

GEOPOLITICS OF OIL EXPLORATIONS IN NIGERIA

By JIMOH YUSUF. A

Nigeria shares boundaries with other nations, with Niger on the north, Chad and Cameroun on the east and republic of Benin on the west with no resources shared between these countries. Nigeria is blessed with a lot of resources with the major source of income coming from crude oil. The oil rich region where oil is mostly extracted is the Niger delta region of the country. The Niger delta consists of about 40 different ethnics with their major occupation known to be fishing and farming. The discovery of crude oil in the region disrupts the community activity through the exploration activities which leaves the farmland and water bodies polluted with oil spills. As a result of this spills, the communities become degraded with no intention from the government or the operating company of cleaning it. This led to the formation of different protest group within the area so as to reclaim the loss of their damage land. Due to the mode of governance applied in the area (top-down), the government neglected the protest and even arrested the protesters disturbing the activities of the operating company. Among the protesters arrested is an Ogoni (-tribe) writer and activist, Ken saro wiwa, who made the issue an international concern with different countries in support of his cry. The negative effect of oil exploration within the area mainly affects the environment, social and health sector of the community rendering many part of the community inhabitable to live by human and other organisms. Due to the level of insecurity and hooliganism in the area, the government initiated an amnesty program for the youth in the area. While this reduced the threat rate in the area it did not solve the main issue.

From my perspective, the first step of solving this issue is to amend the mode of governance to bottom up and relational , as this will allow most of the inhabitants access to community planning. Secondly, the regulation of oil exploration should be implemented for the operating company to abide so as to reduce the rate of oil spill and also contribute to the development of the community.