

IMPACT OF PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY PROGRAMME ON PEACEBUILDING IN NIGER DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The declaration of the Federal Government amnesty was welcomed by a large section of the society and groups, including several international bodies pledge their supports for the programme. Thus securing lasting peace in the crisis prone region has not been easy as several peace-building efforts aimed at resolving violent agitations in the Niger Delta have failed. The study examined the impact of Presidential Amnesty Programme on Peace building in Niger Delta region, Nigeria. The study uses predominantly secondary data. The study findings revealed that amnesty programme is predicated on the willingness and readiness of the militants to give up all illegal arms in their possession and completely renounce militancy in all its ramifications unconditionally and the programme has strengthened peace-building and promoted peace in the state through the provision of health screening and medical attention for ex-combatants. Also, the study revealed further that programme provides economic benefit to the beneficiaries through education and vocational training in the state, ex-militants become engaged in legitimate and viable ventures that keep them busy and help them stay away from militancy. Therefore, the study recommended that there is a need for the state government to put measures in place to promote community engagement, participation, and conflict resolution at the local level as this could indirectly support the goals of the Amnesty Programme by fostering an environment of collaboration and understanding. Also, Government could work to ensure that the Amnesty Programme aligns with other government initiatives and development programmes in Niger Delta region. This coordination



can lead to more comprehensive and holistic approaches to addressing the challenges in Niger Delta region. Government interventions could encourage the integration of sustainable development initiatives alongside the Amnesty Programme.

Keywords: Impact, Presidential Amnesty Programme, Peacebuilding, Niger Delta Region

INTRODUCTION

Petroleum which happens to be backbone of Nigerian economy today was discovered in 1956 and with the commencement of exploration of the resource in Oloibiri, Ogbia Local Government of Bayelsa State in 1959. Nigeria entered into new era of national development. Unfortunately, the initial optimism that greeted the discovery of crude oil in Nigeria did not last. Neglect of oil producing communities by successive governments coupled with unprecedented environmental degradation caused by oil spillage, gas flaring and other ecological issues have adversely affected the nation. [Ejovi and Ebie \(2013\)](#) citing Niger Delta Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration Project (2006), affirm that the environmental impact of oil exploration in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has contributed in no-small measures to the destruction of the fragile ecosystem.

The revenue generated from the region of Niger Delta accounts for over eighty percent of its foreign earnings and its daily oil production amounts to 2.46 million barrels ([Obi, 2014](#)). Ironically, the people of the Niger Delta region have not experienced meaningful development. The people of the Niger Delta live in one of the poorest and the least developed areas in the country. Unemployment is at over 70 percent of the population which is almost double the national average of 40 percent ([David & Nyiayaana 2011](#); [Idemudia 2009](#)). The political economy of oil and the failure of previous regimes have exposed the region to exploitation by oil multinationals. This exploitation includes land degradation and pollution through the poor regulation of the activities of the multinationals in the region ([Akinola, 2015](#)). The implication of this is that the people, whose means of survival is mainly agriculture and fishing, have been systematically uprooted and deprived of their basic source of livelihood. Environmental pollution and degradation also impact on the life expectancy in the region. The region which hitherto produced its own food and water now depends on food imports and people travel several miles to the city in order to access their basic needs ([Ahonsi, 2011](#)). Consequently, the paradox of rising unemployment, environmental degradation, poverty and underdevelopment in the midst of abundant oil wealth has increased the

grievances of the Niger delta people. For this reason, there have been several forms of local peaceful protests since the 1960s which later transformed into a violent agitation following the lack of an adequate response from the Federal Government.

An early peaceful protest was Isaac Adaka Boro-Twelve Day Revolution in 1972, which was brutally crushed by the state. Another protest was the Ken Saro-Wiwa led demonstrations in the 1980s, which placed particular focus on environmental degradation. Indeed, Saro-Wiwa's struggle introduced a new phase of protest which attracted significant international support. Unfortunately, all these efforts were discountenanced by Nigeria's Federal Government. Saro-Wiwa was subsequently implicated and executed with eight other Ogoni activists (Ahonsi, 2011). They were accused of inciting the youth which resulted in the killing of four Chiefs in the region. As a result, the inability of the Federal Government and the oil multinationals to appropriately address the situation radically changed the character of the protest from a peaceful to a violent conflict (Ojakorotu, 2008; Ukiwo, 2007).

