



# **State, Governance And Regional Integration In Africa**

**Editors:**

**Aloysius-Michaels Okolie  
Hassan Saliu  
Gerald Ezirim**

Published by the Nigerian Political Science Association, July 2019

## **Nigeria and the Politics of United Nations Climate Financing and Environmental Security: Understanding the Debacle of Ogoniland**

**Okafor, Joachim Chukwuma**  
Department of Political Science  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

### **Abstract**

*The crisis of development in the face of environmental degradation in Ogoniland, the seemingly pace of the Ogoni cleanup project and the attendant conflicts it has generated since the unveiling of the United Nations Environment Programme assessment report in 2011, has continued to be the subject of debate among scholars and development practitioners. Ogoni cleanup project is part of the Nigerian government effort in ensuring environmental sustainability in the region. However, years after the submission of UNEP report in 2011, little has been done by the Nigerian state in addressing the challenges of Ogoni people. More serious is the fact that at the 2017 UN climate summit in Paris, President Muhammad Buhari blamed Nigeria's failure to confront the challenges posed by greenhouse gas emission into the Ogoni environment on financial impediments facing Nigeria. This paper argues that, the character of the Nigerian state towards Ogoni cleanup project under the United Nations environment impact assessment programme is responsible for undermining the project. Documentary methods of data collection were deployed and data collected were analysed through content analysis. While relying on the rentier state theory and post colonial state theory as analytical frameworks, we recommend that recovered looted funds from foreign countries should be invested in Ogoni cleanup project as a way of promoting human and environmental security thus, quelling future resurgence of violent armed groups that threaten the state's critical economic interest in the region.*

**Keywords:** United Nations, Climate financing, Environmental Security, Ogoni Environment

### **Introduction**

Several United Nations conferences and conventions on human environment have led to critical considerable attention been invested on the impacts of human induced actions on the environment (Vogler, 2008) and how these impacts have continued to threaten human beings and their environment (Desombre, 2002, Ayoade, 2003, Ekundayo, 2008, Oladiran, 2010, Adelekan, 2011, Okafor, 2011, Sachs, 2014, Olufemi, 2018). The United Nations conference on the human environment held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972, the Vienna convention of 1985, the Montreal Protocol of 1987, the Sustainable development summit in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil in 1992, the Millennium Development Goals summit (MDGs) in 2000 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 are examples of these conferences and conventions.

Oil explorations with its attendant pollution of the environment emanating from flaring of gas, oil spills, indiscriminate dumping of industrial waste are collectively one of such human induced action on the environment that affects the livelihood of the people (Yakubu, 2017, Okeke-Ogbuafor, Gray & Stead, 2018). In Ogoniland, the attention of the world was drawn to the region following the Nigerian State execution of the Ogonis led by Ken Saro wiwa in November 1995 after long years of the Nigerian state and multi-national oil corporation's dominance in the region coupled with decades of environmental degradation that has attracted diverse agitations from the people. The region has become insecure with the proliferations of violent militant non-state actors with dialectics of numerous interests (Ibeanu, 2000, Pitkin, 2013, Ezirim, Onuoha & Nwogu, 2014, Okonkwo & Ekekwe 2017).

On 4 August 2011, UNEP submitted an Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) on Ogoniland to the Nigerian government. For 14-month, UNEP team of experts carried an intensive evaluation of the extent of pollution. The intention was that UNEP's recommendations would be implemented to restore the devastated environment of the Ogonis, on the one hand, and on the other, counteract the numerous environmental health issues that have for decades, plagued Ogoniland (Yakubu, 2017). Thus, the Bodo community in Ogoniland about 40 kilometres Southeast of Port-Harcourt, suffers from oil spills and slicks which blackened the waters, fishes killed and the environment ruined, polluted drinking water (Olatunde-Agoi, 2017). Interestingly, the threats of the continued oil spills, emission of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere by the multi-national oil corporations with different dimensions of challenges it posed on the Ogoni people and their environment persists. Thus, the paper looks at the Nigeria in the United Nations politics of climate financing and environmental security: the debacle of Ogoniland.

The rest of the article is divided into several parts. First, it clarifies the concepts of conference of parties in United Nations framework convention on climate change as the global environmental governance regime, climate financing, environmental security and Ogoni environment. Second, it highlights the theoretical frameworks and the history of oil exploration in Ogoniland. Third, it explores the literature on environmental degradation in Ogoniland and the implementation of the 2011 UNEP report by the Nigerian state. Fourth, it highlights the challenges facing the anticipated clean-up programme. Fifth, the Ogonis and the agitation over the implementation of the 2011 UNEP report. Conclusion and recommendations followed.

## **Conceptual Clarifications**

### ***United Nations***

As a product of post-world war II establishment, the United Nations organization ensures and promotes international peace and security around the world. With different specialized bodies, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with their respective mandates have set out rules making member Countries of the United Nations to reduce the level of greenhouse gas emission in the environment.

