

AN ADDRESS PRESENTED

BY

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CONFERENCE.

AT THE

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AND
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U. S. A.

Mr. President
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour and privilege for me to have this opportunity to meet with so many distinguished and prominent Ijaw leaders. I am particularly proud and touched by this unique award which you have so generously and thoughtfully bestowed on me. I especially thank you, Mr. President, and all your colleagues for inviting me here.

I gladly accept the award not only for myself but also on behalf of so many of our people, men and women, young and old, who share the hopes and aspiration of a greater Ijaw land.

Let me say here that the Ijaw people derive their strength and resilience for fighting for justice and fair deal in present day Nigeria from a number of factors. First, anthropologists and linguistic have confirmed that our ethnic group is among the oldest, if not the oldest communities, in Nigeria.

The historical mass immigration of peoples into the present day Nigeria pushed us into the Niger Delta. And we have resisted all further attempts to eliminate us. Our long history and unflagging love for our land, and devotion to traditions have re-inforced our determination over the ages to survive and prosper in our home land.

Secondly, the Ijaws were the first to fight against British colonial rule in Nigeria, We fought particularly for the right of our people to maintain sovereign control and ownership of their resources. King Jaja of Opobo, King Boy of Bonny and King Koko of Akassa were the first Nigerian nationalists who fought against British rule and were exiled by the British before any other Nigerian traditional rulers in the

country. And if I may be a bit immodest, this list of illustrious Ijaw fighters for freedom and independence also included my great grand father, Chief Bekederemo of Kiagbodo.

These heroes of our liberation struggle were the progenitors of the Ernest Ikolis, Dappa Briryas, Isaac Boros, Capt. Amagala, Capt. Ayanayo and other brave Ijaw men and women of present times who have continued to fight to defend our patrimony and to fight against the suppression and oppression of our people.

Thirdly, God in his infinite wisdom endowed our terrain with resources to compensate for the hostile environment in which we find ourselves. The Oil Rivers Protectorate which became the precursor of modern Nigeria was founded on our resources of palm produce, timber and natural harbours. The discovery of abundant oil and gas over 75% of which are found in Ijaw land, have again become the mainstay of the economy of Nigeria

It is therefore with great honour and privilege to be in your midst today for the purpose of celebrating the Boro Day and to receive an award from your great organization. Boro Day is indeed a day set aside by the Ijaws of all generations to honour a brilliant, young nationalist who placed the interest of his ethnic nationality first and foremost before any other consideration. He was loyal and dedicated to the service of the Ijaw people.

Even though he was tried and convicted for what the Federal Government called insurrection, because of his commitment to the freedom of his people, Isaac Adaka Boro left the prison during the Biafra war to join the Federal troop known as marine commando, as a commissioned officer, to fight for the freedom of his people. He died gallantly at the war front and the cause of his death is still shrouded in mystery today.

For celebrating Boro's glorious exit from this world, with fanfare in far away America, as Americans, today, celebrate and lamented the passing away of the heroic figure, Martin Luther King, shows how much you love and cherish the Ijaw Nation. Boro Day is celebrated everywhere in Nigeria where Ijaws exist. I congratulate you very warmly from the bottom of my heart.

Adaka Boro did not only fight for the freedom of the Ijaw people, he also fought for the control of our resources, particularly oil. It is significant to note that it is in Ijaw land, and to be specific, Oloibiri, that first made Nigeria an oil producing and exporting country in 1956. But today, Oloibiri remain, besides a commemoration by capped oil wells, a ghost town as if it has never existed. It has nothing to show for all the oil it produced to sustain the economy of Nigeria. I had the opportunity to visit Oloibiri and the Kolo gas turbine station. It is sad indeed that Bayelsa State is the only state in Nigeria that generates its own electricity because the Federal Government refused to extend the National Electricity grid to Bayelsa since its creation in 1996, even though the gas which NEPA uses comes from Bayelsa. Because of what our gallant brother, Boro, fought and died for, I have decided to dedicate my award speech to the subject of resource control.

