INTERNAL COLONIALISM AND REGIONAL RESISTANCE TO OIL EXPLOITATION IN THE NIGER DELTA

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Abstract

The Niger Delta states have a history of non-performing government institutions. Efforts of the Federal government to address the problems of the region date back to the formation of the Niger Delta Development Board in 1958 through NDDC of 2000 to Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs in 2008. The given mandates were to develop the region to be funded with 13% derivation revenue as a special fund contributed from the federation account. Unfortunately, the oil producing communities, the expected beneficiaries of the oil derivation revenue allocations back to the region, have had little or no influence in the allocation and management of these funds. The political elites utilized awards of oil blocks as patronage to their political friends to elicit their cooperation and consolidate power at the federal government level at the expense of those who suffer the effect of oil exploration. Using the secondary sources of data which builds upon the political economy theory, this article aims at finding out whether the abuse of public office through gross deprivations leading to poor governance and lack of accountability by few elites at the regional and federal levels is a prerequisite for both regional and national developments.

Keywords: Internal Colonialism, Regional Resistance, Oil Exploitation, Political Economy Theory, Niger Delta

Introduction:

Nigeria petroleum is classified as "light" or "sweet" crude oil considered largely free of sulphur. Nigeria is the largest producer of sweet oil in OPEC (ERA, 2005). This sweet oil also known as "Bonny light" is similar in composition to petroleum extracted from North Sea. Essentially, Nigerian crude oils are named according to export terminal which include Qua Iboe, Escravos blend, Brass river, Forcados, and Pennington Anfan operated by six companies to wit: Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (British/Dutsh); Chevron Nigeria Limited (American); Exxon-Mobil Producing Nigeria Limited (American); Nigerian Agip Oil Company (Italian); Total Petroleum Nigeria Limited (French); and Texaco (now merged with Chevron) (Energy Information Administration, 2007) with a total of 159 oil fields with 1481 wells in operation according to the Ministry of Petroleum Resources (ERA, 2005). All these are within the productive region of the coastal Niger Delta Basin in the South-south region. Most of Nigeria's oil fields are small and scattered. No doubt Dublin Green *et al* (1998) had observed that as at 1990, the small unproductive oil fields accounted for 62.1% of all Nigerian production while only the sixteen (16) major fields produced 37.9% of Nigeria's petroleum at that time (Dublin-Green *et al*, 1998:40). Notably, all petroleum production and exploration is taken under the aegis of joint venture between foreign multi-national corporations and the Nigerian federal government.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical analysis is anchored within some basic propositions emanating from the Marxist Political Economy theory as expounded by Karl Marx in one of his classis, A *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* in Selected *Works* (1968).

According to Marx (1970: 20-21):

> In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in their development of material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life.

Marx strongly argued that the economic structure of society significantly influences the character of the superstructure which includes the political, legal, cultural and religious relations and institutions of society. But this does not imply a unidirectional model. Account is also taken of dialectical relations; a form of feedback process in which the superstructure also influences the economic substructure. In the words of Marx, *"it is not the* *consciousness of men that-determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being determine, (their consciousness)".*

Hence, dialectical materialism, as its defining method is characterized by:

- Dynamic character of social reality
- Inter-relatedness of different levels of structure
- Primacy of material condition

This paper argued that the centrality of the state, the elite attitude reflected the primitive domination of state resources with increased wealth accumulation by the dominant class and collaborators as against the interest of more people. The point is that, the Niger Delta political elites are compensated, who in turn, corporate with the federal government at the expense of those who suffer the effects of oil exploration.

The Colonial Interest in Nigeria Crude Oil

Before the consolidation of British control over all present day Nigeria's borders in 1914 from the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria, British companies had established trade links with the Niger Delta kingdom forces which had begun imposing drastic political and economic policies on the Nigerian people. Originally, this was done primarily through the government-owned Royal Niger Company (Anikpo, 1984). Literature provides that the company was crucial in securing most of Nigeria's major ports and monopolized coastal trade. According to Ifeka & Stride (1971) most of the population eventually abandoned food production for such market-dependent crops (like peanuts and cotton in the north, palm oil in the east, and cocoa in the west) to oil, resting their hopes on oil dependent government allocation.