After adopting the 2015 Paris agreement, Stern (2018) reveals that nations in the conference of parties (COP21) took a giant step toward establishing an operational regime to spur climate action after some 20 years of failed attempts to do just that. Some of these establishments in the words of Stern include ‘‘a bottom-up structure for emissions targets i.e. nationally determined contributions, balanced by top-down provisions for strong global emission goals and key accountability provisions, such as reporting and review. It shifted the paradigm of differentiation—continuing to assure developing countries that their priorities for growth and development would be fully respected’. Under the UN’s climate politics of environmental sustainability, there are countries with high emitting capacity which includes China, US, Canada, UK, France, Australia, Germany, among others. There are countries at the receiving end of the negative impacts of carbon or greenhouse gas emission on their environment. Majority of countries in developing world Nigeria inclusive are in this category.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the global environmental regime for managing the environment through policy formulations, regulations and implementation by conference of parties in the regime (Trombetta, 2008). Every year between the first to second week of December, parties (signatory countries) to the convention comes together to brainstorm on the state of global environment with countries specifics as it affects human beings, animals and the ecosystem. The 2018 edition was held in Katowice, Poland and 2019 is expected to hold in Rio-de Janeiro, Brazil.

### ***Climate Financing***

This means the nationally set out budget from each member country of the United Nations for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promotion of green project that encourages the mitigation and adaptation to greenhouse gas emissions. In Ogoniland, the Federal government of Nigeria have launched the Ogoniland cleanup programme and there is provision of this project yearly in Nigeria national budget (Osibanjo, 2017). At the global level, following the politics of carbon emissions between the developed and developing countries at the conference of parties (COP) of United Nations framework convention on climate change, most developing countries including Nigeria has been frustrated because of the continuous promise or pledge of aid (climate fund) from the developed economies towards mitigating and adapting over the negatives of climate change. The most inhibiting factor serving as drawbacks towards the release of this fund from developed economies narratives has been implicated in the internal contradictions in developing countries such as poor development and governance index, corruption and insecurity.

### ***Environmental Security***

To ensure environmental security in Ogoniland, putting up a framework to reduce the emission of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere, gas flaring, oil spills with other environmental management protection laws is critical towards environmental sustainability. Ogoniland cleanup project was established on the bases of the above

insight- reducing the negative impact of human activities towards the eco-system such as water, land, air and the aquatic animals living inside them. As observed by Morelli (2011:6), environmental security implies “as meeting the resource and services needs of current and future generations without compromising the health of the ecosystems that provide them, and more specifically, as a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity”.

### ***Ogoni Environment***

Ogoniland environment arising from long years of oil exploration has been polluted through oil spill; gas flaring which has become a threat to human beings and animals living in the environment. This has made Olatunde- Agoi (2017) to describe the Ogoni environment to a condition where drinking water is poisoned, land, air are polluted and the socio-economic life of the Ogonis in shambles.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The paper choice of interfacing the rentier state theory and the Marxian theory of post colonial state is informed by the similarities between the theories because of the emphasis on the challenges of governance, corruption and instability and particularly the underdevelopment syndrome in post colonial state in Africa. According to Mahdavy (1970 as cited in Odigbo, 2017), rentier States are defined as those countries that receive on a regular basis of substantial amounts of external rents majorly from oil revenue. The major proponents of this theory include; Mahdavy (1970), Beblawi (1987), Yates (1996), Gray (2011) klare (2001) Ross (2001), Herb (2002), Schwarz (2004), Smith (2004), among others (cited in Odigbo, 2017). The post colonial theory of the state emphasises the limited autonomy of the state and since is a product of colonial creation, they are bound to fail. The proponents of this theory includes Ake (1985), Jakubowski (1973), Alavi (1973) and, among others. The major tenets of these theories includes-

- That the ruling classes in the post colonial African state are responsible for the slow pace of development in these countries.
- Relentlessly devises several means to perpetuate themselves in power.
- Oil rents are the major source of revenue for the state thereby. This discourages the collection of tax from its citizens. This promotes corruption, lack of accountability and transparency among the ruling elites in the use of oil rents.
- The state is the major collector of revenue.
- The state has limited autonomy from external control.
- The state is receptive of all forms of elitist maneuvering.
- Primitive accumulation of wealth by the elite and preponderance of impunity.

- That since the state elite depend on oil revenue with little commitment from generating income from other sources of revenue especially from taxation, this has given the elite the alibi to spend the oil revenue recklessly.
- That conflict arises among various interest groups in the state because of the internal poor management of this oil rents by the elite and this account for the continued failure of the state and governance in this countries.