As I have already observed above the Ijaw Nation produces over 75% of

Nigeria oil and gas and there is nothing to show and identify as coming from rich states. It is unfortunate that Nigerians, for their own selfish end have viciously and maliciously misrepresented and misinterpreted our agitation for the control of our resources. They portray us as selfish people, agitators and warlords, agitating for the control of our resources to the exclusion of the rest of Nigeria. This indeed, is a wicked representation. All that we are asking for in our agitation is that we want to share national wealth we produce. We want to be involved in the oil and gas that God gave us because he placed us in a difficult, inaccessible terrain which the Federal Government deliberately refuse to develop, and we have for so long remained as the most backward region.

Unlike in Texas or California, we have nothing to show for the oil wealth we have. Is it not ridiculous and unfair that I do not know how the oil in my backyard is tapped and exploited? There are no Ijaws who are in the oil trade - lifting and exploration of oil. Is it not also ridiculous, unjust and unfair for our youths not to be gainfully employed in the oil Industry? When they cry out, they are dubbed as illiterates, war mongers, pipeline-vandals, sea pirates and kidnapers who must be crushed at all cost by the mighty Federal Government by over militarizing the Ijaw area.

The recent demonstration and occupation of oil flow stations by our women and youth is as a result of this unfair, unjust and oppressive treatment of the Ijaw people. For instance, a situation where Ijaw youths with masters or doctorate degrees in geology, geophysics and petroleum engineering have been without jobs for the past five years, while their counterparts, even with inferior qualifications, are employed is most unacceptable. In situations whereby unskilled workers who can hardly swim and not used to water-logged terrain are flown in helicopters to do the unskilled jobs in offshore areas abandoning the Ijaw swimmers who are used to the terrain simply because the management cadre of these oil companies are non-Ijaws is totally unacceptable.

A situation whereby our people are instigated to fight themselves in intra-communal feuds by the oil companies thereby adopting the divide and rule system is also unacceptable to us. Today, the Okrikas are fighting themselves, so also are the Andonis, the Tombians, Buguma people, Nembes, Ojobo people, Brass fighting Okpoma, to name a few.

These are indeed very worrisome and if these intra communal conflicts are not stopped before 2005, our chances of having improved census in our area is very slim.

In a recent meeting we held in Yenagoa on Tuesday, May 11, 2004 under my humble chairmanship and attended by the Executive Governor of Bayelsa State, Chief D.S.P. Alamieyeseigha, with Ijaw leaders of thought from Ondo, Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Akwa Ibom States, was indeed very useful. It was recognized that the destiny of the Ijaws is in their own hands and therefore we must think seriously of our position towards 2007.

I wish therefore to treat briefly my presentation on resource control under the following headings:

1. How Nigeria was founded

Let me make it clear that Nigeria as a country is an abstract geographical expression. It is the states that are identified with land. The ownership of land by the Federal Government is through the states. Nigeria was an artificial creation of different ethnic Nationalities. Initially when the British came to Nigeria and particularly to Southern Nigeria, they did not find any country known as Nigeria. They negotiated and signed independent treaties with various communities or ethnic Nationalities.

Thus, in many parts of Ijawland, you still find original treaties signed with the indigenes. The British were to provide protection in consideration of buying goods from the various nationalities. That was the first stage of the contract and some of these treaties were signed between 1893 and 1900 when there was no entity called Nigeria. The next stage of our association was by grouping these Nationalities into what was later called regions.

The third stage was the regions such as Southern region with the Headquarters located at various stages at different times, in Lagos, Calabar, Enugu and Ibadan. The next stage of what constitute Nigeria today is the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria in 1914 by Lord Lugard who became Governor-General of Nigeria. Later we had three regions, i.e Northern Region, Western Region and Eastern Region. These three regions negotiated with the Colonial Government their pace of political development and hence the Western Region under the leadership of Late Chief Awolowo became self-governing at the time when Northern Nigeria was not ready. These regions got their self-government at different times. The 1960 and 1963 Constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria were negotiated and consented to by the representatives of the various ethnic Nationalities including the Chairman of SSOPEC H.R.H Chief Harold Dappa-Biriye, who was one of the delegates to these conferences both in London and in Nigeria between 1956 and 1960. The contract to come together as Nigerians was mutually agreed to by Nigerians from various part of the country. Both political and economic conditions were spelt out clearly in these constitutions.