The region is considered to be one of the world's most severally petroleum impacted ecosystems and one of the most petroleum-polluted environments in the world. Despite the fact that the Nigerian Government derives 70 percent of its revenue and up to 90 percent of its foreign earnings from crude oil exploration from the Niger Delta, poverty level in the region is ranked among the highest in Nigeria. According to Watts (2008) cited in Oluduro (2012), almost 90 percent of the local inhabitants of the Niger Delta fall below the poverty line of \$1 dollar per day as they depend on aquatic resources for their livelihoods. The catastrophic ecological situation of the Niger Delta region, which has direct negative effect of crude oil exploration activities in the region, has virtually destroyed the area's aquatic resources. Crude oil exploration brought countries like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates wealth and prosperity but for Nigeria, the biggest oil producing country in Africa, crude oil exploration has not resulted in comparable development. Not much of the money derived from the sales of crude oil has been used for the development of the country as a result of corruption (Oluduro, 2012).

The Niger Delta crises have been major threats to socio-economic activities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. At present, the amnesty programme is 15 years since its implementation in the Niger Delta as the Federal Government of Nigeria through the amnesty package had good intentions for granting militants amnesty with the hope that the gesture would effectively put an end to youth's restiveness in the region. Amnesty, therefore is a guarantee of exemption from prosecution and pardon from punishment for certain criminal, rebel and insurgent actions hitherto committed against the state. It indemnifies affected persons in terms of safety and protection from punitive actions, retributions

and associated losses. An amnesty most often is within a specific time within offenders admit crime and take advantage of the general pardon of government (Ikelegbe, 2010).

With the emergence of a Pan-Niger Delta militia group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in 2006, the struggle for local control of Nigeria's oil assumed a more violent dimension with clearly articulated grievances namely Environmental Insecurity and Socio-Economic Marginalization of the Niger Delta people, sundry groups emerged in the Niger Delta as well. Some of these groups, it would appear, were driven not by liberation ideology but crime and criminality. Independently, the activities of these groups created a difficult security challenge in Nigeria's oil belt (Aaron, 2010). Oil installations were attacked and oil workers particularly expatriate staffs were taken hostage for ransom. All these were happening, in spite of the heavy presence of the Joint Task Force (JTF), comprising of the Navy, Army, Air Force and Police, who were sometimes over run by the superior fire power of the militants (Aaron, 2010). The implications of this parlous security were grave. Oil production figures plummeted to all time low, as many Multinationals companies announced production shut-ins. Specifically, average production figure for 2009 was around 1.6million barrels per day (bpd), down from 2.7 million bpd (NNPC, 2009). The country lost an estimated \$92 billion in oil export earnings to production shut-in and crude oil theft associated with the activities of militants (Davis, 2009). The cumulative effect of this was a drastic fall in the country's oil exports. Consequently, public finance was subjected to one of the worst crises since independence. The late President Umaru Yar'Adua, on 25th June 2009 announced an amnesty for militants who were willing to surrender their arms. The amnesty programme was in phases: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) (Aaron, 2010). Disarmament of militants entailed the physical removal of the means of combat from ex belligerents (weapons, ammunition). Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed groups, followed by processing of individual combatants in temporary centers with provision of support packages. Reintegration entails the process of reintegrating former combatants/militants into civil society ensuring against the possibility of a resurgence of armed conflict (Nwachukwu & Pepple, 2011).

Consequently, as crude oil gradually became the backbone of Nigerian economy, accounting for about 99% of the nation external earning, the government of Nigeria could

no longer ignore the Niger Delta agitation following the fall of crude oil production to all time low of 700,000 barrels per day due to vandalism, kidnapping, bunkering and other vices disrupting exploration process in Niger Delta Region. It is on this note, following the submission of Ledum Mitee reports with other recommendations, the Federal Government after consultation with the council of States and in pursuit with section 175 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria granted unconditional pardon to all persons who have directly or indirectly participated in the commission of offences associated with militant's activities in the region. The amnesty was proclaimed on 25th June, 2009 included forgiveness and automatic freedom from any form of prosecution whatsoever which was expected to run for a 60-day period from August 6th to October 4th 2009, (Idonor 2009, Ikelegbe and Umokoro 2014). During this period, opportunity was given to ex-agitators to surrender their arms and ammunitions in exchange for presidential pardon. The declaration of the Federal Government amnesty was welcomed by a large section of the society and groups, including several international bodies pledge their supports for the programme. Thus securing lasting peace in the crisis prone region has not been easy as several peace-building efforts aimed at resolving violent agitations in the Niger Delta have failed but as part of his efforts.

