

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDRs) as Strategies of Amnesty Program as Conflict Management Mechanism in Nigeria.

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Abstract- Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is indisputably one of the most richly endowed countries on the continent. It is blessed with immense natural and human resources which provide opportunity for national development. However, since de-colonization in 1960, the nation has been plagued with a civil war and series of conflicts. These conflicts, particularly the recent ones where our interest lies for this paper, had continued to attract national and global attention. Successive administrations since independence in 1960 had adopted several constitutional and institutional ‘remedies’ towards the resolutions of these conflicts. These include setting up of commissions of enquiries, establishment of developmental institutions, and agencies, State creation, creation of grazing reserve areas for herds men, the use of armed forces, provision of political opportunities and seizure of land (under the land use decree) and the provision of additional incentives to resource producing areas (derivation formula) etc. Some of these measures had relatively worked while some were seen as pacification methods and mere palliatives. Thus, some of the crisis in Nigeria, particularly, the militancy in the Niger-Delta Region has continued unabated. Consequently, in a bid to finding a lasting solution to the violence in the Niger Delta, president Yar’Adua granted amnesty in 2009 to the militants and to all those who were overtly or covertly involved in the conflict in the Niger Delta region. This paper is anchored on the conflict resolution theory. The theory focuses on the management of deep-rooted conflicts. Conflict management initiatives are often characterized by long time horizons and intervention strategies at multiple levels aimed at changing perceptions and improving communication skills at addressing the roots of the conflict including inequality and social injustice. The paper concluded that DDR programs

seek to support ex-combatants’ economic and social reintegration, so that they can become stakeholders in peace and as productive members of their communities. This transformational strategy helps to foster post amnesty peace-building, and thereby to ensure that the peace is home-grown and thus durable. Unfortunately, the Federal Government Amnesty Program fell short of DDR measures which account for the little success the program has achieved since inception and the continued hostility albeit with significant reduction in the Niger Delta.

Indexed Terms- Amnesty, Conflict Management, Demobilization, Disarmament, Reintegration

I. INTRODUCTION

The State in both its holistic and modern senses is by its nature a product of conflict and generator of conflict situations in the society. This is particularly evident in the fact that at all point in time, the State represents certain specific social, political, economic and general material interests of certain dominant social group(s) in the society and which also control it (State) (Ofoeye, 2006). However, it is very important to note that conflicts are inevitable facts of socioeconomic existence. Dunmoye (2010) emphasized that in any social formation, conflict is as inevitable as co-operation. Conflict may be functional to the social system by creating a form of social cohesion within groups; but it is the dysfunctional aspects of conflict that are detrimental to the survival of the State. Thus, conflict is a barometer for testing the fragility or otherwise of every

State, and creates the basis for future remedy and adjustments.

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is indisputably one of the most richly endowed countries on the continent. It is blessed with immense natural and human resources which provide opportunity for national development (Esko Toyo, 2012). However, since de-colonization in 1960, the nation has been plagued with a civil war and series of conflicts; from the Nigerian-Biafran civil war, to Ife-Modakeke, to Amuleri-Aguleri, Tiv-Jukun, herdsmen versus farmers in Benue and Plateau States, the several ethno-religious crises in Kaduna, Kano, Bauchi, Maiduguri, Adamawa and Plateau States, the militancy in the Niger-Delta and the Boko Haram crises in the North Eastern Nigeria to mentioned but a few. These conflicts, particularly the recent ones where our interest lies for this paper, had continued to attract national and global attention.

Successive administrations since independence in 1960 had adopted several constitutional and institutional 'remedies' towards the resolutions of these conflicts. These include setting up of commissions of enquiries, establishment of developmental institutions, and agencies, State creation, creation of grazing reserve areas for herds men, the use of armed forces, provision of political opportunities and seizure of land (under the land use decree) and the provision of additional incentives to resource producing areas (derivation formula) etc. (Nwozor, 2010). Some of these measures had relatively worked while some were seen as pacification methods and mere palliatives (Usman, 2010).