All we are saying in present effect is that the Federal Republic of Nigeria came into being as a result of contract between the three regions of Nigeria and one of the considerations of federation is that each region will have a measure of control over its affairs and its resources. At this juncture, I wish to refer to section 134 of 1960 constitution which states as follows.

(1) There shall be paid by the Federation to each Region a sum equal to fifty per cent of:-

(a) the proceeds of any royalty received by the federation in respect of any minerals extracted in that Region; and
(b) any mining rents derived by the Federation during that year from within that Region.

(2) The Federation shall credit to the Distributable Pool Account a sum equal to thirty per cent of:

- (a) the proceeds of any royalty received by the federation in respect of any minerals extracted in that Region: and
- (b) any mining rents derived by the Federation from within any Region.

(3) For the purposes of this section the proceeds of a royalty shall be the amount remaining from the receipts of that royalty after any refunds or other repayments relating to those receipts have been deducted there from or allowed for.

4) Parliament may prescribe the periods in relation to which the proceeds of any royalty or mining rents shall be calculated for the purposes of this section

(5) In this section "minerals" includes mineral oil.

(6) For the purpose of this section the continental shelf of a Region shall be deemed to be part of that Region.

>From the foregoing, it is quite clear the fiscal arrangement of the federating units was based on derivation/resource control. Otherwise certain regions could have opted out of the Federation having regard to their enormous resources.

After what has been shared among the regions, the 30% of the balance will be paid into the distributable pool which was shared proportionately among the three (3) regions.

- (a) Northern Nigeria, forty-ninety-fifths;
- (b) Western Nigeria, twenty-four-ninety-fifths;
- (c) Eastern Nigeria, thirty-one-ninety-fifths

2. The Misgivings of Nigerians in our Agitation for Resource Control.

One wonders how Mr. President got the idea that resource control was the cause of the Nigeria civil war and that if he had died during the war as the General Officer Commanding the Armed Forces in the Niger Delta, he would have died for nothing.

While we acknowledge the great role played by Mr. President as a Commanding Officer of the Nigerian troop in the Niger Delta, one is tempted to ask Mr. President whether he is not now pretending not to know what he actually fought for.

I repeat, resource control was never a factor in the civil war. Resource control can never be a threat to the unity of Nigeria. I am convinced that it is ignorance, selfishness and sheer arrogance that is responsible for the opposition to resource control. For instance, it is ridiculous and shameful to read the argument of Taraba State Government as contained in their statement of defence when they claim that all mineral deposits belong to the whole country and that the demand for resources control will break up this country. This is also the line taken by Nassarawa, Kebbi, Yobe, and other states in the North.

For instance, the likes of Dr. Yusuf Bala Usman, the Governor of Yobe State, etc argue that the demand for a just derivation formula and

resource control is an attempt to undermine the stability and sovereignty of Nigeria.

We have a duty therefore to educate our people about resource control because our survival as a people depend largely on resource control, having regard to the criminal neglect of our region by the Federating Units of this country despite the fruits of our oil and gas resources.

We have seen how Oloibiri was abandoned soon after its oil wells dried up.

It may be necessary at this juncture to go through the memory lane as contained in the following paragraphs.

The Criminal Neglect of the South South Must Stop:

It is generally accepted by all well meaning Nigerians that the Niger Delta has been criminally neglected by all Governments for the past 50 years and it is also generally agreed that serious effort should be made by the Federal Government to redress this great injustice

Respected leaders who visited the Niger Delta, particularly the riverine area, were stunned at what they saw and confessed that they thought that these areas were not part of Nigeria. One of such respected leaders is my good friend Dr. Olusola Saraki of Kwara State fame.

The neglect by successive Governments to develop the Niger Delta did not start today and we have become more aggrieved that President Olusegun Obasanjo who in his campaign promised to eradicate the sufferings of the people and to open the Niger Delta under a Marshall-like plan of Europe after the Second World War has been playing with the destiny of our people. This was also contained in his inauguration speech of 29th May, 1999.