Interest in Nigerian oil originated in 1914 with an ordinance making any oil and mineral under Nigerian soil legal property of the Crown (McIntype, 1982). By 1938, the colonial government had granted the state-sponsored company, Shell (then known as Shell D'Arcy) monopoly over exploration of all minerals and petroleum throughout the entire colony. Commercially, crude oil was discovered by Shell roughly 90 km West of Port Harcourt at Oloibiri (now in Bayelsa State) in 1956 (Okonta, 2006). The revenue distribution formula on derivation was initially a 50-50 percent profit sharing system between the Regional or state of production and the national government. This was implemented between the company and the government. Until the late 1960, concessions on production and exploration continued to be in the exclusive domain of the company, then known as

Shell-British Petroleum. However, other firms became interested and by the early 1960, Mobil, Texaco, and Gulf Petroleum companies had purchased concessions.

At independence in October 1960, the British monarch still continued to preside over the public affairs of the nation as Head of State, but the indigenous political leaders quickly altered its relationship with its former colonizers by declaring Nigeria a Republic of three federated states (the Eastern, Western and Northern Regions). Despite the prominent role of oil exports in national affairs thereafter, the Federal government had only limited involvement in the oil industry. This was so because, the government confined its financial involvement in the oil industry to taxes and royalties on the oil exploration companies (Lewis, 2007). The oil companies quickly adjusted and began to set their own price on the petroleum they extracted, and dominated petroleum industry to such a point that the laws governing the oil sector began to have negative effects on Nigeria Niger Delta interests as a result of excessive explorations. Reacting to this new trade behaviour, the Gowon's led military government instituted **the 1969 Petroleum Decree** which dismantled the existed revenue allocation system that had divided revenue from oil taxes equal between federal and state government (Salau 1993:67). The Federal Laws had continued to favour an allocation formula in which the Federal government controlled the dispensation of revenues to the states.

Indigenization Policy of the Petroleum Industry (1970-1979)

The emerged elite framework in the petroleum industry nationalization was the indigenization policy of Mutala Muhammed and Olusegun Obasanjo's government. Although, it was not a full scale nationalization policy because, the Federal government only acquired 51% share of control. Though, in May 1971 the Nigerian Federal government (under the control of General Yakubu Gowon) nationalized the oil industry by creating the Nigerian National Oil Corporation. The Nigerian government persisted in garnering control over oil revenues. In 1972 for instance, it declared that all property not currently owned by a foreign entity is legally the property of the Federal Government (Kuruk, 2004). At this point, the Federal government gained jurisdiction over the sale and allocation of concessions to foreign investors.

At the end of the civil war, the Federal Government considered it necessary to secure and gain more control over the oil industry. According to

Amuwo et al (1998) notwithstanding the Federal government had maintained its involvement in the oil industry prior to 1971, nationalization of the oil sector was also precipitated by Nigeria's desire to join OPEC, which required that, member states acquire 51% stake and become increasingly involved in the oil sector. The military regime however, oversaw the implementation of a number of other important milestones laws related to oil to wit:

1974: Participation in oil industry by the Federal Government increased to 55 percent.

1975: Decree 6 increased Federal government's share in oil sector to 80%, with only 20% going to states.

1976: First, exploration and development venture by Nigeria National Oil Corporation undertaken and drills to uncover commercial quantities of petroleum off-shore.

1978: The Federal Government created the Land Use Act which vested control over state lands on military Governors who were appointed by the Federal military regime. This eventually led to the formulation of Section 40(3) of the 1979 constitution which declared all minerals, oil, natural gas, and natural resources found within the bounds of Nigeria to be legal property of the Nigerian federal government (Guardian 2005:82).

1979: In an effort to establish further control over the oil industry, the federal government merged and restructured the Nigerian National Oil Corporation and the Ministry of Petroleum to form the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, an entity which would exert more power over the allocation and sale of concessions than the Nigerian National Oil Corporation. The same year, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation gained 60 percent participation in the oil industry on behalf of the Federal government (Egborge, 2002). These were accomplished mainly through business deals on concessions to the foreign firms in operation (*The Guardian* 2005:82).

