

## **Niger Delta Crises: Implication For Society And Organizational Effectiveness.**

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### **Abstract**

The paper attempts to trace the causes of and also review the attempts made by the government to resolve the crises in the Nigeria's Niger Delta. Also, the paper examines the impacts of the crises on the Nigerian economy, human resource utilization and organizational effectiveness. A historical approach was employed to examine the institutional framework used by the Federal government in responding to the long term neglect to invest in the social well being of the Niger Delta people. The survey of oil and gas companies in terms of their performances was also carried out using indices of performance like output, sales and profit including Nigeria's economic performance. A pluralist theory postulate that there are contending interests in any system and the interest of each party needs to be catered for ensuring harmonious relationship among the interacting parties.

The study found that the enormous wealth of Nigeria's Niger Delta does not match the abject poverty being witnessed by its people. Neglect, deprivation, environmental degradation, lack of social infrastructure of the Niger Delta has been met by violent resistance since 1958 to Adaka Boro Niger Delta (1966) revolution, Kiama Declaration, Ogoni Bill of Rights to the present militant response through arms. The Federal government responses through institutional framework like Oil Minerals Producing and Development Commission (OMPADEC, Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), amnesty and empowerment of selected ex militants have been considered as social responsibilities foisted on the people and may not meet the aspiration of the Niger Delta people for dialogue, resource control, autonomy and justice.

It was also found that the long term neglect and deprivation of Niger Delta and its people has engendered ethnic militia . The activities of these restive youths are likely to have negatively impacted on oil production, GDP, exchange rate and dehumanised the people of Niger Delta. The successive institutions established by the Federal government might have failed in view of the emergence of increasing number of groups agitating for Niger Delta peolpes' emancipation

An alternative dispute resolution approach which employs a mediator or group of mediators selected and trusted by both the Federal government and the Niger Delta people is suggested as a panacea to resolving the age long Niger Delta crisis. The appeal of such approach rather than imposition from the Federal government is attractive.

**Key words:** environmental degradation, resouce control, enourmous wealth, abject poverty

## 1.0 Introduction

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria has witnessed ethnic, communal and political unrest since 1990s'. As well are incessant attacks on oil installations, hostage taking and general atmosphere of insecurity at both the communal and organisational levels. The people of Niger Delta toughened over the years by circumstances of anguish, deprivations, and poverty visited on them by different oil mining companies are increasingly becoming pensive. Their youths had drawn both local and international attention to their deplorable situation through their restiveness. Oil exploring organisations can be said to be operating under hostile and insecure environment. The government and the oil companies responses to the issues in the Niger Delta had been called to question by watchers of events and by the Niger Delta people themselves.

Though the Federal government and the Oil exploration companies have responded to the crises in some measures stated later in this work, the paper view these as social responsibilities which are at the whims of the donors. The extent to which these meet the needs and aspirations of Niger Delta people and the region left much to be desired. The insufficiency of these social responsibilities may account for the increasing violent attacks on oil installations and frequent hostage taking since 2006. The alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approach can be explored at the micro level of oil exploring companies and macro level of the federal government in addressing the conflict. The appeal is that the aggrieved people need to be heard not in a legalistic context, or in way that is imposed or for that matter, under duress.

*Niger Delta* describes the oil producing communities of the southern region of the country, Nigeria. It transverses nine of the thirty six states of Nigeria, namely: Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, and Rivers. Most of the oil exploration so far had been at the core Niger Delta states of Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers. These three states had witnessed the major crises in the region. The population of the region is estimated at over 30 million people comprising over forty ethnic groups, the major ones being Ijaw, Ogoni, Ikwerre, Urobo, Isoko, Ilaje, Ibibio, and Andoni. Osuntokun (2000) paradoxically described the region as the goose that lays the golden egg but most environmentally fragile.