He spent Government money to produce plans for the development of the Niger Delta and none has seen the light of day after about 3 years of his rule. He has by his insincere promises eaten up the goodwill we the people of the Niger Delta have for him when he took office in May 1999 and none of his Ministers or Advisers from the South-South can restore this goodwill.

3. Impact of Oil Exploration in our Areas.

The Niger Delta people have had their rights under the Constitution usurped by the three major ethnic groups who have controlled the Federal Government at various times in violation of the various sections of the Nigerian Constitution. For instance under the 1999 Constitution, Section 20 provides that : "The State shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wild life of Nigeria".

But the Federal Government is only interested in exploiting our natural resources which has led to environmental degradation, pollution, acid rains with serious ecological consequences. The flaring of gas, oil pipes leakage, water pollution change of vegetation erosion, etc., have made life unbearable for our people.

The ecological funds provided by the Federal Government are shared on equal basis amongst the 36 states irrespective of the environmental or ecological effect in any of the states. We have also noticed discriminatory treatment, whereby some states lobby and use their influence at the Federal level to obtain more ecological funds for themselves. The Niger Delta area which is mostly affected by environmental degradation is not given any special treatment to reduce the effects of the environmental hazards.

4. Constitutional Breaches

In order to perpetrate the neglect and the dehumanization of the Niger Delta and the Ijaw people in particular, the Federal Government has breached various sections of the 1999 Nigeria Constitution and some of them are stated here below.

The discriminatory treatment and the criminal neglect of the Nigeria-Delta over the years by those in authority, has caused us not to have a feeling of belonging in the Nigerian nation; which is contrary to section 15 (4) of the 1999 Constitution which stipulates that: "The State shall foster a feeling of belonging and of involvement among the various peoples of the Federation to the end that loyalty to the nation shall override Sectional loyalties". So when Mr. President in his New Year Broadcast in 2001 appealed to the Afeniferes, Ohanezes and the Arewas to discuss the problems of Nigeria, same was not extended to the ethnic nationalities of the South South. Particularly INC.

Again section 16 (1) of the 1999 Constitution provides inter alia. The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happenings of every citizen on the basis of social justice, equality of status and opportunity.

Also Section 16(2) of the 1999 Constitution states that the State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or a group.

The criminal and willful neglect of the Niger-Delta by the Federal Government and the former Northern, Eastern and Western government, over the years is a negation or violation of this Constitutional provision. The control of resources and the distribution of wealth of the nation has not been evenly shared in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

The social unrest amongst the youths, in the Niger Delta is a reaction to the social injustice and inequality of status and opportunities in the execution of the governmental policies.

We have no roads; extreme poverty prevails; we live in darkness. Yet the electric power which serves the whole nation is mainly generated from the Niger-Delta Power Stations including Delta Power Station at Ughelli, Ogorode Power Station, at Sapele and Afam Power Station in Rivers State.

We observed to our dismay that the little wealth our fathers had through trading with early European companies, which were later inherited by their children and the wealth that was generated from fishing, timber, rubber and palm produce have been denied us due to the exploitation by the Oil Companies and the ecological degradation of the area.

The wealth from our resources is now being concentrated in the hands of a few individuals from the North, South-East and South-West to the exclusion of the Niger Delta people contrary to the provisions of the Constitution.

These few individuals, some of whom had poor background have built up massive wealth within Nigeria and outside Nigeria comparable to those of the wealthy class from Saudi Arabia, Western Europe, USA, Canada, etc.

These individuals and group of individuals from these major ethnic groups derive their wealth from the patronage of Military Heads of State between 1975 and 1978. In fact, they used some of their wealth to organize coups and perpetuate military rule in Nigeria. They are granted license to lift crude oil. Others act as commissioned agents for multi-national companies whereby they receive heavy commissions etc.

Most of the beneficiaries of these Military exploitation are found mostly amongst the Northern elites with their collaborators from the South-East and South-West who arrogantly display these wealth to the embarrassment and displeasure of our people who see themselves as second class citizens in their own country.