How do these theories connect to the realities of the Nigerian state and Ogoniland environment? The state in Nigeria is the principal collector and distributor of oil rents and oil revenue contributes ninety-eight percent of government revenue. The centrality of power arising from the unitarized fiscal federalism bequeathed to the Nigerian state after long years of military dominance at the centre. Arising from poor internal mismanagement of oil revenue which breeds corruption, the Nigerian state has been unable to proffer solution over the festering conflict between itself and the oil bearing communities in Ogoniland in one hand, and between the oil bearing communities and the multi-national oil corporations like the Shell in the region in the other hand (Ibeanu 1998 & 2000 Joseph, 1999).

After the independence in 1960, Nigeria has witnessed different governments with different leadership which have failed to promote good governance, fight corruption while ensuring that the commonwealth of the people are distributed in a manner that have direct impact in reducing the development challenges facing the common man such as good healthcare facilities, education, accessible roads, electricity, food security, information and communication technology, good housing scheme, employment generation (Chukwuemeka,2011). The aforementioned disconnect was widened arising from the discovery of oil with its attendant revenue. This some scholars believed, was the genesis of state-society crisis and failure of the state in Nigeria to provide the citizens with the basic needs of life.

Moreso, Omar (2007), opines that corruption phenomenon have become pervasive and have gained ascendancy in Nigeria due to prevalence of two dominant factors namely; the invasion of politics by the military and the discovery of oil in the country. Thus, the preponderance of these factors has deteriorated the nation's economic, political and social vitality. Sadly, roughly \$500 billion has been lost or stolen over the past 30 years, and despite being the world's sixth-largest oil producer, Nigeria remains one of the poorest and most corrupt countries in the world (Omar, 2007). Following from the above, the rentier character of Nigerian State is demonstrated not only in its capacity to generate huge rents from oil but in the failure of the State to re-invest the proceeds to facilitate growth, developmental priorities, critical infrastructure and sustainable development challenges in the country.

### **Ogoniland and the History of Oil Exploration**

From historical antecedent, Ogoniland and its people are synonymous with the picture of the struggle against environmental degradation and injustice of which the region have been exposed and subjected to from long years of oil exploration. Thus, Ogoni struggles and agitations for environmental justice both from the

operating multi-national oil corporations and the federal government of Nigeria, have continued unabated until the environmental assessment report carried out by the United Nations programme on Ogoniland which was submitted on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August, 2011. Ogoniland is a region covering some 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Southeast of the Niger Delta basin. The area is divided administratively into four local government areas that include; Khana, Gokana, Tai, and Eleme respectively. Ogoniland boasts of a total of 226 communities and harbors majorly six kingdoms. They are, Babbe, Eleme, Gokana, Ken-Khana, Nyo-Khana and Tai (NDPI, 2017).

From 1958 when exploration of petroleum commenced in Ogoniland, oil-related activities resulted in the pollution of land and air until community protests led to the stoppage of oil-drilling in 1993. Pollution from oil wells and pipelines continued after Shell removed their personnel from Ogoniland (Social Action, 2014). In 1990, KAGOTE under the auspices of Ogoni elder's forum which dates back to the 1970s, formed the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People was used and still being used as the rallying platform for campaigning for the greater control over oil and gas resources being extracted from Ogoniland and agitation for economic development, and autonomy of Ogoni people over their affairs. It was the formation of MOSOP that gave birth to a document called "Ogoni Bill of Rights", which contained the demands of the people and which was presented to the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1991 under the military administration of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida Yakubu (2017).

Amidst the continued despoliation of Ogonis natural resources, anthropological environmental degradation, persistent poverty due to deprivation of livelihood means, and utter disregard for culture and tribal language, the Ogonis presented the "Ogoni Bill of Rights" (OBR) to the government and people of Nigeria in 1990. The Ogoniland and its people came into international limelight in the early 1990's with the vehement struggle against the environment injustice. The struggle of Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni activists eventually led to the cessation of oil production activities in the area in 1993 and were later condemned to death through firing squad by the then Military head of the state, General Sani Abacha on November the 8<sup>th</sup>, 1995.

Similarly in 1999, upon the return of democratically elected government in Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo commissioned the United Nations environmental impact assessment in 2006 through his reconciliation process. The commission released its report in 2011 with wide range of informed issues on different damages the region has been exposed to as a result of long years of oil exploration. The report ranges from soil, land, water and air contaminations. Besides the various contaminations and pollution the region is beset with, Ogoniland has been enveloped by many of the same conflict dynamics that affect the wider Niger Delta; including cultism, militancy, the proliferation of weapons, intra- and inter communal conflict, chieftaincy tussles, and widespread youth unemployment. The region has become highly polarized during recent election cycles, with politicians, militants and security figures recruiting cultists and restive youth to intimidate and coerce adversaries and opponents. (NDPI, 2017).