## 1.1 The Problem

The Niger Delta had witnessed severe economic deprivation and social exclusion in sharp contrast to the enormous wealth of the area. Environmental degradation, lack of infrastructural facilities, inadequate provision of functional educational system and deplorable socio-economic standard paint the picture of the area inspite of the huge wealth carted away by the foreign workers, especially the expatriates that also live in affluence, in contrast to the abject poverty and deprivation of the indigenes on whose land the former got their wealth.

There had been environmental pollution, forced unemployment as a result of land and water pollution arising from oil spillage.

The Niger Delta communities as a result of these criminal neglect on the part of the Federal government and the oil exploring companies responded initially through road blocking and shutting the gates of oil companies. When these did not produce the desired results, pipelines vandalism, blowing up of oil installations, bunkering and hostage taking were resorted to.

As a result of the crises, volume of oil exploration, is assumed to have reduced, oil workers operate in an insecure and hostile environment, and frequently, the Nigeria Joint Military Force (JMF) and the Niger Delta youths had clashed leaving casualties on both sides.

The government responses since 1957 when oil was first discovered in commercial quantities at Oloibiri had not abated agitation in Niger Delta. That is, Willinks reports of 1959 to the creation of Ministry for Niger Delta in 2008. Certain questions can then be asked.

a. What is the historical background to the crises in Niger Delta?

- b. How have the Niger Delta people responded?
- c. What have been the responses of the oil exploiting organisation and Federal government?
- d. Why would the responses of the government not sufficient to redress the situation?
- e. What are the effects of the crises on the spirit of the Nigerian nation and the nation's economy?
- f. How has the crises affected human resource utilisation and organisational outcomes?

To what extent can industrial relations' conflict resolution approach of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) be applied to resolve Niger Delta crises?

Attempts at answering these questions are the objectives of this paper

The objective of the paper is to trace the causes of and also review the attempts made by the government to resolve the crises in the Nigeria's Niger Delta. The paper also examines the impacts of the crises on the Nigerian economy, human resource utilization and organizational effectiveness. This would be done using historical approach in examining the institutional framework used by the Federal government in responding to the long term neglect to invest in the social well being of the Niger Delta people. The survey of oil and gas companies in terms of their performances was also carried out using indices of performance like output, sales and profit including Nigeria's economic performance.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Historical Background to Niger Delta Crises**

Full blown conflict arose in the 1990s due to tensions between foreign oil companies and Ijaw and Ogoni communities. The unrest in the communities persisted until 2006 when new dimension of militancy and of hostage taking set in. The factors leading to the crises include but not limited to: Fear of domination; land use law; environmental degradation and infrastructural issues.

**Fear of Domination.** Before Nigeria's independence in 1960, the Ijaw ethnic group that transverse the present Ondo state in the west to River State in the east had wanted a separate nation. Also the fear of domination of minority ethnic group by the majority ethnic group led to the setting up of Henry Willinks minority commission of 1957. Though the commission rejected the creation of River State because the request came only from two (2) Ijaw communities of Brass and Degema divisions and also for economic reasons, it recommended a special development program for the Ijaw people. The Federal government provided for a development board: Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB). Akinyele (2006), noted that the political climate did not allow the board to achieve its goals. Akinyele (2006) also noted that the fear of Igbo ethnic group domination led to Adaka Boro Niger Delta revolution of 1966.

**Land Use Law.** The land use Decree, entrenched in the Nigeria 1999 constitution, afforded the Federal government full ownership and rights to land within Nigerian territory. Compensation for land would be based on the value of the crops at the time of acquisition, not on the value of the land itself. The Federal government distributed Niger Delta land to oil companies and dislocated the Niger Delta people. Adebayo et al (2007) noted that with the means of livelihood of these people taken away from them and no compensation coming their way, poverty sets in and idleness becomes a way of life. When they ask for reparation and compensation they get sudden visit from soldiers... to deal ruthlessly with the "trouble makers".

**Environmental degradation.** Oil spillage and gas flaring constituted environmental hazard for human, flora and fauna. Farmland and portable water got polluted and are no longer useful as means of eking a living through farming or fishing.

