The Niger Delta:
Peaceful? Secure? Developing?

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Armed militants in the Niger Delta- a familiar sight
According to Nigerian government sources:

- Amnesty program is a great success—26,358 “militants” disarmed and rehabilitated
- (Niger Delta Buckingham Palace)
- 10,395 of these have been/are being trained (Kingsley Kuku April 2, 2012)
- Oil production up from less than 1 million bpd in 2009 to 2.6 million bpd today
But:

• National protest- Occupy Nigeria, etc.
• Numerous recent attacks on facilities
• Bombs, fighting between northerners and locals
• Lack of development in the Niger Delta e.g. East/West Road
• Few jobs created for militants and others
• Militants accusing Pres. Jonathan of nonperformance
• Increasing division of us vs. them
• So what is causing this dissatisfaction?
Sources of my information

- Work on Interethnic conflict, especially Warri, Eleme/Okrika, and Kalabari 1999+
- Asari/Ateke peace process 2004
- Work with NNPC on youth issues
- Hostage negotiations 2006-2007
- Study of Armed Groups 2006-2007
- Continuing network- insider information
- 2011-2012 constructive engagement of Niger Delta youth, especially in Bayelsa election February 2012
The 3 Wise Men
May 2006
Familiar Faces in the Niger Delta
Alh. Asari Dokubo- Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force
Asari with leaders of Pronaco
President Yar’Adua and Ateke Tom (Niger Delta Vigilante) 
October 2009
Ateke with Cockman at his mother-in-law’s funeral Nembe
Ateke Tom brought actresses and musicians for the funeral.
Boyloaf (Ebikabowei Victor Ben)
General Boyloaf during visit to President Yar’Adua  August 2009
Boyloaf as Presidential Envoy inspecting training facilities in the Netherlands  February 2012
Tompolo (Government Ekpempuolo) spiritual leader
Tompsono as MEND leader
Militants met with Pres. Yar’Adua
Tompsono, Ateke, others
Some others didn’t do as well

Late Soboma George disarmed August 2009
killed August 2010
Late John Togo- new generation of self-declared militant leader
4 clusters of conflict drivers identified by both the Yenagoa Accord and MEND 2006

- Governance issues
- Lack of participation in the oil and gas industry
- Lack of social and economic development
- Militarization of the Niger Delta
Extreme example of corruption
East/West Road- N245 Billion
A top priority of the Federal Govt.- handled by the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs
Darkness - NEPA no dey inspite of hype by the Ministry of Power
Bayelsa Militants on their way to Disarmament Exercise 2009
And in 2012-

- Amnesty finished October 2009
- No census of members of armed groups
- No reorientation until mid-2010, then 1-2 weeks at camp on nonviolence
- Some skills training - but no opportunity mapping and very little job creation
- Discipline problems show lack of reorientation
In 2012

- Estimated 2/3 of amnesty budget going into private pockets
- Many real militants still armed - c. 26,000 armed in Delta State alone - 2007 study
- Fear among top leaders of attacks by their former followers - tight security around them,
- Living outside the delta in Abuja, Lagos, etc.
• Huge payoffs to top leaders lead to resentment and struggles to replace them
• New groups rise to enjoy same benefits as old leaders eg. 3rd Batch of Amnesty
• Corrupt political and traditional leaders
• Attacks on “leaders” – ministers, youth
• Reformation of MEND
• Attacks on individuals and facilities
Bayelsa – always a special case

• Most of state income siphoned off
• Special mobile police group Famou Tangbe to terrorize citizens
• Armed groups sponsored by various politicians- lived in Government House
• Most quickly changed sides
• New governor chosen from Abuja
• Militants mobilized to rig elections
And this is how we got there-

- Lack of immediate and firm response when violence started escalating
- Nation is adrift- reactive, not proactive
- Nigerian state officials and the intl community have not attended to the plight of the people of the Niger Delta, leading to frustration, resignation, and resort to alternative measures.
Possibilities for Peace

• Implement recommendations of previous reports- incl. Technical Committee
• Genuine development
• Genuine job creation
• BUT Political Will must be there
• Put pressure on elected govt. officials for accountability- difficult to do when mandate doesn’t depend on elections
Possibilities for Peace  cont’d.

- Review of the Land Use Act- more oil benefits to communities- ownership
- Stop BLOOD OIL- illegal bunkering
- Close off sources of illegal arms
- Above 2 will require major overhaul of the military and SSR
New Hope- Niger Deltans protect and participate in their own governance process
Social Media Tracking Centre- established to assess impact of social media on April 2011 elections
AA PeaceWorks has trained thousands of social media activists- Sagbama, Bayelsa
High level of enthusiasm for social media
Social Media training of Media Practitioners - GM Channels Television
A New Naija facebook group

Don Miguel de Cervantes:

“Maddest of all is to see life as it is and not as it should be”

Responses by Bayelsans on how they would like their state to be under the new Governor. Check what they have to say.
The information is out there
A new age of KNOWING

- Youtube of named woman thumbprinting - April election
- Occupy Nigeria January - videos, photographs, tweets, facebook mobilization, Nigerians “ping”
- Probes - televised, blogs
- Twitter - immediate information eg Kano bombings, budgets