$16.5 billion	700,000	\$19.2 billion

¹⁷⁹ Table compiled by author based on a combination of the following sources: Stephen Davis, “The Opportunity for Peace in the Niger Delta,” *GEEI Green Paper Series*, No.2 Summer 2009, accessed July 4, 2010, http://www.sais-jhu.edu/centers/geei/Papers/The_Opportunity_for_Peace_in_the_Niger_Delta.pdf, 6; “The Potential for Peace and Reconciliation in the Niger Delta,” *Coventry Cathedral*, February 2009, accessed July 4, 2010, <http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/downloads/publications/35.pdf>, 155.

Year	Av.Price Bonny Light Crude (USD)	Volume Stolen bpd	Value of Oil Stolen (USD)	Assumed Production Shut-in bpd	Value of Production Shut-in (USD)	Daily Av. Stolen & Shut-in	Total Value (USD)
2008	115.81	150,000	\$6.3 billion	650,000	\$27.5 billion	800,000	\$33.8 billion

Table 13. Approved Nomination List for National Political Reform Conference¹⁸⁰

Group S/N	Title	Number	Comment
1	Chairman	1	} All of } these 46 } to be } nominated
2	Deputy Chairman	1	
3	Respectable Elder Statesmen (1 per State)	36	
4	Retired Military Personnel	2	
5	Police	2	} by } the } President
6	Civil Servants	2	
7	Diplomats	2	
8	State Representatives (6 per State & 2 from FCT)	218	
9	Traditional Rulers (1 per Zone)	6	
10	Academicians (1 per Zone)	6	
11	Labour	6	
12	Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA)	4	
13	Nigeria Youth Organisations	4	
14	Women Groups	8	
15	Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)	4	
16	National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Manufacturing and Agriculture (NACCIMA)	4	
17	Political Parties:		

¹⁸⁰ Mobolaji E. Aluko, "The NPRC and the PNC- Thoughts on the Opposing National Conferences," Burtonsville, MD, USA 29 January 2005, *DAWODU.COM*, accessed 25 September 2010, <http://www.dawodu.com/aluko108.htm>.

18	PDP	12	
19	ANPP	4	
20	AD	2	
21	Others	2	
22	Civil Societies (Not on Zonal basis)	6	
23	Moslem Leaders	6	
24	Christian Leaders	6	
25	National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS)	2	
26	Media	2	
27	Physically-Challenged People	2	
28	Nigerians in Diaspora (1 each Europe, America, Asia and Africa)	4	
	TOTAL	354	

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