#### **Provision of infrastructure**

Niger Delta region, especially the Ogoni land lack infrastructure. It is a case of water and none to drink. Abundant oil and no filling stations. Until recently, the Niger Delta area was neglected in terms of social, economic and human capital development.

All these can be summed up as neglect on the part of the federal government of Nigeria and the oil exploring companies.

## 2.2 Response to Niger Delta Issues

This can be approached historically from the platform of the Niger Delta people, the oil firms and the government.

**Niger Delta people.** The Niger Delta People responded in the following ways

- (i) Asking for a separate state at independence from colonial government in 1957.
- (ii) Adaka Boro extended this in 1966 with a revolution in a bid to have an independent Niger Delta attempting, as it were, to secede from Nigeria State.
- (iii) The Ogoni, increasingly dissatisfied with the environmental, social and economic deterioration of their nation, responded with the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) led by playwright and author **Ken Saro Wiwa**. The movement challenged the Nigeria state in the United Nations and also came up with the Ogoni Bills of rights. Though Ken Saro Wiwa was hanged by the Federal government in a controversial manner, the spill over effect still remain with us. While MOSOP asked for dialogue, the Federal government resorted to divide and rule by paying some selected chiefs who also died under mysterious circumstances.

However, Akinyele (2006), reported that the Ogoni recorded a significant victory when the United Nations committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNERD) took key decisions relating to the Niger Delta. The committee urged the Federal government to adopt “legal frame work which clearly set forth the broad principles governing the exploitation of the land including the obligation to abide by strict environmental standards as well as fair and equitable revenue distributions.

- (iv) Kiama Declaration: Ijaw youths from six Niger Delta states drew a charter of freedom in which the campaign for the total liberation of the Niger Delta was to be based (Akinyele, 2006).
- (v) Outright Confrontations. In 1990s, road blocking, closing of oil companies' gates and in 2006 pipeline vandalization, blowing of flow stations and oil installations, bunkering and hostage taking had been the means by which the Niger Delta Youths obtained some concessions from the oil companies and the government.

Oil Theft: Amnesty and militants empowerment favored an insignificant proportion of Niger Delta population. Many other people had resorted to what had been referred to as illegal oil bunkering and illegal refineries and crude refining of crude oil. It is reported that 150,000 barrels of crude oil is being stolen daily in the Niger Delta region. This translates to 1,500,000 US dollars or 233,850,000 NGN per day going by the average world crude oil price of 100 US dollar. General opinion had been that such accruing wealth to some people is enough for such people to challenge the legitimacy of governmental authorities

**Oil Companies Responses** had been in the area of:

- a) Education: provisions of classrooms and scholarship for indigent students.
- b) Pollution abatement, compensation when ever there was oil spillage.
- c) Sponsorship of sporting events in the locality.
- d) Employment provisions for qualified youth.
- e) Provision of medical facilities including HIV/AIDS test.

**Government response:** before 1990, there had been insincerity; lip service was paid on the part of the Federal government towards the development of Niger Delta. Institutions set up to invest in the

development of Niger Delta were politicised (Akinyele 2006, Adebajo et al 2007). Since 1990, the government responded in these ways (Anyaji et al, 2007).

- a) Industrial policy : Industrial policies were formulated to guide and ensure adherence of oil companies to their corporate social responsibilities, quota system in staffing, contribute certain percentage to Education Trust Fund (ETF), control pollution, encourage dialogue between oil companies and host communities.
- b) Developmental Commission: the following were set up to invest in the development of human and landscape of Niger Delta region. Niger Delta development Board (NDDB) 1959. Niger Delta Development Authority (NDDA). Oil Minerals Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and Ministry for Niger Delta.. Their effectiveness shall be reviewed later.
- c) Coersion : The use of Joint Military Task Force (JTF) to counter arm carrying youths and hostage takings.
- d) Amnesty: The Federal government granted amnesty (state pardon) to militant groups that laid down arms during a stipulated period in 2009. Rehabilitation and empowerment programs were also designed to enable the surrendered militants become employable in the oil firms or be self employed.