**Environmental Degradation in Ogoniland: A Glimpse at Literature**

Most scholars, Development Practitioners and numerous organizations with operational interest in the Niger Delta region were of the position that the establishment of Amnesty programme in 2009 has within it the proclivity to induced development and security in the region (Okoli, 2013, Mainangwa & Agbiboa, 2013). Thus, despite the Nigerian state intervention in the past especially, during the President Yar'adua led administration and the continued engagement of the same by the past administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, the volatile political environment and the insecurity in the region especially, in Ogoniland has continued unabated (Onuoha, 2016).

It is practically difficult to examine the political economy of oil resource governance, generation and spending in the Nigerian state without taking a cursory examination of the continued political instability in the Niger Delta areas and in Ogoniland in particular that has been fuelled by the apparent long running environmental despoliation and injustices against the people of the area over the years (Onuoha, 2016). The long running conflict of environmental despoliation, state preservation and the protection of business interest in this region over the years since the discovery of crude oil in the 1950's, has been hinged on the irreconcilable interest of the oil-bearing communities, the Nigerian State and the divergent multi-national oil companies especially, the Shell Petroleum company (Okoli, 2013, Yakubu, 2017). The instability arising from failure to manage amicably these irreconcilable interests despite various interventions from the Nigerian state in the past in the region has brought about the rise and continued resurgence of militant groups cum over-bearing state exaction of repression and clampdown of the people as a means of restoring order and stability in the region which has vehemently affected the security and stability of the region (Nwolise, 2017).

Consequent upon the alarming environmental degradation in the region which has devastated the fishing, farming business of the rural dwellers and made the socio-economic activities of the people vulnerable to poverty, unemployment above all, the vulnerability of the People especially, the Youths to violence and criminality (UNEP, 2011), the environmental restoration and stability of the Niger Delta region especially, in Ogoniland will be elusive until the state repression, economic exploitation, environmental and human rights abuses, socio-economic and political marginalization of the region is properly engaged and concrete actions are taken by the Nigerian state (Okoli, 2013).

Moreover, relating to engagement and development of marshal plan in form of concrete plan to remedied the environmental degradation while ensuring stability in the region by the Nigerian State, Yakubu (2017) had argued that with the appalling environmental crisis ravaging the region, the Nigerian State has done little or nothing in remedying the environmental conditions of the area even in the face of the recommendations of United Nations environmental assessment report of the region in 2011. Yakubu opines that both the Nigerian government and Shell have paid little attention to the cry of these people whose ecology and consequently, means of

livelihood have been severely impacted therefore, the rise and vulnerability of the region to the destabilizing activities of the militant groups which breeds instability.

Bassey (2012) had submitted that apart from the policy inconsistencies by different political leadership in Nigeria, the environmental restoration and political stability in the region has become elusive arising from the character of the Nigerian State penchant use of violence and repression in resolving the challenges of insecurity and agitations against environmental injustice in the region. The Nigerian State penchant use of violence rather dialogue has degenerated into the emergence of violent non-state actors who have taken arms against the State with attendant consequences such as pipeline vandalism, oil theft, kidnapping of oil workers and loss of revenue by the government.

While identifying with the syndrome of the character of the Nigerian State as the major hindrance to environmental restoration and political stability in the Niger Delta, Nwolise (2017) had argued that the sheer insecurity and political instability confronting the Nigerian State especially, the Ogoni challenge is hinged in its failure to respond to the fundamental obligations of the State as enshrined in the 1999 constitution especially, the attainment of security of lives and properties, welfare and the political will to engage the youths towards productive employment. Relating to the environmental conditions and poverty of the Ogoni People, the health and agricultural implication of gas flaring, oil pollution, indiscriminate dumping of harmful industrial waste from oil refineries, have had far reaching impacts on people's lives.

Arising from the syndrome of the character of the Nigeria State penchant for the use of force and repression in maintaining order in the region, Nwolise argues that interrelated factors in Nigeria are responsible for the failure of ensuring environmental restoration and political stability in the region. These factors are the negation of social contract pact between the State and the citizens, the frustration and aggression arising from the failure of the social contract pact, the negligence of human security dimension of securitization which include environmental security and sustainability, the lopsided nature of the Nigerian federal practices which favours centralism, as these critical factors. Any attempt to engage the state by the people of Ogoniland is interpreted as challenge to the Sovereign authority of the state and is met with military force even as first option-no dialogue. The brutal killings through firing squad of Ogoni citizens led by late Ken Saro-wiwa in 1995 under General Sani Abacha, the massive killing of inhabitants of Odi under President Olusegun Obasanjo in the year 2000 and with other unaccounted killings in the region are handful case of state use of force and repression against the people of the region.

Multiplicity of literature about the causes and nature of environmental degradation and political instability in Ogoniland abounds. To ensure environmental restoration and political stability in the region, the Nigerian state should as matter of national security pursue vigorously the social contract pact between her and its citizen that enable the state guarantees the security of lives and property, welfare, employment, environmental security and sustainability in the region.