At this point, the political economy of petroleum in Nigeria truly became characterized by the endemic patronage and corruption of the political elites which plagues the nation to this day (Gore & Pratten, 2003:211-241). At both state and federal government levels, power and wealth therefore, became monopolized by few interest groups within the government and business realm, who maintain a strong tendency to "look after their own"; by financially rewarding their political supporters. Umoru (2007:9) at this point argued that, there was heavy patronage based on tribal affiliation which fueled ethnic unrest and violence throughout Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta states where the stakes to control the immense oil resources are very high.

Second Republic and Debt Accruation to Government (1979-1993)

When General Yakubu Gowon was overthrown in 1975, the Obasanjo's junta still managed to succumb to the demands of the civilian populace. In 1979, the military Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo (Rtd) handed over power to the elected government of the National Party of Nigeria **(NPN)** with Shehu Shagari as President. This event coincided with the declaration of Nigeria's Second Republic. At this juncture, the oil producing states of the Niger Delta were accounting for 82% of all Federal government revenue, but the people affected in these states received very little compensation out of the agitation for adequate reimbursement for the black gold extracted from their land (Milaka, 2005). After three years under the 1982 Revenue Act, the Shagari led government gave 1.5% as derivation benefit to the Niger Delta areas. The total revenue allocation percentage to the Federation account was modified by a new military regime in 1984 via **Decree 36**, which reduced government share of oil revenue from 80% to 55%. 32.5% went to States and 10% to local governments (Sanya, 2006). But the 1.5% was retained as a special fund to develop oil producing areas then by the state governors of the oil producing states. All the funds realized were not utilized for the betterment of the people. Shonekan's interim government was short-lived by the palace coup of late General Sani Abacha, who installed himself as military Head of State.

Oil Revenue and the Politics of its Allocations:

The Federal government has domineering power over all sections of the Nigerian people and resources. That of the Niger Delta is not an exception. The Federal government holds sovereignty on behalf of the people and will have to hold the country together when a section misbehaves (Danjuma, 1995). But to the Niger Delta people, oil has provided the excuse in which the Federal government has subjected the region to colonial slavery through continued exploitation of their resources. This politics of domination of the resources in the Niger Delta or its internal colonialism according to

Omotoso Gbenga (2003), started during the civil war years of 1967-70. During the era of British colonial rule, income from minerals and other export products from 1946 to 1966 attracted 50% of derivation to regions in which minerals were mined. The Federal government received about 20% on the average. This was considered a fair principle of derivation which favoured the Niger Delta regions and encouraged healthy competition with adequate funds for implementing ambitious development projects. The rapid advancement which the government of the old western region made in the area of education and social welfare was due to this factor.

The principle of fiscal federalism was abolished by the military during the civil war. After the war in 1970, the **Petroleum Decree 51 of 1969** which gave exclusive ownership of oil resources to the Federal government had already done the damage. Though the excuse of the Federal government was that, the policy was aimed at depriving the breakaway republic of Biafra of access to funds to prosecute the war. The war has ended forty years ago and the law has remained unchanged. Many observed this as criminal against a federating unit.

Significantly, the theory of fiscal federalism attempts adopted here as a framework of analysis explains the different stages of revenue allocation formulae both in colonial and post-independence Nigeria. From literature, Nigeria has had the following revenue sharing panels as shown below. There was the Raisman Commission of 1958. This was followed by Aboyade Technical Committee of 1977, and Okigbo Panel of 1979 before the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) established in 1992 by the military regime of President (General) Ibrahim Babangida (rtd). Interestingly, observers of governmental affairs had remained worried over the orchestrated scheme of the Federal Government, unilaterally reviewing in its favour the revenue allocation proposals from the RMAFC to its advantage. This is contrary to James Buchanan's (1950:586) position on the features of fiscal federalism or residuum as creating a "balance" between the contributions made by region and the value of the public services referred to the individual (here the oil producing areas, region or states are considered within this framework). Buchanan further explained that, under fiscal federalism, an individual (here representing Niger Delta state) is subject to the influence of the fiscal operations of three levels of government. This he suggested will promote the efficiency in resource allocation.

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Three years later under the 1982 Revenue Act, the Shagari led government gave 1.5% as derivation benefit to the Niger Delta areas, though, as a result of the modification of revenue allocation formula via **Decree 36**, which reduced Federal government share of oil revenue from 80% to 55%. 32.5% went to States and 10% to local governments (Sanya, 2006). But the 1.5% was retained as a special fund to develop oil producing areas by the state governors of the oil producing states. But, the development pace in the region remained low as the funds realized were not utilized for the betterment of the people. Shonekan's interim government was short-lived by the palace coup of late General Sani Abacha, who installed himself as military Head of State and adopted repression as a management approach to the crisis in the region.