Thus, some of the crisis in Nigeria, particularly, the militancy in the Niger-Delta Region has continued unabated. At its

peak, there were frequent attacks on oil and gas installations and facilities by militant groups which spread over five hundred (500) camps in the Creeks of the Niger Delta. The destruction of Odi Town and the bombardment of Gbaramatu kingdom could not deter the militants and / or resolved the conflicts. The activities of these militants have serious implications to peace and security in the region, oil exploitation, national revenue profit, development of infrastructure and other derivatives. No doubt these became a source of worry to peace-lovers, scholars and policy makers.

The Niger Delta region is the main source of Nigeria's abundant oil and gas resources. The revenue generated from the region accounts for over eighty percent of its foreign earnings and its daily oil production amounts to 2.46 million barrels (Obi, 2014). Ironically, the peoples of the Niger Delta region have not experienced meaningful development. This is more so in consideration of the enormous oil wealth derived from the region. The people in 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 (Davidheiser and Nyiayaana, 2011). 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 oil 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. The 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 became transformed into a violent struggle following the lack of an adequate response from the government. The early peaceful struggles notably include the Isaac Adaka Boro-Twelve Day Revolution in 1967, which was brutally crushed by the state and 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. They were accused of allegedly 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 (Ojabor, 2008).

The violent dimension of the conflict became more pronounced with democratic rule in 1999. All political leaders in the region who desired political office through elections recruited unemployed youth and armed them with weapons (Ukiwo, 2007). After the election, some of these groups were not demobilised. The access to weapons provided the opportunity for them

to join the rank of existing militants in the region, and this further added a criminal impetus to the previous struggle (Ahonsi, 2011). Consequently, there were a series of hostage takings, killings, oil bunkering, and the sabotage of oil vessels. Nigerian oil production dropped drastically, and the security situation in the country became volatile. It became a discourse of both the national and international community, especially as it affected the energy security of the United States and other foreign interests. This directly affected the political economy of the country, as the image of the country became battered and it affected direct foreign investment. Similarly, the revenue from oil reduced significantly, as the oil production declined from 1 million barrels per day in 2007/2008 to 300,000 barrels per day in 2009 with further deterioration (Asuni, 2009).

There have been a series of government interventions in the previous year's spanning from 1960 to 2000 to address the Niger Delta conflict. In the 1960s, the government created a special focus upon development through the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) to manage the developmental challenges of the region, but little progress was achieved. Between 1979 and 1983, due to the developmental challenges of the region, the Nigerian government also established a Presidential Task Force to manage the allocation of 1.5 percent of the federation account to tackle the special developmental needs of the region. The resultant project had little or no significance to the community (Ahonsi, 2011). In 1992, during the Babaginda administration (1985-93), the government set up the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC). In spite of the 3 percent of federal revenue allocated to it, it also failed due to

institutional incapacity in its administration. Subsequently since 2000, the government has also introduced various intervention efforts, which manifested in the creation of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the establishment of the Ministry of the Niger Delta. None of these have had a significant impact on the development in the region and have failed to address the root causes of the problem. Due to government incapacity and insincerity, they have all failed (Ahonsi 2011).

The conflict in the region has become further aggravated in recent years. In 2008, President Yar'Adua set up a technical committee to collate the reports of previous committees that had been set up to resolve the conflict in the Niger Delta region. Part of the report contained the provision to grant amnesty to those involved in the conflict. Consequently, in a bid to finding a lasting solution to the violence in the Niger Delta, president Yar'Adua granted amnesty in 2009 to the militants and to all those who were overtly or covertly involved in the conflict in the Niger Delta region (Technical Committee Report, 2008).

It is in the light of the above antecedents; this paper seeks to assess the strategies of the Amnesty programme as conflict management mechanism in Nigeria.