**2.3 Theoretical Framework** The pluralist theory recognises the plurality of interests in a system and these various interests should be recognized,accomodated and satisfied by the system. In Nigeria, there has been over concentration of power and apparatus for the distribution of the resources of the nation at the center. The federal government seems not to recognise the various interests of the federating component units. The conflicts that eventually broke up in Niger Delta can be explained by equity theory which compares an actor's contributions and earnings with those of other actors. Any negative gap will lead to any of many actions: reduce input, output, make others to contribute more, quit the situation, or make a way of earning more equitably. The last option can explain the action of restive youths in Niger Delta.

The issue in Niger Delta is that of **resource control and injustice to a people**. After long years of suffering in the midst of resources that can transform their economic and social situations, the Niger Delta people are demanding for the redress of the injustice meted to them by the Nigerian nation by demanding for control of their oil resource which padoxically has sustained the Nigerian economy since the oil boom of 1970s and pauperize the Niger Delta people.

### **3.0 Evaluation of the Responses of Major Stakeholders**

An assessment of the stake holders responses cannot be regarded as totally ineffective. On the part of the government, the industrial policy gingered the five major oil prospecting companies – Agip, Chevron-Texaco, Exxon-Mobil ,Shell and Total to live up to their corporate social responsibilities. Provisions of schools, construction of jetties, water supply project and other developmental projects had been carried out.

The developmental approach has been somewhat effective. In 2006 for instance, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) embarked on 122 projects and commissioned 67 and 55 were nearing completion as at February of the year (This Day Feb 9, 2006). Inadequate supervision, politicization of projects had been the bane of all the commissions.

The negotiation approach had been problematic because of its historical antecedents. The dialogue between Jaja of Opobo and the British led to his seisure and exile. Asari Dokubo an Tom Akele dialogue with the federal government led to their arrest and consequent detention. Dialogue till date, Ijaw National Congress (INC, 1999) commented, had brought more destruction than reconciliation. Military activities had brought more destruction than reconciliation

The corporate social responsibilities by major oil prospecting organizations had not brought the necessary relief to the people, rather, incessant violence and threat of it to oil companies, and hostage taking always trail infrastructural provisions.

Youth restiveness expressed by pipeline vandalization, hostage taking, had not brought about the desires of Niger Delta people for resource control and or increasing revenue derivation from 13% to 25% immediately and 50% in the next 5 years.

Amnesty had not resolved the crises, rather oil theft illegal refining emerged and the loss to the economy is enormous if 1,500,000US dollar or 233,850,00NGN is lost to the economy daily. When this computed in a year is a great loss. However, it is also a pointer to the fact that it does not take much to refine crude oil as Nigeria government always want the citizens to believe. On the negative aspect, on the other hand, the environment is further polluted by the waste discharged into the water bodies and flora by illegal refiners.

A new approach is therefore required to resolve the issue of Niger Delta.

#### **4.0 Effects of Niger Delta Crises**

The effects can be approached from the four planks of the Niger Delta people, human resource and organization effectiveness and the Nigeria nation. Deprivation, neglect poverty, unemployment, tension, destruction of flora and fauna can best describe the situation of Niger Delta. There had been the struggle to have a fair and equitable share of the national resources through the pushing of derivation for oil producing states to 25% from 13%. When this failed at the national political conference of 2005 in which the south – south delegates walked out of the conference and never returned to it, a total resource control had been demanded for by the Niger Delta people. Oil companies' and government's divide and rule approach to negotiation and compensation engendered proliferation of rival militant groups all claiming to represent the interest of their communities.