Is it not an irony of fate that indigenes of the Niger-Delta area who are qualified to lift crude oil or to act as commission agent have been denied these opportunities? There was a time when indigenes of the Niger-Delta who went abroad in search of business opportunities were often asked whether they had Northern elites as partners with respect to the oil Industry because these expatriates believe that only the Northern elites could make things work in Nigeria. If this criterion was not met, then the application will not be considered. Is it not insulting and a denial of our right that for economic reasons, those of us from the Niger-Delta area are perpetually disqualified from aspiring to the highest political position in the country?

It is most unfortunate that many Nigerians see our demand for resource control as something that is new or strange in the political and economic history of Nigeria. Some vicious and mischievous Nigerians see it as a denial or deprivation of Nigerians from enjoying the wealth that accrue from the Oil resources of the Niger Delta. This is far from the truth. An example is the recent call by four states from the North central zone namely: Niger, Kogi, Kwara and Kebbi for their own development commission because of the Shiroro/Kainji Dams.

They called for a Hydro-power commission because of what they called the devastation of their environment through these dams. It is because of ignorance and sheer arrogance that these states are calling for their own form of the NDDC. Were these North-Central States in the

position of the South-South state, would they not have been in the forefront in the agitation for resource control and self determination?

All we are saying is that let us, as stake-holders, participate in generation and distribution of these resources which are found in our own backyard.

We should be seen as oil producers like those in other parts of the world.

The states of Texas and California for example, fully participate in the Oil Industries operating in their own states whereby the Federal Government collects taxes and duties from the oil industry which it uses for the development of the entire country including Texas and California.

This is now the United States of America, the wealthiest country in the world which survives as a great nation in the maintenance of the unity and stability of that great country.

6. The Role Of NDDC

When leaders of the South-South met with the President on the 22nd August, 2000, in a presidential discussion forum held at the Presidential Villa, we repeated our demand for a political solution to our problem because we believe that NDDC cannot and will not be a solution to the problems of the Niger Delta.

OMPADEC did not and NDDC will not be. We told him that our problems can only be solved by allowing us to control our resources as it was in the First Republic where the regions were free to develop themselves at their own pace. Western Nigeria under Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo was the most developed and this was achieved through resource control over cocoa. It was the wealthiest of the three regions. This was as a result of the cocoa boom at the time. The destiny of one region was not tied to that of another. That was why Western Nigeria was able to introduce Free Primary Education in 1955 and Eastern region could not because it had not such resources to finance it. In fact, we insisted at the forum that resource control is an essential ingredient of true federalism. In Mr. President's reply, he admitted that we have a good case but doubted the possibilities of its implementation having regard to the constitutional position and the tendency of leaving certain states with little or no resources underdeveloped.

It is therefore disturbing that despite our meeting with President on this issue, he went on to oppose our demand for resource control.

7. How the Ijaws are treated in Nigeria

Again, when we talk of resource control we are not only talking of control of oil resources, it includes employment for our people and contract for our people from the oil companies. Today more than 85% of Nigerians in the Management cadre of the Oil companies are occupied by the Ibos and the Yorubas. In fact from records available the Ibos and Yoruba in the Oil companies are struggling for supremacy at the expense of the South-South indigenes. All major oil contractors in the oil companies that operate in the core Niger Delta are mostly Ibos and Yorubas and not South-South indigenes.

In the areas of employment of our youths, the situation is most provocative. We demand full and gainful employment of our teeming youths in the oil companies that operate in our land. A situation where the Management staff and the control of policies are in the hands of people outside our region will no longer be accepted. Uptil now, our unemployed youths are still roaming the streets and the wrong impression and mis-information being dished out by our detractors to a majority of Nigerians and the outside world is that our youths are uneducated, irresponsible, unskilled, pirates, kidnappers and pipeline vandals who must be shot at sight to protect the Nigerian economy. This erroneous impression is wicked, malicious and tantamount to the usual slogan of giving a dog a bad name in order to hang it.

Most of our unemployed youths are suitably qualified in the field of Engineering, Accountancy, Economics, Law etc, and some of them have been without jobs for the past 6 years.