Literature Review

The word conflict is taken from the Latin word "conflictus" meaning "struck together". Conflict means clash, contention, confrontation, a battle or struggle, controversy or quarrel (Nwolise, 2004). Conflict as an element of social interaction has evoked a lot of arguments. Suffice to say that there are as many definitions of conflict. Coser (1956) defines conflict as a struggle over values

and claims over status, power and resources, in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. To Donohue and Kolt (1992), conflict has to do with the expression of differences by interdependent people in the course of achieving their needs and goals. To Deutsch (1973), conflict exists "whenever incompatible activities occur: an action that is incompatible with another action prevents, obstructs, interferes, injures or in some ways makes the latter less likely to be effective". Bernard (1953) has contended that conflict arises as a result of incompatible or mutually exclusive goals or aims or values espoused by human beings. This definition sees conflict from goal perspective.

However, Pruitt and Rubin (1986) see conflict from perceptual point of view.

To them conflict denotes the perceived divergence of interest(s), or aspirations that cannot be achieved simultaneously. Ross (1993) notes that conflict "occurs when parties disagree about the distribution of material or symbolic resources and act because of the incompatibility of goals or a perceived divergence of interest". Some other scholars see conflict as a natural occurrence in man, not necessarily in contest for resources, but still a deference of interest. McCrery (1985) sees conflict as the overt coercive interactions of contending collectivities. Sills (1965) submits that conflict could arise in an atmosphere in which each party is likely to seek a maximum advantage that cannot be achieved without reducing the advantage of the other part. This materialist idea of conflict has been dominant among some scholars (Nnoli, 1978). It has also been noted that conflict arises as a consequence of the striving of a man, the social being who in the course of promoting some of his

objectives, either intentionally or unintentionally upsets or direct to negative uses, instead of strengthening along beneficial line, some of the arrangement that ought to be for the benefit of man. Hence, conflicts come up as a result of negative contradiction and are such irresolvable by peaceful means (Nwanegbo, 2005).

Francis, (2006) observed that ‘conflict is an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence’. Conflict is defined as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. Conflict has also been defined by Igwe, (2002) as ‘a universal and permanent attribute of nature, life, and society, necessary and unavoidable when, in terms of dialectics they serve to advance the positive evolution of phenomena and unnecessary and avoidable when irresolvable and their consequences are very negative for the Society and Man’. (Igwe, 2002). A situation of conflict is created by attitudes transformed into specific goals and aspirations; hence, Okolie (2009) sees conflict as an inevitable aspect of human interaction, an unavoidable concomitant of choices and decisions.

Omotosho (2004) avers that it is widely believed by scholars that a conflict situation crops up when two or more parties could not agree on an issue. The parties involved may not necessarily be governments or nations. Ekanola (2004) posits that “the term conflict embodies notion of strife, struggle, differences, and disagreement”. It is indeed the struggle for mutually exclusive rewards or the use of incompatible means to achieve a goal. Horowitz (1985) sees conflict as a “struggle in which the aim is to get objective and simultaneously neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals”. Daugherty and Falzgrat (1981), view conflict as a situation in which

one identifiable group of human beings which could be tribal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, socio-economic, political or otherwise is in a state of conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable human groups. This could be because those groups are pursuing what appears to be incompatible goals.

Though there exist avalanche of perspectives of the concept, but an examination of the various definitions and views shows that conflict is a fact of life. It is indeed an integral aspect of social existence brought about by contradictions arising from difference in ideas, perceptions, goals and competition for acquisition of scarce resources. This lends credence to the statement credited to the Marxists in extant literature that to understand society is to understand social conflict. Thus, an ideal society is not noted for absence of conflict but rather its ability to manage conflicting interests constructively so that it will not snowball to violence that will threaten the continued existence of such a society. Opinions are divided among scholars as regard whether conflict only has negative aspect or there are some positive benefits derivable from conflict?