### **Nigeria and the 2011 United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in Ogoniland**

The historical antecedent of oil exploration and production in Ogoniland has been greeted and documented with chequered history, and lamentations of conflict not only between the oil multi-national corporations and the host communities but among the various oil bearing communities on one hand and the oil bearing communities and the federal government of Nigeria on the other hand. Thus, the conflict in the region had worsened arising from the pains of environmental degradation such as water, land and air pollutions which has brought monumental hardship on the people and their various sources of livelihood (Young, Ndiformache & Nakiyingi, 2005).

The federal government of Nigeria under the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2006 engaged the services of experts at the United Nations environment programme to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the impact of long years of oil explorations in Ogoniland. The scope and the feasibility of the assessment which was scientific and evidenced based have its unique challenge that includes; lack of trust between actors, political tensions between communities, regional and national government, gaining access to Ogoniland, security considerations, technical and logistical challenges (NDPI, 2017).

The UNEP report details how the assessment team carried out their work, where samples were taken and the findings that they made. Over a 14-month period, the UNEP team examined more than 200 locations, surveyed 122 km of pipeline rights of way, reviewed more than 5,000 medical records and engaged over 23,000 people at local community meetings. Detailed soil contamination investigations were conducted at 69 sites. Altogether more than 4,000 samples were analyzed, including water taken from 142 groundwater monitoring wells drilled specifically for the study and soil extracted from 780 boreholes (UNEP, 2011). The report was a child of necessity to remedy the multiplicity of health, environmental and sustainable development challenges facing millions of people in Ogoniland (UNEP, 2011). Key actors in the petroleum industry footed the financial cost of the assessment and this was spelt out in the project document. The following are the various aspects of the report and its recommendations. Full assessment report of the UNEP report released to the public on August 4, 2011 on environmental injustices in Ogoniland and the Niger Delta revealed the following:

- Serious contamination of land and underground water tends to be localized; air pollution related to oil industry operations is pervasive and affects the quality of life of about one million people.
- Contamination of drinking water with concentrations of benzene, carcinogen and other multiplicity of pollutants at level over 900 times above World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.
- Contamination of soil over five meters deep in many area studies.
- Spill sites oil companies claimed to have cleaned up were still highly contaminated by pollutants.

- Oil companies failed to meet minimum Nigerian standards, let alone international oil industry standards.
- Water coated with hydrocarbon was more than 1,000 times the level allowed by Nigerian drinking water standards.
- Evidence of oil companies dumping contaminated soil in unlined pits.
- The impact of oil spills on mangrove vegetation is disastrous (cited in Agbonifo, 2016).

As with many oil companies operating in Nigeria, the UNEP report indicated that Shell does not abide with the Nigerian environmental laws as well as the oil industry standards (Amnesty International, 2014). Nevertheless, Shell promised to take immediate action, working with communities, government and other stakeholders, unfortunately no serious action has been taken by Shell and the government, and has continually blamed sabotage and theft as a major contribution to the problem of oil spills in the region (Agbonifo, 2011 & 2016).

Moreover, the United Nations environmental assessment impact reveals that, the challenge of weak regulatory institutional failures was responsible for the long years of oil spills in the region. Separately, oil spills disaster with other environmental degradation in Ogoniland had gone almost certainly unnoticed over several decades, because of the appalling state of environmental management in Nigeria. Some scholars such as Barry 2010, Ordinioha & Brisibe 2013, Obenade & Amangabara 2014, in their studies have separately agreed that the pathetic conditions of Ogoni people are frustrating and the harmful threat poses by oil spill and gas flaring across the Ogoniland makes it extremely difficult for fish, shrimps and crabs in the water that are major source of livelihood of the people.

### **Ogoni Environment and the Challenges Facing the Cleanup Exercise**

There are couple of challenges facing the implementation Ogoniland cleanup project that have been devastated by long years of oil explorations by the dominant multi-national oil corporations like Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC). The challenges are:

- *Corruption, Ineffective leadership and weak institutions in Nigeria:*

Onwuteaka (2016), Yakubu (2017), Okonkwo & Ezinnwanne (2017), Chuks-Ezike (2018) and Essen & Uwaegbulam (2017) were in all agreement that corruption, ineffective leadership and weak institutions in Nigeria are the fundamental challenge facing the implementation of UNEP report in Ogoniland. Environmental laws and policies especially on gas flaring are not followed by the multi-national oil companies in Ogoniland and the political will on the part of the Nigerian state in enforcing them has been compromised over the years.

Pervasive level of corruption remains the topmost impediment against the implementation of the report (Gonzalez, 2016). Corruption and the rentier character of Nigerian State which explains both the nature and character of its leadership. Politics and control of state power is for the self-serving interest of the elites and not for the citizens (Ake, 1996). The Nigerian state has generated billions of dollars from

long years of oil explorations in Ogoniland and the entire Niger Delta region, yet this billions of oil rents has no impact on the lives of its citizens (Ibeanu, 1998, 2000, Omar, 2007).