To add insult to injury, the training institute known as the Shell Intensive Training Programme established in Warn and Port Harcourt for training of young graduates and technicians to go into the labour market have very few graduates and technicians from the Niger Delta in the two institutions. More than 80% of the total intake of the trainees are mainly from the South-West and the South-East zones. This is unacceptable to us.

The phrase "Catchments Area" means nothing to the government and the oil companies. A worrisome area is found in the posting of Youth corps members in their primary assignments. Our youths from the Niger Delta are usually posted to the North, South East and South West States while indigenes from outside the Niger-Delta are usually posted to the Oil companies operating in the Niger Delta. Of course, at the end of the one year service, most of the youth corps members from outside the Niger Delta use managers in these oil companies who are their kinsmen and women by virtue of tribal affiliation, to secure permanent jobs in the Oil industries to the exclusion of Niger Delta Youth corps members who return home jobless. It must be recognized that youths' restiveness can only be arrested if these irregularities and injustices are corrected.

8. Western and Eastern Region

The Western Nigerian Government deliberately contributed to the criminal neglect of the Midwest area of the Niger Delta. During Chief Obafemi Awolowo's premiership of Western Nigeria, he deliberately discriminated against the Midwestern area of the Niger Delta using the principle of derivation as a weapon of neglect.

He used the wealth accruing from Cocoa which was the economic mainstay of Western region of Nigeria to develop the Yoruba area of Western Nigeria.

The Western Nigeria Development Corporation (WNDC) which later became the Odua Group of Companies was the instrument used by Chief Obafemi Awolowo to carry out development in Apapa and Ikeja area of Lagos State through the control of his own resources.

He introduced Television Service, which was the first in the South of the Sahara, but he did not extend its services to outside the Yoruba area of the region. Rubber was the economic mainstay of the Midwestern part of the Region. Instead of Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Government developing and improving the quality of the Rubber Plantations in the Midwest area he decided to establish Rubber Plantations in Ijebu Area of the region including Ikenne his home town and Odogbolu with modern rubber species from Malaysia.

It was none of his business when the price of rubber was falling and the rubber plantations in the Midwest area were dying due to lack of care.

The Network of roads in the Yoruba area of the region were constantly developed and maintain by Israeli Construction companies while those in the Midwest area were left to deteriorate and perish. It was with funds from Cocoa that the famous University of Ife was built and it was only the Free Primary Education Scheme introduced by Chief Awolwo that was extended to the Midwestern part of the region.

All these deprivations notwithstanding. Chief Obafemi Awolowo bluntly refused the demand of the people of the Midwest to have their own region created of the Western Region and asserted that the Midwest region will be created over his body. It was the crisis of Western Nigeria in 1962 and the trial and imprisonment of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and his cohorts for treasonable felony and with the appointment of Dr. Moses Majekodunmi as the Administrator that made it possible for the creation of Midwestern region. When eventually Midwestern region of Nigeria was created in 1963, the West refused to share the Assets with the newly created Midwestern Region and the reason given by the Western Nigeria Government was that both the movable and immoveable assets were acquired with cocoa wealth and not rubber, and therefore the Midwest Region was not entitled to any asset.

Today only the six Yoruba States of Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti are the beneficiaries of the Assets of Western Region of Nigeria which were acquired when Midwest was part of Western Region of Nigeria.

This address will be incomplete if I do not go down the memory lane to trace the recent history for the agitation for resource control by the people of the Niger Delta.

A. The Kiaima Declaration

The communique of the historic gathering of Izon Youths at Kiaima, Isaac Boro's home in 1998 was the first to highlight the phrase Resources Control which was christened as the "Kiaima Declaration" with an ultimatum to the Federal Government to redress the injustices and inhumanities which expired on 30th December, 1998. Instead of the Federal Government resorting to a dialogue with the Ijaw Youths and elders, it remained adamant and unconcerned and treated the Declaration with levity. It was not realized that the Federal Government was preparing to declare a war on the Ijaw people in Bayelsa State. The youths, in keeping with the declaration, carried out peaceful demonstrations in Yenagoa and Kiaima and without any provocation the Federal Government attacked them with troops from Warri and Port Harcourt. I gave a Press Conference on the 3rd of January, 1999 condemning the action of the Federal Government for using troops to

carry out wanton destruction of properties and massacre of defenceless youths. The dialogue between the Federal Government and the Niger Delta people followed between January and April 10, 1999.