On the types and variation of conflicts, Soremekun (2009) identified the following sub types: such as elite conflicts, factional conflicts, communal conflicts, mass conflicts and popular conflicts. Elite conflicts are said to occur within the political centre, when elites of different backgrounds, favouring diverging policy positions, and often pursuing a multiplicity of interests, contend with each other to promote their separate concerns and to protest against measures perceived as detrimental to their well-being.

Factional conflicts connote factional strife. It is often times organized by elites, but nevertheless extends to a variety of social groups and down to the local level. This mobilization takes place to further access to the institutional centre of power, to increase participation and even control of government, and to influence political decisions as well as specific policies. Communal conflict, on the other hand, is strife posed by a section or some small group of people within a state. Communal conflict challenges the state's territorial integrity and mass confrontations protest the existing distribution of power.

Mass conflict according to Soremekun (2009) is a political movement with the purpose of inducing a rapid, complete, and permanent alteration of the power structure. By definition, revolutionary conflicts of this sort pose a basic threat to the validity of state power as currently constituted and offer an alternative political vision guided by a clearly defined set of organizing principles. He concluded by averring those popular conflicts as popular political protest chip away at the foundations of state power from below, thereby undermining its viability without altering its form. It constitutes a quiet rebellion against state authority, a way of responding to exclusion and lack of access by limiting the reach of existing central institutions. Popular conflict of this kind emerges most emphatically in conditions where state structures are especially weak and leaders capricious, other patronage network have broken down, where alternative avenues for power accumulation exist and where economic conditions have wrought widespread misery. The next paragraph provides an insight into factors and conditions that make conflict probable, an understanding of which assists in

underscoring various drivers and causes of conflict.

Every society manages her conflicts through a framework of laid-down conventions or rules. Either traditional or modern, each has a body of rules that defines and qualifies people's relationship with each other and the state. These rules and regulations constitute the law of the land (constitution). In societies where there are no written constitutions, the basic set of standards in which individual member has been socialized from youth to conform to and from which other standards in the culture derive become the framework of conflict management (Oyeshola, 2005).

Conflict management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict (Best, 2006). The concept of conflict management comes to the fore as a result of the fact that conflict is inevitable and not all conflicts can be resolved, hence the need to manage or regulate them.

Francis (2009), says conflict management covers efforts and interventions to reduce, contain or regulate conflict. It has also been conceptualized as the process of limiting the negative and damaging capacity of conflict through certain measures and by working with and through the parties to the conflict. It involves the entire sphere of handling conflicts positively at different stages, including those proactive measures instituted to prevent conflict. In short, it includes conflict limitation, containment and mitigation (Best, 2009). As John Burton puts it, this may include "conflict prevention" which he used to describe containment of conflict through actions taken to enhance conditions in which

collaborative and valued relationships control the behaviour of parties to a conflict (Best, 2009).

In the management of minority conflict such as that of the Niger Delta, which is the focus of this work, the state may adopt the approach of coercion of minority or sectional claimants into agreeing to exploitation, or avoidance in which the agitators and their claims are simply ignored (Isumonah, 2003)

The state could also adopt the strategy of bargaining whereby there is a redistribution of opportunities and benefits in favour of the minority claimants or an adoption of a framework that would facilitate the participation of the minority claimants in the decision-making process (Isumonah, 2003). It must be noted that the response of the Nigerian State to oil minority conflict in the Niger Delta overtime has been an admixture of the bargaining / pacifist and coercive strategies.

Africa's societies have different means of managing conflict. In Chad for instance, the traditional chiefs/ ruler is vested with power to intervene and effect conciliation between the parties in conflict residing within their own area of jurisdiction. In conflicts between nomads, herders and settled farmers, there exists a structure whereby traditional rulers quite frequently participate in the management of such conflicts. Through that platform, the traditional rulers do not limit themselves to conciliatory efforts; they equally carry out enlightenment campaigns and undertake measures to prevent future conflicts. Other traditional mechanisms for resolving conflict in Chad include Peace Dialogue Committees.