The deplorable conditions of the region can be attributed to the insensitivity of the federal government to the diverse nature of the country and the concentration of developmental activities in the geographical zones of the major ethnic groups. Idowu (2006) reported that much have been documented of the consequences of conflicts of various types in Africa: Furley (1995), Mazrui (1995), Throup (1995), Nnoli (1978), and Pironet (1995). The main actors in conflicts are the economically vibrant segment of the population- the youths, between the ages 16 – 45 years. The outright waste of human life depletes the potential labor force of the country. Disruption in social, economic and political life of the nation is attendant leading to deinvestment, loss of earnings, insecurity, loss of productivity. It is agreed with Idowu (2006) that a nation with low Gross Domestic Product (GDP), poor exchange rate, and high rate of inflation cannot afford conflicts in the region that sustains the national economy.

The existing state structure and apparatus do not satisfy variously the aspiration for cultural identity, autonomy, economic democracy and the self determination of the different nationalities co existing within the contemporary Nigerian state. The concentration of power and means of distributing the resources of the nation at the Federal level and in favor of major ethnic groups to the neglect of the minorities will always generate conflicts (Idowu 2006). He also argued that equity, fairness, and consideration of needs had not been employed in the distribution of the resources of the nation. The wave of uprising prevailing in the Niger Delta is a threat to the unity and stability of the nation, and care must be exercised so as not to lead to her disintegration.

Economically, as at January 2006, Nigeria lost 211,000 barrels of crude oil daily which equals 8.4% of Nigeria export of 2.6 m (punch Jan 18, 2006). Shell Nigeria shut in 455,000bpd by March 2006 due to militant attack (New Age, March 28, 2006). By April, of the year, it got to 650,000bpd (New Age April 28th) . New Age calculated that facilities producing about 25% of the nation's crude oil

remained under lock and key in Niger Delta region. The effect of this on budget implementation is far fetched.

As to sales, earnings from crude oil export fell by 702m US dollars in February 2006 from the previous month. As at June 2006, export has been cut by 20%. National power generation had reduced by more than 25% as a result of shutting off of gas to 3 major power stations.

On casualties many policemen and soldiers were killed so were arm carrying youths and innocent souls that were caught in cross fire. Punch (Feb 12, 2006) reported that hostage taking caused panic within the government and the oil companies planned to suspend operations.

**Effects On Human Resource:** Punch (Feb. 12, 2006) also reported the refusal of most expatriates to be posted to riverside field location but on shore. It also reported low morale among workers and the fear of enmass resignation by the management. Nigerian oil workers were also afraid and were not ready to venture into offshore location. The oil workers' unions, PENGASSAN and NUPENG were forced to call on oil companies to device measures to safeguard the lives of their members since the feelings of apprehension and insecurity pervaded the air (New Age May 15, 2006).

Of significance is that the oil companies engaged private security outfit apart from the ones in the companies establishment. Also, the number of police deployed to and are on the pay roll of these companies is believed to be more than the total police that exist in the Delta region. The implication of this on the total cost outlay of these companies is enormous and may engendered cut down in some other headings. The human resource is always the first to be so affected.

In 2006, 2007 and 2008 Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) threatened retrenchment of workers. This is likely to be in connection with both the total withdrawal of its operation from Ogoni land and the Niger Delta youths and communities disruption of its oil flow stations. At the same time, the international pricing of crude oil of over 100 naira in July 2008 to low 48 naira in February 2009, may reinforce the threat of retrenchment because of reduction in oil companies earnings.

**Table 1: Consolidated Statement of Income**

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
<b>Revenue</b>	47017	368,05	278,18	458,36	355,75
<b>Total Revenue and other Income</b>	484,48	378,15	285,12	470.94	369,77
<b>Exploration</b>	2,266	2,036	2,178	1,995	1,822
<b>Upstream</b>	24,455	15,935	8,354	26,506	18,094
<b>Downstream (CCS Basis)</b>	4,289	2,950	258	5,309	8,588
<b>Production and Manufacturing Expenses</b>	26,458	24,458	25,301	25,565	23,219
<b>Income Attributable to</b>	30,918	20,127	12,518	26,277	31,331

Shareholders					
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### Source: Shell Reports 2011

The table indicates that Shell Nigeria Plc revenue, exploration, production and manufacturing activities got to the lowest ebb in 2009 at the peak of the militants activities and picked up immediately after the amnesty. Also the share holders contribution to Shell revenue went down. An indication that the shareholders lost confidence in the company and therefore any investment in it could be a loss. Revenue from both the upstream and down stream sectors dwindled also in 2009.