The Major-General Popoola's Committee, which was set up by the Federal Government to provide the MARSHALL type of development for the Niger Delta recommended the expenditure of N15 billion to be spent on various projects in the Niger Delta but this did not materialise. The General Abubakar's Government deceived us.

B. MOSOP Operation and the Massacre of Ken Saro Wiwa and the Nine Other Ogoni Leaders.

The murder of Ken Saro Wiwa and the nine Ogoni leaders was also as a result of agitation against environmental pollution and the determination of the Ogoni People to control their own affairs.

C. The Niger Delta Emancipation Crusade:

Various Militant Organisations including the South-South People Conference, Union of Niger Delta and later the Dynamic and Purposeful leadership given by the 6 South-South Governors and the National Assembly members, fired their first salvo in their communique issued at Asaba.

D. Why the Campaign Resource Control was Intensified:

The formation of political parties in the new democratic set-up--The new political parties, which were dominated by the majority ethnic groups did not include or reflect the agitation for Resource control in their manifestoes even though Gen. Obasanjo had promised the youths of the Niger Delta that the agitations for resource control and the criminal neglect of the region will be addressed if he was elected as President.

The refusal of President Obasanjo to implement the 13% Derivation as provided for in Section 162(2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the delay in passing the NDDC Bill into law and the failure of the Federal Government to implement the NDDC Act as passed by the National Assembly was regarded by the Niger Delta people as a deliberate act of oppression and the refusal of the Federal Government to develop the Niger Delta area, so also the inclusion of Abia, Imo and Anambra States as part of Niger Delta. The refusal of the Federal Government to fund the Commission and the unreasonable and unwarranted series of amendments proposed by the Federal Government to the detriment of the Niger Delta people. The unconstitutional action of the President to re-introduce the onshore-offshore dichotomy which was abolished by the FEDERATION ACCOUNT AMENDMENT ACT No. 106 of 1992 Sub-section (2) which says:

"For the avoidance of any doubt, the distinction hitherto made between the on-shore oil and off-shore oil mineral revenue for the purpose of revenue sharing and the administration of the fund for the development of the oil producing areas is hereby abolished".

I submit that as long as this act was not abolished by the 1999 Constitution, it is only an act of the National Assembly that can abolish it and not the Supreme Court of Nigeria.

9. Derivation Is Not Resource Control:

It must be emphasized that the principle of derivation is not the same as resource control. For instance, the 13% Derivation provided for in Section 162 (2) of the Constitution is being manipulated by the Federal Government and we only receive whatever they decide to put into the Federal Account under Section 162 of the 1999 Constitution. We are not party to how our resources are exploited, we are not part of the production and we appear to be stranger in our own home. Take for instance, a situation whereby the Headquarters of the various Oil companies are situated outside the Niger Delta Area and majority of their Management staff come from outside the Niger Delta. They formulate the policies that are in most cases against our interest. We want to be involved in the exploration, exploitation, production and marketing of our resources and this is exactly what happened in the First Republic whereby Western Nigeria, under the leadership of Awolowo, exploited, produced and market the cocoa crops which was the main economic stay of Western region and similarly, the Northern Region equally exploited, produced and marketed the groundnut crops which formed the groundnut pyramid of Northern Region. The Federal Government was only entitled to 20% of the revenue that was accrued from Cocoa, groundnut, etc. It is the Federal Government and the non Oil producing States that exploit our resources by squandering these resources to the disadvantage of the Niger Delta which lays the golden egg and which feels the negative impact of oil exploration and exploitation.

The 12 states structure which has now manifested into 36 states with 774 Local Government Councils were deliberately created to squander the resources of the Niger Delta. For instance, Kano State and Jigawa State which was created out of Kano State have more Local Government Councils than the Six States of the South South zone combined and each of these Local Government Councils gets direct allocation from the Federation Account. One can therefore, understand why we have all threats and brickbats over resource control. Some have even threatened to go to war over resource control.