Distabilizations

Conflict in the Niger Delta aroused in the early 1990s due to tensions between the foreign oil corporations, the Nigerian federal government, and a number of the Niger Delta's ethnic groups who felt they were being exploited, particularly minority groups like the Ogoni and the Ijaw in the late 1990s (Umanah, 2002:16). Ever since then, ethnic and political unrest in the Niger Delta areas had continued throughout the 1990s and persisted upto 2009 before the amnesty proclamation to militants. For example, on assumption of office, Abacha commenced the brutal repression of pro-democracy elements which made his tenure notorious (from global assessments). Throughout the early 1990s, popular unrest grew steadily, particularly in the Niger Delta region, where various ethnic groups began demanding compensation for years of ecological damages, as well as control over their God given oil resources. This unrest manifested itself at the outset as environmental activists and organizations united their members on the basis of ethnicity (Barrett, 2008:18). One of the most prominent of these organisations to emerge in the region was the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People **(MOSOP)** headed by the late Kenule Saro-Wiwa.

The Anger of the Oil Producing Communities

The problems besetting the Niger Delta are indeed formidable. These problems include among others; **The Politics of Oil Exploitation and Resource Domination.** The Federal government has domineering power over all sections of the Nigerian people and resources. That of the Niger Delta is not an exception. The Federal government holds sovereignty on behalf of the people and will have to hold the country together when a section misbehaves (Danjuma, 1995). But to the Niger Delta people, oil has provided the excuse in which the Federal government has subjected the region to colonial slavery through continued exploitation of their resources. This politics of domination of the resources in the Niger Delta or its internal colonialism according to Omotoso Gbenga (2003), started during the civil war years of 1967-70. During the era of British colonial rule, income from minerals and other export products from 1946 to 1966 attracted 50% of derivation to regions in which minerals were mined. The Federal government received about 20% on the average. This was considered a fair principle of derivation which favoured the Niger Delta regions and encouraged healthy competition with adequate funds for implementing ambitious development projects. The rapid advancement which the government of the old western region made in the area of education and social welfare was due to this factor. However, data provided in table 1 below demonstrates different regional under-development that are prevalent in Niger Delta region till date.

Table 1: Regional under-development reflecting federal government insensitivity in the region

Newspaper	Environmental Degradation	%	Regional Neglect	%	Lack of Basic Amenities	%	Total Percentage %
Vanguard	388	***79.84***	217	***89.67***	395	***83.69***	**84.40**
The Guardian	98	***20.16***	25	***10.33***	77	***16.31***	**15.60**
TOTAL	**486**	**100**	**242**	**100**	**472**	**100**	**100**

Source: Okonmah (2009), *Youth Restiveness and Federal Government Policy in the Niger Delta Areas.*

The table above identified major causes of the unresolved development crisis in the Niger Delta region. Specifically, environmental degradation, regional neglect arising from the exploitation of the natural resources with little compensation, and lack of basic social amenities. The indices of these neglects which attracted an average of 84.40% (*Vanguard*) and 15.60% (*The Guardian*) newspapers as presented in table 1 above include; high unemployment rate among youths, the non-provision of basic amenities such as clean water, electricity, hospitals, good roads, and other physical infrastructure.

Environmental Degradation: This implies the lowering or worsening of the biological and physical components of the soil, of the oil producing communities in the Niger-Delta through the exploration of crude oil by the activities of the multi-national oil companies. These environmental damage results in soil erosions, low fertility of agricultural products, gas flaring and pollution, contaminations of water through oil spillages (Dibie, 2000), among others.

Gas flaring: Historically, gas flaring began simultaneously with oil extraction in the 1960s by Shell-BP now PDC (Powell et al 1985:168). Gas flaring in Nigeria is inefficiently managed and releases large amount of methane, which has very high global warming potential. The methane is accompanied by the other major greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, of which Nigeria was estimated to have emitted more than 34.38million tons in 2002, accounting for about 50% of all industrial emissions in the country and 30% of the total CO2 emissions (NDES, 2006). Often, gas flares are located close to residents of local communities and regularly lack adequate fencing or protection for villagers, who risks nearing the tremendous heat of the flare in order to carry out their daily activities.