Also, the Federal Government in proclamation of unconditional amnesty for Niger Delta ex-agitators included the willingness and readiness for them to surrender their arms and ammunitions on or before the expiring date October 4th 2009. So far, 30,000 ex-agitators have accepted the FG amnesty programme. In pursuant to the letter, the FG also instituted a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) package for those who embraced amnesty before the deadline with a 65,000 monthly stipend being paid to ex-militants who accepted the offer of amnesty (Kuku, 2012). The FG through the Presidential Amnesty Programme is to manage, supervise and implement the amnesty programme. At the end of 60 days' period on October 4 2009, a total of 20,192 repentant-militants surrendered their arms and ammunitions to the FG and accepted the programme. As at November 2010, additional 6,166 ex-agitators were enlisted into the PAP this constituted the second phase and brought the number of persons enlisted to 26,358. More importantly, in 2012 the FG approved the inclusion of 3,642 transformed ex-agitators who were excluded in both the first and second phases, bringing the total number of ex-militants to 30,000 that have so far embraced and accepted the amnesty programme proclaimed by the Federal Government.

Nonetheless, 15 years now into the amnesty programme there are fears bearing in mind the method of implementation that sustainable peace may not be realized when the programme comes to an end. However, the post-conflict era of the Niger Delta region

has witnessed various kinds of social unrest, which have hampered development ranging from kidnapping, illegal oil bunkering, piracy, bombings, disruption of pipeline facilities and other crimes. Therefore, this study seeks to examine impact of Presidential amnesty programmes on peace building in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. What are the roles of Presidential Amnesty Programme on Peacebuilding in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?
- ii. What are the impacts of Presidential Amnesty Programme on Peacebuilding in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent has Presidential Amnesty Programme reduced conflict in communities in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?
- iv. What are the challenges of the implementation of Presidential Amnesty Programme in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?
- v. What is the effectiveness of Presidential Amnesty Programme in resolving conflict in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Amnesty

Amnesty is not new to the world. According to [Ikelegbe & Umokoro 2014](#)) cited in [Imongan \(2015\)](#): the word amnesty is a Greek word derived from "amnestia" which is an act of grace by which the supreme power in a state restores those who may have been guilty of any offence against it to the position of innocent persons (Novus homo) and it includes more than pardon, in as much as it obliterates all legal remembrances of the offences. It is also the act of authority by government in which pardon is granted to persons especially for political offences, and release from guilt or penalty of an offence.

An amnesty is an exoneration and pardon from punishment for certain criminal, rebel and insurgent actions committed usually against the state and society. An amnesty is always backed by law and has a specified period of time for the assumed offenders to admit the offence and accept pardon. Amnesty guarantees an interregnum of peace, cessation of hostility and a state of unsecured quiet which necessitates a post conflict scenario for peace building. Post conflict transition ensures comprehensive changes in terms of structures, institutions, orientations and attitudes. It is very sensitive and involves socio-political engineering, economic recovery and military and security interventions.

(Collier, Hoeffler & Soderbom 2006) have found that post conflict economic growth and economic recovery for example reduces substantially the risk of conflict reversion. Unresolved grievances, poverty, decay of trust, intention and confidence and unfocused leadership are among the factors which can cause relapse to conflict. Post conflict reversion is very costly and dreadful. Stages in the management of post conflict transition to peace are sequentially disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. (DDR) Within the context of the study, amnesty is an exoneration and pardon from punishment for certain criminal, rebel and insurgent actions committed usually against the state and society.