The human resource policies and practice that are likely to emerge in the dispensation may be anti labor. This will likely enstranged employment relationships in the oil companies. Hostile environment, threat of retrenchment hostile human resource policies and practice will be countered by the unions. The situation will dampened workers morale, satisfaction and committment and ultimately organization efficiency and effectiveness

### 5.0 Conclusion

The deplorable condition of the niger delta region is due to neglect on the part of both the government and the oil companies to invest in devopmental activities in the region. Errors had been made by series of administrations in the country as well as the oil companies not being foresighted enough to envisage the current happenings and taking adequate care of them in planning

The militants like the movement for the emancipation of niger Delta (MEND) claimed to be fighting for the interest of impoverished inhabitants of Niger Delta where most of the oil that is the mainstay of the nigeria's economy is produced. The deplorable conditon of the region had been challenged from colonial era till present time. The Adaka Boro revoluton, Ogoni Bill of Rights, Kiama Declaration, cumunnating in hostage taking and outright oil pipe vandalization and illegal refineries are some of the ways Niger Delta people responded to their situation. Life had been lost, communities like Odi razed, oil companies sacked from locations, oil companies' productivity reduced by almost half, so are the earnings of the companies and the nation . Workers operate under fear and low morale, their engagement and utilization level had reduced since the crises. The crises lingers on in spite of these, and all approaches had not brought meaningful peace.

Alternative dispute Resolution has been explored as as a veritable tools of resolving the crises. As a non judicial tool, its proposal is likely to be acceptable and satisfactory to all stakeholders. More so, since the mediators are neutral and credible individuals and institutions. A resolved conflict through ADR will engender peace, safe environment of work, increased workers' engagement, increased organizational efficiency and effectiveness and improved productivity and GDP, polution free environment,increase in developmental activities in the region and stability in Nigeria.

### Recommendation

The following are recommended as options for resolving the Niger Delta crises

*i. Land Decree Reforms* The land decree as entrenched in the 1979 constitution which ceded all the land in the federation to the Federal government must as a matter of urgency be revised. As it were, the federal government had been appropriating communities land without considering the adverse implication to the communities as in the case of Niger Delta. The land use decree also deprives communities of obtaining appropriate compensation for their land whenever it is used for mining, and yet, they are always the victims of the deplorable environment into which the land is put into. Every community should be able to appropriate its land. However, whenever the government want landed property for exploration, there should be tripartite agreement among the stakeholders.

*ii. Resource Control:* Nigerian goverment could revisit derivation /resource control issue as a short term measure at resolving the crises in Niger Delta. Resource control is the equity in the resource allocation,exploitation and allocation ([www.GRANDIOSEPALOR.Com](http://www.GRANDIOSEPALOR.Com)., 2005). The ADR approach

can be employed. As an enduring solution however, the issue of resource control should be entrenched in the concurrent list to avoid over centralization in resource allocation. It should be entrenched too that communities can negotiate for royalties on the resources located on their land with exploring companies.

*iii. Facilitating employment relationship policies:* Oil companies should formulate human resource policies and embrace practices that improve the security of workers, improve their remuneration as it is practised in the companies' home countries, formulate HR policies, and embrace HR practices that would facilitate positive employment relationship.

*vi. True Federalism* The federal government should restructure the state apparatus to reflect true federalism for component units' autonomy, economic democracy, and self determination, as practised elsewhere.

*Special Development of Niger Delta Region:* Special attention should be paid to the investment in the development of people and delta region. The Niger Delta ministry and NDDC should not be politicised but encouraged to accomplish the goals for which they are established

*v. Stringent measures* should be taken against oil companies that do not adhere to pollution free environment, carry out stipulated corporate social responsibilities to their host communities or compensate adequately the host communities for oil spillage and properties acquired.

