

## The role of natural resource in conflict, environmental destruction and peace-building in the Ogoniland of Nigeria

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This paper is aim to identify, discuss and analyze the role oil wealth in triggering conflict as a result of despoliation of the environment by the oil companies in the Niger Delta region. The exploitation and exploration of oil severely contaminated the environment in the Niger Delta, which is one of the factors that sprung ongoing the natural resources conflict, social unrest and violence in the oil-rich region. The severe environmental damage occasioned by the oil companies activities affects human health and has destroyed many livelihoods across the delta region.

The paper will be divided into four sections to explore, examine and analyze the role of oil and gas in conflict, destruction of the environment and the consolidation of peace in Nigeria's restive Niger Delta region.

Firstly, the people and the oil industries are in disagreement, creating a landscape characterized by the lack of trust, paralysis, and blame. The situation for which the oil hosts communities' well-being is worsening; the oil companies' activities supported by the federal government of Nigeria have seemingly devastated the environment. Secondly, the reckless exploitation of the natural resources in the Niger Delta amounts to environmental devastation - ecological war. The Shell Petroleum Development Company and Nigerian state depend heavily on violence to maintain and sustain their interest to control and exploit those areas where oil discovered. Because of the environmental devastation, the Niger Delta youth formed militant groups to confront the Nigerian state and oil companies through violence means which includes kidnapping oil and vandalization of oil pipelines as well as killing the security forces and the region becomes the hotbed for both the state and oil companies. Thirdly, in other to address the militancy and bring peace to volatile oil rich region, the federal government of Nigeria declared amnesty to the Niger Delta Youth militants. As the result of the amnesty programme, the Niger Delta region for the past six years witnessed relative calm, again in 2016 new militant violence group called Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) emerged. The NDA whose activities have severely affected Nigeria's oil output. The aggrieved Niger Delta youth - fighters are arguing that the region has been environmentally destroyed and deprived of its development despite its enormous contributions to the Nigeria's economy. Fourthly, to bring peace to the Niger Delta region, the federal government of Nigeria and the oil companies accepts to clean-up the Ogoniland in order address the grievance of the Niger Delta people and to bring lasting peace to the resource-rich region of Nigeria.