Peace Building

Peace building is an all-encompassing whole process of facilitating and strengthening enduring peace. According to Fisher et al (2000) peace building involves “understanding programmes designed to address the causes of conflict and the grievances of the past and to promote long term stability and justice”. It is an effort to ensure socio-political and economic stability of the society. Peace building is proffering durable solution to a conflict ridden society to achieve durable peace. They further stated that peace building does not only address conflict behaviours but more importantly the underlying context behaviours that gave rise to violence. (The causes and triggers).

Theoretical Framework

This paper is positioned within the Social Contract Theory. Generally, social contract theorists advance the view that the state or, more precisely, civil society is the product of a contract, a covenant, an agreement, or a compact. Its earliest recognizably modern form dates back to Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and others (Nbeta, 2012). However, Lockean social contract theory is adopted as the theoretical underpinning for the Nigeria's Niger Delta phenomenon but later supported with peace-building theoretical proposition. John Locke (1632-1704), as an English philosopher, titled his major political writing, "Second Treatise of Government" (1690) at the dawn of the English Glorious Revolution of 1688. Locke's was primarily concerned with providing a justification for government by consent (that is limited government) and a right to revolution where the government fails. As such, Locke posited that men in a state of nature are capable of rational thought and of moderate, practical behavior even without a government (Deutsch cited in Epelle, 2010). Since this state of nature was social but lacking in the political, it means that some persons will naturally infringe on the rights of others. Since covetousness was part of the nature of man, there was the need to set up a civil-society based on their collective consent to which they will voluntarily submit themselves.

The civil society so established is for the greater assurance of the preservation of their lives, liberty and property (Sabine &

Thorson, 1973). Having created a political society and government through their consent, men then gained three things which they lacked in the State of Nature: laws, judges to adjudicate laws, and the executive power necessary to enforce these laws. Each man therefore gives over the power to protect himself and punish transgressors of the Law of Nature to the Government that he has created through the contract. According to Locke, the purpose of the Government and law is to uphold and protect the natural rights of men. So long as the Government fulfills this purpose, the laws given by it are valid and binding, but when it ceases to fulfill it, then the laws would have no validity and the Government can be resisted. Hence, John advocated a state for the general good of people. He pleaded for a constitutionally limited government (Manzoor, 2013). In connection with Locke explanation, the amended 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) required the Nigeria state to respect and protect the fundamental human rights of her citizens including the protection of lives and property. The Government is expected to be guided and to govern based on the principle of the rule of law or rule of the constitution (CFRN, signed 2011).

Hence, it follows from Locke's explanations that: first, the three tiers of government in Nigeria (Federal, State and Local) are set up by the citizenry and owe their continuous existence to the periodic mandate of the citizens. Second, these Governments are set up by the collective will of the citizens to protect their lives, liberty and property. Man's acquisitive tendencies in the state of nature are likely to make him infringe on other people's properties (whether God-given or laboriously acquired) and government's main duty is to mediate amicably between the aggressor and the oppressor not to take sides. Thirdly, in light of the above, Locke 's theory is unequivocal in its insistence that once a Government reneges in its duty to safeguard the interest of its citizens, the latter has the right to resist its tyrannical, biased, prejudicial or cavalier tendencies (Epelle, 2010).

Logically therefore, Niger Delta's agitation sprang out of discontent by the most vocal part of the Niger Delta population to draw Government's attention. As earlier noted, Egwu (2013) has made it known that despite the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities in the Niger Delta region since 1956, the Niger Delta region remains poor, her people have remained unemployed and the region is underdeveloped due to blatant environmental pollution, despoliation and political marginalization while the post-colonial Government of the Nigerian state has failed to pay adequate attention to their expressed dissatisfaction that

were communicated through several peaceful means. Hence, [Ojakorotu and Gilbert \(2010\)](#) pointed out that this act by the Nigerian state led to constant oil related violence in the Niger Delta in an attempt to compel the Nigerian state and MNOCs to remedy the injustices perpetrated in the region. It is no wonder, [Epelle \(2010\)](#) discloses that the post-colonial Nigerian state's failure to tame and ensure the MNOCs operate the policy of best business practices as it is obtainable globally; and to constantly exhibit Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Niger Delta states where they operate, bearing in mind that the oil minerals they are mining are properties of the inhabitants of the Niger Deltans who are morally justified to call them to order, in the event of any breach of the memorandum of understanding signed by both parties have all contributed to Niger Delta rebellion or revolution given credence to the Locke's social contract theory on the right to revolution when the Government fails to discharge its duty.