The Nigerian state and its leadership are at convenience to loot public funds, inflate budgets and contracts, spend billions of Naira in electioneering campaign, rigging an election, battling court litigations and influencing the outcome of tribunal, financing expensive medical trip abroad and other existential frivolities without the interest of the citizens who voted them into power. Nigeria earns much from the export of crude oil but cannot boast of any meaningful developmental strides arising from reckless resource mismanagement when compared to other countries which produce oil and recently, has been compared corrupt with countries whose leadership specializes in looting public treasury like, Pakistan, Peru and Kazakhstan (Jimu, 2009). For example, UNEP report recommended that 1 billion dollars is expected to be used annually for the cleaning up of Ogoniland (UNEP, 2011). Interestingly, billions of naira has been stolen unaccounted for from the country's treasury since the dawn of the fourth republic till date (Ojo, 2016). From the Military to the Civilian administration, billions of naira was stolen unaccounted for and weak institutional framework of the state has reduced the fight against corruption as a charade (Omar, 2007).

➤ *The character of the Nigerian State.*

Bassey (2012) and Nwolise (2017) agreed in consensus that one peculiar characteristics of the Nigerian state is the use of violence rather than dialogue in addressing state-civil society challenge. This has increase instability and reemergence of violent non state actors in Ogoniland. This critical factor that appears responsible for inability of the federal government to implement the Ogoni report is the prevailing weak institution failures and the subtle hegemonic power of multi-national oil corporations in Nigeria (Anochie & Mgbemena 2015). Most environmental regulatory laws in Nigeria especially, those put in place by the federal government of Nigeria aimed at regulating the operational practices of Oil Companies are not effective and are manipulated by these oil corporations especially, in areas of gas flaring and indiscriminate dumping of industrial waste in rivers, lands that people depend from (Udok & Akpan 2017, Yakubu, 2017).

➤ *Youth restiveness in Ogoniland.*

One critical challenges facing the implementation of Ogoniland cleanup exercise is the resolve by the unemployed youths in Ogoniland to have insisted on being paid the money for the cleaning up of the environment rather than giving the money to the contractors (Olatunde-Agoi, 2017). Thus, the confrontations from the Youths against the Shell Petroleum Development Company to award the contract to different contractors rather than to the Youths have increased tension and instability in the region.

The security dilemma which culminates into conflict in the region have made Ogoniland to be clouded by many of the same conflict dynamics that affect

the wider Niger Delta region which includes; cultism, militancy, the proliferation of weapons, intra- and inter-communal conflict, chieftaincy tussles, and widespread youth unemployment (NDPI, 2017). Other challenge working against the implementation of the Ogoni report is apparent lack of political will on the part of Nigerian state and multinational oil corporations in the region.

➤ *Sabotage and oil theft:*

This represents also a major contribution to the problem of oil spill in Ogoniland and threats to maritime security (Agbonifo, 2016).

### **Ogonis and Agitation over the Implementation of UNEP Project**

The continued agitation for the cleanup of Ogoniland by the people of the area, were primarily based on the long years of oil exploration by the multi-national oil companies like Shell Petroleum development company which through its explorative activities in the region has brought unprecedented damage on the socio-economic conditions of the people with farming and fishing enterprise in Ogoniland affected in a great deal (UNEP, 2011).

Obenade & Amangabara (2014) noted that indiscriminate dumping of hazardous materials, oil pollutant and spills are inimical to the immediate communities and contaminate water and air quality. Environmental degradation has been made plausible by weak environmental regulations and poor enforcement mechanisms of the Nigerian state. The 2011 UNEP reports based on two years scientific research revealed unprecedented widespread oil contamination of soil and water body with severe consequences on health, agriculture, ecology and aquatic life. The most critically affected is drinking water with adverse health risk on communities. The spills contaminated the surface water, ground water, ambient air, and crops with hydrocarbons, including known carcinogens like polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon and benzo (a) pyrene, naturally occurring radioactive materials, and trace metals that were further bio -accumulated in some food crops (Ordinoha & Brisibe, 2013). Though, the federal government of Nigeria on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, 2016 due to domestic and international pressures over the delay of the implementation of the UNEP report since 2011 upon its submission, yielded to the pressure by flagging off the implementation of the report in Port Harcourt.