Gas flares have harmful effects too on human health and livelihood of the communities in their vicinity releasing a variety of poisonous chemicals. Some of the combustion by-products include nitrogen dioxides, sulphur dioxide, volatile organic compounds like benzene, toluene, xylene and hydrogen sulfide and carcinogens like benzapyrene and dioxin. According to Etekpe, (2007), human-beings exposed to these substances can suffer from a variety of respiratory problems commonly found amongst children in the Niger Delta areas but have apparently gone scientifically uninvestigated. These chemicals exposures can aggravate asthma, therein causing breathing difficulties and pain, and chronic bronchitis. Chemical benzene that is emitted from gas flares is a causative agent for leukemia and other blood-related diseases (Ekundaye *et al*, 2000). With all these risk potentials arising from oil exploration in the Niger Delta since 1958, to what extent has the federal government cared about her subjects in the region who are faced with these death threatening diseases?

Oil Spills: Oil spillage as an environmental problem in the Niger Delta has a major impact on the ecosystem into which it is released. Immense tracts of the mangrove forests susceptible to oil spillage are often destroyed. This is mainly because it is stored in the soil and released later with inundation. Oil Spills in Nigeria occur due to a number of causes which include: corrosion of pipelines and tankers (accounts for 50% of all spills), sabotage (28%), and oil production operations (21%) with 1% of the spills being accounted for by inadequate or non-functional production equipment (Atlas, 1995:180-1). Much of the agricultural efforts on food supply can be destroyed by minor leaks, debilitating the farmers and their families who depend on the land for their livelihood. Drinking water is also frequently contaminated showing gloss of oil in many compounds of water (Olagoke, 1996). The effects of these on the lives of the local people (close and around their areas of operations) are not adequately compensated for their damaged crops, animals and aquatic lives which the peasantry lives on. It is therefore not surprising that, the people are frustrated and occasionally or frequently rises up in protest against these oil companies for adequate compensation.

To Ledum Mitee (2006:2) the activities of the oil companies in the region has fifty years of misery and neglect which the people of the oil producing communities could no longer be contented to be bystanders in the exploitation of their resources. The Niger Delta people only see the immense wealth that oil exploration represent but not touched. Mitee's contention is that, fifty years of oil exploitations in the Niger Delta has been fifty years of hell, fifty years of oil has been fifty years of turmoil, fifty years of exploration has been fifty years of tears and deprivation and destruction, and fifty years of oil wealth has meant fifty years of oil and death for the Niger Delta people. The general consequent being that, the Niger Delta people have lost their livelihood, their natural environment with nothing back in return from either the Federal government or oil explorating companies, thus culminating into what is today known as Nigeria's Niger Delta question (Ahiuma, 2006: 7).

Table 2: Availability of basic socio-economic facilities in the oil producing areas of the Niger Delta region

Opinion	SEX		AGE				STATE OF ORIGIN			OCCUPATION				Cum
	M	F	15-25:	26-35:	36-45:	46-x	Baye	Delta	Rivs	P.Em	Emp	Stu	Pol	%
Yes	2015 *52.8*	1003 *26.3*	813 *21.3*	946 *24.8*	891 *23.4*	368 *9.7*	903 *23.7*	981 *25.7*	1134 *29.8*	1330 *34.9*	436 *11.4*	609 *15.9*	643 *16.9*	**79.0**
No	669 *17.6*	123 *3.2*	223 *5.9*	317 *8.3*	209 *5.5*	43 *1.12*	264 *6.9*	177 *4.6*	351 *9.2*	214 *5.6*	222 *5.8*	204 *5.4*	152 *3.9*	**21 .0**
Total	**2684**	**1126**	**1036**	**1263**	**1100**	**411**	**1167**	**1158**	**1485**	**1544**	**658**	**813**	**795**	**100**

Source: Okonmah (2009), Youth Restiveness and Federal Government Policy in the Niger Delta Areas.

On the issue of available schools (primary and secondary) in the studied areas/communities, the table above reveal that, in the oil producing communities 79% [cumulatively] of the respondents affirmed that, schools are available in their areas. This finding is sharp in contrast to the wide reports of scanty educational institutions (21%) in the region or areas.