To support the above, amnesty introduced as a peace-building mechanism to curtail Niger Delta agitators, appears not to be taking care of the root cause as reveals by [Adeyemo and OluAdeyemi \(2010\)](#); [Epelle \(2010\)](#); [Azinge \(2013\)](#); [Moshood \(2016\)](#); [Dudu and Odalonu \(2016\)](#). The DDR process in connection with amnesty also constituted a peace agreement between Nigerian state and Niger Delta militants. Yet, if x-rayed or mirrored by extant peace-building theoretical propositions for transforming a violent-habituated system into a peace system, seems to fall below expectations which may have accounted for post-amnesty crisis in the region further gives credence to Locke's social contract theoretical foundation in all ramification. Hence, according to peace building expert, [Peek \(2016\)](#) for peace-building to be truly successful, it must include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people. It is believed that, to determine success or failure, one can distinguish three different standards.

First of all, the maximalist standard is the most ambitious of peace-building practices. Its goals reach as far as addressing the actual root causes of the conflict. The maximalist standard seeks to end conflict, keep the peace and address deeply rooted issues in a society. Secondly, the minimalist standard, this practice only seeks to end an immediate conflict and keep the peace. It does not delve deeper into the war-torn society trying to determine and solve grievances that could be pointed as a cause for the conflict. Lastly, the moderate standard entails that peace-building is assessed by determining the quality of post-war governance and the absence of a recurrence into conflict. All in all, the success of any post-conflict peace-building operations depends largely on the preceding expectations. However, this present study would not only help to understand and classify the peace-building programme in Niger

Delta properly but to propose a new model that will help the Nigeria state to build a peace system.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

A number of studies have been conducted on amnesty in Nigeria deal with the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. [Omokhoa and Ikelegbe \(2016\)](#) examined amnesty programme in Nigeria, this study seeks to capture the impact and challenges of the amnesty programme in post conflict Niger Delta region. The qualitative and quantitative method sampling procedure was used for the study. Omokhoa and Ikelegbe carried out the research in Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. And adopted purposive sampling method because of the nature of militancy activities in the area. Omokhoa and Ikelegbe revealed that for decades, the people of the region have long been neglected, marginalized and lacked the basic infrastructure. Since then, the agreement made by the Federal Government is still unfulfilled, and urged the FG to address the problems in the region.

Moreover, the distorted development pattern in Niger Delta Region have been sufficiently reported in extant literature ([Ekiyor, 2001](#); [Albert, 2011](#); [Dukor, 2003](#); [Osuoka, 2003](#); [Menegbon, 2003](#); [Ogundiya, 2011](#); [Ojo, 2015](#)). The area despite having a significant portion of the nation's wealth is characterized by widespread and institutionalized poverty, manifesting in the form of malnutrition, endemic hunger, poor health, general lack of access to suitable accommodation, formal education, and a devastating environmental degradation ([Ogaboh et al, 2020](#)). The unimaginable violence that has invariably constituted a perennial problem has done more harm than good to the region. [Umar et al, \(2017\)](#) have specifically criticized the profound crude oil spillage through pipeline vandalism in the region. Increasing reports of pipeline vandalism by hoodlums in the creeks of the Niger Delta Region have substantial consequences on government revenues and oil companies operating in the region. At the peak of the Niger-Delta militancy evolution, statistics show that the country lost about 300,000 barrels of oil daily due to the vandalisation of pipelines in the region. This has brought about grievous environmental and socioeconomic conditions plaguing the region with serious consequences for human lives and the eco-system. Incessant destruction of oils channels is worrisome because of its harmful environmental consequences ([NNPC, 2013](#)).

[Odalonu and Obani \(2018\)](#) and [Ogaboh et al \(2020\)](#) reported that the deleterious activities of ex-agitators in the region had severe consequences on the socioeconomic and

political sectors of the country. According to [Awojobi \(2014\)](#), the bombings of oil installations and gas pipelines, killings of human potentials necessary for sustainable development, kidnappings of expatriates and the destruction of private and government properties, and other sources of revenue to the state and federal governments have impacted negatively on the Nigerian economy. However, the pardon granted to the ex-combatants has not been able to translate to peace and security, as repeated cases of hostage-taking and kidnapping as well as oil theft continue to rampage the insecurity problem of the region ([Okpa & Ekong, 2017](#)).