Thus, opinion varies from scholars as to why the delay of implementation by the federal government. The response of the Nigerian government has fallen far short of expectations, in view of its responsibility to safeguard the environment, as enshrined in Section 20 sub-section two of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria. While the Government has set up the Hydrocarbon Pollution Restoration Project (HYPREP), the agency is under the Office of the Minister of Petroleum Resources, a complicit party in the pollution of Ogoniland. HYPREP was not backed by legislation and was also not provided with adequate operational funds needed to totally execute its mandate. The result is that, generally, neither the agency nor the government has done anything worthwhile to restore the Ogoni environment (Social Action, 2014). More worrisome according to the report is that, even the emergency measures like the

provision of alternative sources of drinking water have not been taken seriously by the government. Ogoni community members continue to drink from badly contaminated water wells and bathe in badly polluted streams.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Nigerian state diplomacy in becoming a signatory and subsequent ratification of agreement and conventions at the United Nations platforms has gained momentum however, the domestication of these conventions and agreements are a function of elite's interest in Nigeria. Since the submission of UNEP report in 2011, the Nigerian state has done little to alleviate the environmental challenge facing the Ogoni people. In view of the above, the paper recommends the following:

- The recovered looted fund from overseas banks should be reinvested in the Ogoni cleanup project.
- Alternative drinking water supply should be devise by all levels of government in Ogoniland in reducing the challenges of safe drinking water in the region.
- Job opportunities should be created by the government in collaboration with the private sector initiatives.
- Well equipped hospital and affordable health care services should be provided by the government in collaboration with private sector initiatives in treating the people that have been affected by various forms of contaminations.
- There should be Ogoni development Authority entrusted and backed by the law from National Assembly to take oversight functions in the area.
- The restructuring debate over the lopsided and militarized brand of Nigerian federal practice should be patriotically engaged for the survival of the Nigerian State

### **Reference**

- Adelekan, I.O. (2011). Climate change, weather extremes and society. The Seventeenth Faculty Lecture of Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan. May 25
- Agbonifo J. (2011). Territorializing Niger Delta conflict: Place and contentious mobilization, *Journal for and about Social Movements*, 3(1), 240-265
- Agbonifo, P. (2016). Oil spills injustice in the Niger Delta region: Reflections on oil industry failure in relation to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report. *International Journal of petroleum and gas exploration management*, 2 (1), 26-37
- Ake, C. (1985). The State in Contemporary Africa. In Ake, C. (ed.), *Political Economy of Nigeria*. Lagos: Longman.
- Ake, C. (1996). *Democracy and Development in Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited
- Amnesty International (2014). The State of the World's Human Rights. [www.Amnesty.org](http://www.Amnesty.org)

- Amnesty International (2015) Clean it Up: Shell's false claim about oil spill response in the Niger Delta. [www.Amnesty.org](http://www.Amnesty.org)
- Amnesty International (2016). The state of the World's Human Rights. [www.Amnesty.org](http://www.Amnesty.org)
- Anochie, U.C & Mgbemena, O.O, (2015). Evaluation of Some Oil Companies in the Niger Delta of Nigeria: An Environmental Impact Approach. *International Journal of Environment and Pollution Research*, 3(2): 13-31.
- Aworawo, D. (2013). Deprivation and Resistance: Environmental Crisis, Political Action and Conflict Resolution in the Niger Delta since the 1980's. *Journal of International and Global Studies*, 52-70.
- Ayoade, J.O. (2003). *Climate Change: A Synopsis of its Nature, Causes, Effects and Management*. Ibadan: Vantage Publishers Limited.
- Barry, F. B. (2010): Environmental Injustices: Conflict and Health Hazards in the Niger Delta. Substantial Research Paper, Washington, DC, pg. 1 – 73.
- Bassey, C.O. (2012). Oil and Conflict in the Niger Delta: A Reflection on the Politics of State Response to Armed Militancy in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(11), 77-90
- Chukwuemeka, E.M. (2010). The Political Economy of Conflict Resolution in a Natural Resource Economy: The case on Nigeria's Niger Delta. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 5(3): 152-158
- De Sombre, E. R. (2002). *Global environment and world politics*. London: continuum Books Limited
- Ekundayo, O. (2008). Nature's Gifts: Essence, Oils and Plants. An Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University of Ibadan on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> November.
- Ezirim, G. E, Onuoha, F.C & Nwogu, C. L. (2014). Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Human Security in Nigeria. *Journal of International Relations and Diplomacy*, 1 (1&2), 126-147
- Gonzalez, A. (2016). The Land of black gold, corruption, poverty and sabotage: Overcoming the Niger Delta's problem through the establishment of a Nigerian Non Renewable Revenue Special Fund (NNRSF). *Journal of Cogent Social Science*, 2(1): 1-22.
- Ibeanu, O. (1998). Exiled from their own Home: Internal Population Displacement in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science*, 3(2): 80-97.
- Ibeanu, O. (2000). Oil the Friction: Environmental Conflict Management in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. *Environmental change & Security Project Report*, (6): 19-32.
- Jimu, I. (2009). Managing Proceeds of Assets Recovery: The Case of Nigeria, Peru, Philippines and Kazakhstan. International Centre for Asset Recovery. Basel Institute on Governance, working paper series, No.06
- Joseph, R.A. (1999). *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The rise and fall of the second Republic*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Maiangwa, B & Agbibo, D.E. (2013). Oil Multinational Corporations, Environmental Irresponsibility and Turbulent Peace in the Niger Delta, *Africa Spectrum*, 48(2), 71-83