*vi. Constant dialogue* among the stake holders is suggested to forestall cumulated aggression. The onus is on all levels of government and oil prospecting companies to facilitate such dialogue and implement all agreements reached.

*vii. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) option*

It was noted above that all attempts by the government, the oil prospecting companies and the Niger Delta various groups to have a truce had failed. There had been threat and counter threat from the Niger Delta armed groups and the government respectively.

According to the groups "At a time of our choice we will resume attack with greater devastation and no compassion on those who choose to disregard our warnings. We do not need any further mismanagement of the fast diminishing resources of our land by the award of bogus contracts intended to channel the wealth of the Niger Delta back to the hands of those who have looted... all the years"

The armed Niger Delta youths issued this warning after the president of Nigeria then, Olusegun Obasanjo had convened a meeting of all stakeholders in Niger Delta between 5 and 6 April and 17 – 19 April 2007. The militants viewed the meeting as politicization and therefore rejects 'the political jamboree' in the name of stakeholders forum (New Age, Feb 19, 2007). The federal government had earlier threatened not to dialogue in the previous year. According to the Federal Government, "it is not proper for the Federal government to continue to negotiate with terrorist and since the negotiation had collapsed we are prepared to enforce law and order in line with what is obtainable in all civilized countries" ( Punch, Jan 28, 2006).

The people of Niger Delta have professed to believe in dialogue. According to movement for the emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) "the resolution of the Niger Delta question depended on genuine dialogue which should commence immediately. It added that the killing of Isaac Boro did not prevent the uprising of Ken Saro Wiwa, nor the killing of Wiwa stopped Kiama Declaration uprising (New Age, Feb 26, 2007). Basil Omayi, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) country chairman was disposed to dialoguing. According to him, "we believe there should now be a period of calm and dialogue between all sides to ensure there are no other hostilities. We appeal for constraint and constructive dialogue that will lead to lasting peace in Niger Delta" (New Age March 29, 2007).

Alternative Dispute resolution (ADR) involves an independent third person called a 'neutral' who tries to help resolve or narrow down the area of conflict. It fell outside the judicial and governmental process of resolving dispute (Olowu, 2007, Roth,2007). It comes through negotiation, mediation, collaborative law and arbitration. Mediation type is often used, in which case the mediator facilitates conflict resolution process and suggest resolution typically known as 'mediators proposal' (Roth,2007). Negotiation type requires voluntary participation. The third party acts behind the scene coaching one or both of the parties; a process called "helping the people themselves". Collaborative Law type involves each party engaging an attorney who facilitates the negotiation process. The parties reach agreement through the support of the attorneys trained in the art. Arbitration type involves a private judge who imposes solutions. Any future dispute is resolved by arbitration

The use of ADR results in more efficient, cost-effective resolution of dispute with greater satisfaction to the parties in dispute. It does not impose resolution on the parties, the preference for confidentiality, and the desire of the parties to have a greater control over the selection of the individual(s) who will decide their dispute are some of the appeal of ADR.

It is suggested that African Union through its mediation and conciliation committee or Peace Nobel Laurates serve as mediators at both the macro level of the state or the micro level of the oil prospecting companies and other stakeholders The use of nobel laurates was once suggested to the federal government by Wole Soyinka (New Age, June 9, 2006). To be effective the following are necessary.

- i To put in perspective who the stakeholders in Niger Delta crises are
- ii the historical antecedent of the crises should be put in perspective.
- iii the effects of the crises on man hour loss, oil workers' morale, oil organisations' performance and productivity, the national income . the gross domestic product (GDP) should be estimated
- iv the derivable benefits to all parties in resolving the crises should be explored
- v The issues at stake: **principally resource control, injustice and reparation**, and at other level, gas flaring, pollution, environmental degradation, unemployment, poverty, and social infrastructure should be considered.

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