10. The Natural Resources of the Niger Delta

(i) Oil: Crude Oil Resources == 20 Billions Barrels production Rate
o12.1MBD
Reserves to Production of 26 years.
Daily Oil Production = 2.1 Million Barrels
Average Daily Oil export =1.8 Million barrels
Average daily oil income - \$45,000,000 @\$25 per barrel Govt. share @
average of \$20.6 per barrel - \$37,080,000
Share of Six Oil-producing
States @ 13% Derivation == \$4,820,400
Shares Appropriate by Federal Government for Federation
Account = \$ \$32,259,600
Share of six States @ .5%
Derivation - \$9,270,000
Shares of 6 States @ 50%
Derivation = \$18,540,000

(ii) NATURAL GAS

- Gas Reserves of 159 Trillion Cubic Feet (TCF) (Associated Gas = 85 TCF: Non-Associated Gas = 74 TCF Production Ration of 4 Billion Cubic Feet Per day

Resource-to Production of Over 100 years

Nigeria Ranked 1 -th Largest in the world

- Second to Algeria in Africa
- Current Flare Rate is 65% of Gas produced
- Revenue lost to Flaring - \$3.1 Billion Annually
- Projected Year for Zero Flaring 2008

I have gone to this extent and laboriously too to show what the natural resources are and also to show that the Niger Delta is not only rich in mineral oil and gases but also endowed with other economic natural resources. The Niger Delta early contact with the Europeans was not as a result of oil exploration but because of the oil palm trade. All for oil a play written by my brother, Prof. J. P. dark, exhibited clearly the early contact between the Niger Delta people and the Europeans. Here I am pleased to quote the setting of the play, All for oil: Which states clearly the existence of Niger Delta with its natural resources, the trade that existed between them and the early European traders long before Nigeria was founded in 1914.

The Setting

"In the European scramble for Africa towards the end of the 19th century.

Britain declared for itself the Oil Rivers Protectorate to gain monopoly of the palm oil trade in what is now part of the land it put together as a country. Later, it formed the first Federation of Nigeria with the former Royal Niger Company as its principal commercial operator, and the indigenous people of the area^the Niger Delta, the suppliers of the raw materials that Britain needed for its factories. Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, oil again, this time, petroleum, has been for years the one major commodity making up Nigeria's economy, and indeed the reason for its existence.

The players, as in the story before, are the same, namely, the Nigeria State, run by the majority ethnic groups to whom Britain ceded independence; the economic partners are the multi-national oil companies, and at the bottom of the heap, in the heart of the old Oil Rivers Protectorate, the people of the Niger Delta, left squabbling among themselves by the Lugard's policy of divide and rule.

Human Resources Development

One of the reasons for our argument for resource control is in the area of human resource development. Education is the key to human resource development. For the Niger Delta to join the rest of the developed world, Education must be given the top-most priority. This was the main reason why the late Chief Awolowo concentrated on the development of human resources by introducing Free Primary Education in 1955, awarded Post Secondary Scholarships and established the University of Ife, which is now re-named OAU, the Ibadan Polytechnic and several other institutions of higher learning. These became possible through the control of resources which was mainly cocoa. At that time, the old

Midwest region was part of Western region. And hence Edo and Delta States have the highest literacy rate in the Niger Delta. This is also responsible for Western Nigeria, now South-West, being the most educated, most sophisticated and most economically developed region in the whole federation. But unfortunately, due to the criminal neglect and the exploitation of the mineral resources found in our region, the rate of development in the Niger Delta has been very slow.

Finally, I wish to restate and re-emphasize that resource control will not divide Nigeria but it is the refusal or rejection of our demand for resource control that will create problem because it will be a violation of the principle of true federalism which Nigerian leaders and rulers dishonestly and fraudulently pretend to practice. The agitation for resource control is therefore political and it will continue irrespective of any court judgement.

Once again, it is my pleasure to be with you and I thank you all.

SEN. DR. EDWIN KIAGBODO CLARK OFR