- Morelli, J. (2011). Environmental Sustainability: A Definition for Environmental Professionals. *Journal of Environmental Sustainability*, 1 (2), 1-8
- Niger Delta Partnership Initiatives (2017). Ogoniland: Remediating the Troubled Region. Conflict briefing: June, 2017.
- Nwolise, O.B.C. (2017). The State, Security and Economy in Nigeria. Being the Lead Paper Presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association, South East Zone held at Abia State University, Uturu.
- Obenade, M. & Amangabara, G. T. (2014): The Socioeconomic Implications of Oil Theft and Artisanal Refining in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 3(7), 2390 – 2394
- Okafor, J.C. (2011). Oil and the Politics of Greenhouse Reduction: Implication for Developing Countries, unpublished Master's Dissertation Department of Political Science, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria
- Okeke-Ogbuafor, N, Gray, T.S & Stead, S.M. (2018). Perception of the Existence and Causes of Structural Violence in Ogoni Communities, Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2018.1437256>
- Okoli, A.C. (2013). The Political Ecology of the Niger Delta Crisis and the prospects of Lasting Peace in the Post-Amnesty Period. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 13(3), 37-46.
- Okonkwo, C.I & Ezinwanne, E. (2017). Environmental Management and Sustainable Development in the Niger Delta. *South East Journal of Political Science Review*, 1(1), 254-267
- Oladiran, E.O. (2010). Atmosphere Dynamics and Regional Contributions to the Earth's Energy Balance and Global Warming. An Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University of Ibadan on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> August.  
<https://phys.org/news/2017-06-anger-nigeria-south-oil-clean-up.htm>
- Olatunde-Agoi, J. (2017). Anger in Nigeria's South over Oil Spill Cleanup Delay.  
<https://phys.org/news/2017-06-anger-nigeria-south-oil-clean-up.htm>
- Olufemi, M. (2018). Climate change and effects on present-day Nigeria. February 2  
[www.tribuneonline.ng](http://www.tribuneonline.ng)
- Omar, L.M. (2007). Mallam Nuhu Ribadu: Fighting Corruption in Nigeria. *Chazen web Journal of International Business*, 1-3.  
[www.gsb.columbia.edu/chazen/webjournal](http://www.gsb.columbia.edu/chazen/webjournal)
- Onuoha, F.C. (2016). The Resurgence of Militancy in Nigeria's Oil Rich Niger Delta and the Dangers of Militarization. <http://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2016/06/resurgence-militancy-nigerias-oil-rich-niger-delta-dangers-militarisation-160608065729726.htm>
- Ojo, J. S. (2016). Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999- 2014). *Canadian Social Science*, 12 (9), 1-20. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/8794> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/8794>

- Ordinioha, B. and Brisibe, S. (2013): The Human Health Implications of Crude Oil Spills in the Niger Delta, Nigeria: An Interpretation of Published Studies. *Nigerian Medical Journal*, 54(1), 6-10
- Osibanjo, Y. (2017). Speech Delivered by His Excellency Professor Yemi Osibanjo, SAN, GCON Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Rivers State Oil Producing Communities Stakeholders Meeting Held at the Government House Banquet Hall, Port Harcourt on 13<sup>th</sup> of February, 2017. [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com).
- Pitkin, J. (2013). Oil, Oil, Everywhere: The Environmental and Human Impacts of Oil Extractions in the Niger Delta. Pomona Senior Theses. Paper 88. [http://scholarship.claremont.edu/pomona\\_theses/88](http://scholarship.claremont.edu/pomona_theses/88)
- Sachs, J.D. (2014). Sustainable Development Goals for a New Era. *Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences*, extra series 41, Vatican City
- Social Action (2014). Still Polluted: Monitoring Government and Shell's Response to UNEP'S Environmental Assessment of Ogoniland. Published by Social Development Integrated Centre, Port Harcourt, River State, Nigeria.
- Stern, T. (2018). The Paris Agreement and its future. Brookings institution, Paper 5, October.
- Udok, U & Akpan, E.B. (2017). Gas Flaring in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. *Global Journal of Politics & law Research*, 5(1), 16-28
- United Nations Environment Programme (2011) Environmental Assessment of Ogoniland <http://www.unep.org>
- Vogler, J. (2008). Environmental issues. In: Baylis, J, Smith, S & Owens, P (eds), *The Globalization of World Politics* (4<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Yakubu, O. H. (2017). Addressing Environmental Health Problems in Ogoniland through Implementation of United Nations Environmental Program Recommendations: Environmental Management Strategies. *Environments*, 4 (28), 2-19
- Young, S., Ndiformache, M. M., & Nakiyingi, C. (2005). Reclaiming the land: Third world environmental movement and global environmental discourse. *The Interdisciplinary Journal of International Studies*, 3, 23-44