[Omokhoa \(2015\)](#) examined the peace building efforts in post-conflict Niger Delta a case study of the amnesty programme. The study pursued to look at the method, causes and assessment of the amnesty programme in Niger Delta within the time frame between 2009 to 2015. The qualitative method is adopted and the use of secondary data was employed for data generation and analysis as well. [Omokhoa \(2015\)](#) proved that persistent neglect, deprivation and marginalization without development or compensation, high level of unemployment, environment degradation, uneven resource distribution and lack of basic amnesty were problems that led to the emergence of militancy in the region for the past years. The study also revealed that the amnesty programme, security implications and its challenges in the Niger Delta clearly indicated that until the root cause of the region is achieved there will not be enduring peace, security and stability in the environment.

Recently, [Ebiede et al \(2020\)](#) analyzed the outcomes of PAP in Niger Delta. *Ebiede et al* analysis showed that the DDR programme contributed to the reduction of small arms and light weapons (SALW), fewer attacks on oil infrastructure and kidnapping of expatriates, and improved human capacity development. However, they noted that the programme has been ineffective in reintegrating ex-militants into civilian life because of serious shortcomings in its design as well as the extremely difficult implementation environment. In addition, they revealed that programme has proved to be hugely expensive and suffered some set-backs such as delayed of stipends to ex-militant in recent time and threaten the peace of the region.

Consequently, while observing some of the gaps in the existing literature, many previous studies on amnesty in Nigeria deal with the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. However, there are limited studies that explore the peace building aspect of the programme because most of the ex-militants are still undergoing training and conflict has not metamorphosed into peace building process. Thus, this study is proposed against this backdrop by assessing the role of PAP in the peace building and conflict resolution in Niger Delta region.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper underscores the impact of the presidential amnesty programme on peace-building in Niger Delta region. Being at the epicenter of militancy, the region has been negatively impacted in the areas of environment, community security, security of lives and property, dwindling fishing activities, destruction of oil facilities, human carnage and displacements, etc. with their attendant economic burden on government. Thus, the Niger Delta has enjoyed relative peace since 2009 however, the study found that the amnesty programme is predicated on the willingness and readiness of the militants to give up all illegal arms in their possession and completely renounce militancy in all its ramifications unconditionally. It also comes with disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration into the society, economic empowerment, etc. which engenders peace. Hence, the region has enjoyed peace since the introduction of the programme. Therefore, the study makes the following recommendations:

- i. The Federal Government has a duty to increase the budgetary allocations and funding for the Amnesty Programme. Changes in budgetary decisions or oversight mechanisms could influence the resources available for the programme's implementation. This is important considering the fact that there are some unresolved grievances, affected communities that have not been compensated and ex-militants that are yet to be captured in the list of beneficiaries.
- ii. There is a need for the states government in the region to put measures in place to promote community engagement, participation, and conflict resolution at the local level as this could indirectly support the goals of the Amnesty Programme by fostering an environment of collaboration and understanding. People will start to appreciate the essence of a peaceful environment and how it fosters development. Effective action plans could promote community involvement and conflict resolution mechanisms to address concerns or disputes related to the reintegration of former militants.
- iii. The Presidential Amnesty Office, Ministry of Niger Delta and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) should review the guidelines for the rehabilitation and reintegration of beneficiaries, including provisions for education, vocational training, skill development, employment opportunities and set-up grants. This will ensure that they do not return to the trenches and peace sustained. Government might call for regular evaluations and reports on the impact and effectiveness of the

Amnesty Programme. This information can inform future policy decisions and policy adjustments.

- iv. Government could work to ensure that the Amnesty Programme aligns with other government initiatives and development programmes in Niger Delta region. This coordination can lead to more comprehensive and holistic approaches to addressing the challenges in Niger Delta region. Government interventions could encourage the integration of sustainable development initiatives alongside the Amnesty Programme. This might involve aligning the programme with broader efforts to address environmental issues, poverty, unemployment, and infrastructural development in the Niger Delta region.

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