Resource Control Agitation by Niger Delta People: It is not contestable that, resource control could mean different things to its advocates. Stakeholders from the Niger Delta region in common accord see it as any adjustment of the derivation principle from 13 percent to "at least" 25 percent while others will campaign for 100 percent (Ikelegbe 2001). Resource control agitation from the time of late Isaac Adaka Boro to contemporary heroes and environmentalists is purposive to emancipate the Niger Delta region from marginalization and neglect. This common ideology influenced the youths of the region to declare ownership and resource control known as the **"Kaiama Declaration" of December 11, 1998**. The youth's inspiration manifested from the proverbial postulation of "the goose that lay the golden eggs but have nothing to show for it". For the restive youths in the Niger Delta, the discovery of the black gold in Oloibiri town in the present Bayelsa State in the Mid-1950s by the Shell PDC and subsequent production of the oil in commercial quantities, according to Ajaero & Azubuike (2006:17) has worsened their conditions.

Table 3: The support for Youth Restiveness against Oil Companies in the Niger Delta region

Opinion	SEX		AGE				STATE OF ORIGIN			OCCUPATION				Cum
	M	F	15-25: 26-35: 36-45:46-x				Baye Delta Rivs			P.Em Emp Stu Pol				%
Yes	1422 ***37.3***	657 ***17.2***	629 ***16.5***	911 ***23.9***	415 ***11.0***	124 ***3.3***	802 ***21.0***	799 ***21.0***	478 ***12.5***	1016 ***26.7***	198 ***5.2***	579 ***15.2***	286 ***7.5***	54.6
No	1262 ***33.1***	469 ***12.3***	407 ***10.7***	352 ***9.2***	685 ***18.0***	287 ***7.5***	365 ***9.6***	359 ***9.4***	1007 ***26.4***	528 ***13.9***	460 ***12.1***	234 ***6.1***	509 ***13.4***	45.4
Total	**2684**	**1126**	**1036**	**1263**	**1100**	**411**	**1167**	**1158**	**1485**	**1544**	**658**	**813**	**795**	**100**

Source: *Okonmah (2009), Youth Restiveness and Federal Government Policy in the Niger Delta Areas.*

The table above reflects the views of respondents in relation to supporting youth restiveness against oil companies' activities in the Niger Delta areas. Herein, **54.6%** (cumulatively) of the respondents opinions aligned that, they are in support of youth restiveness as against **45.4%** respondents, who will prefer dialogue, negotiation and bargaining as a peaceful means of achieving results in the regional struggle or emancipation. Youth restiveness here include: arm confrontations, oil pipeline vandalizations, outright destruction of oil facilities, kidnapping, hostage taking, sea piracy, oil bunkering and thievery, among others. Instrumentally, a greater proportion of the respondents which supports the sampled views, are mainly males within the ages 15-36 years. These age brackets essentially constitute the youth militant groups in the Niger Delta areas and crisis.

Conclusion:

Various groups play active roles in the struggle for Niger Delta regional development, constructing the road networks/ infrastructures, provision of all necessary social amenities like water, electricity, and support schools with learning material among others as key factors to promoting peace in the oil producing areas. The mistrust of state functions and responsibilities on the concerns of the oil producing populace, whose living conditions have been displaced by poor governance behaviour. These without doubt, influenced the feeling of gross deprivation by the youth of the Niger Delta region who adopted confrontation against the Nigerian state, hostage taking as the means of negotiation, and kidnapping for ransom the relations of politicians who used them to climb, but dumped them after their victory. Also, the new wave of resistance in the region represent that the youths are only demanding a fair deal from both the oil companies and the

Nigerian state on behalf of their environments. It is the same sentiment that the Niger Delta elites are expressing their agitation for 'Resources Control' or increased derivation revenue to 25% as one of the emerging concepts in the Nigerian Federal question. To cushion the pace of development in the region, the agitation for increased revenue to 25% is tolerable, but the question that remained unanswered is: Where are the trillions of naira that was allocated for developing the region and received by the oil producing state governors from 1999 to 2009? Or do we accept that the 13% derivation fund to the oil producing states from the federation account is not real? If the allocations were distributed correctly and the purpose denied the targeted beneficiaries, then, the elites in the region in conspiracy with the presidency are the internal oppressors.

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