Associations/Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Role of Assemblies (Cofono) are well recognised. The "Cofono" is a fully representative gathering, which brings together not only the traditional rulers, but also customary council members from the surroundings, all interested men-young and old, as well as women groups of all ages (Zamtato, 2003). In Cameroun, the traditional method of conflict management involves three stages. Before then, it is necessary to state that there is what is called "African Palaver" which is widely used in quite a number of communities to settle conflict "Palaver" simply mean talking things over, or the settlement of conflict through dialogue. The first stage is to persuade disputants to bring their case to the "Palaver" the second stage is hearing phase and the final stage is the point at which the elders, after taking evidence from witnesses and listening to all the contributions from the floor, retire to a secluded place to take a decision on the conflict. As soon as they are ready with their decision, they return to give it and conclude the "palaver". The palaver system is also used in Mali as a popular conflict management technique (Zamtato, 2003).

According to Ifeanyi (2006) there are two major classes or methods of resolving conflicts; Regular Dispute Resolution (RDR) and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). The RDR includes the regular system of reporting a case to the police, getting the offender prosecuted, convicted and sentenced. It also covers civil litigations. This is basically by litigation in court, that is, through legal process. Under this system, the winner takes it all. There is always a winner/loser ending. The ADR implies, this includes the methods that are alternative to the regular system. In this type of dispute resolution strategy, people are encouraged to go for a win-win solution

(instead of a win-lose or lose-lose situation).

The problem of political stability that is, the dilemma of how to secure enduring, legitimate political order – has long been the focus of much philosophical discourse and debate, Shaun (2000). If we, “rechristen the problem of stability as the problem of order we can immediately recognize it as a central focus of political philosophy in all periods’ Shaun (2000).

For, Thomas Hobbes (1968:) in Shaun (2000), the need for political stability was paramount: without political stability there could be no security for either life or liberty, and thus man’s existence could never be anything more than a chaotic, violent and bloody struggle for power—a condition of war of every man-against every man”.

It is based on this fact that political precedence was placed over economic precedence earlier on in this study ie political stability is a necessary condition to achieve in order to realize economic stability. However, sustainable political stability is dependent upon realistic economic stability. In fact, they are inseparable, one reinforces the other and vice versa.

According to Abdulrasheed (2007), political stability is viewed as “a condition of steadiness and firmness of political institutions and processes within the political system as well as absence of threat to an existing pattern of authority and behaviour, then it could be reasoned that political stability especially in plural society is a function of several society factors within the entity. These include the extent of polarization and opposing tendencies within the entity and the extent

of adaptability of the government system to management of these divisions. It need be stressed that, while a situation of absolute stability may not be attainable in any society, relative stability of all organs as well as general acquiescence to rules is quite essential for the state to achieve its desired end”.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on the conflict resolution theory. The theory focuses on the management of deep-rooted conflicts. Conflict management initiatives are often characterized by long time horizons and intervention strategies at multiple levels aimed at changing perceptions and improving communication skills at addressing the roots of the conflict including inequality and social injustice (Azar, 1986).

The main thrust of the theory includes the following: It was a strategy and tactic for conflict prevention, settlement, termination, resolution, transformation and peace building through Negotiation, Mediation, Arbitration and Conciliation. These are called conflict management methods and they are combined with the conflict management styles in resolving disputes (Burton, 1991). These styles are Collaborating, Accommodating, Dominating, Obliging and Compromising (CADOC). Azar (1986) synthesized and referred to these as ‘Assertiveness and Accommodation’, which means Low and high concerns for self and low and high concerns for others. That through the conflict management methods and styles, actors involved in conflict reduced the level of hostility and generate some order in their relations that led to complete resolutions of issues at stake, change in behaviour and attitudes, acceptable settlement, ceasefire or partial agreement. Thus, the theory

provides a mechanism whereby steps are taken to transform, de-escalate or terminate a conflict in a mutually acceptable way through the conflict management methods and styles.

Nevertheless, the full range of methods and instruments that constitute conflict management is quite wide (Fogg, 1985). It varies from coercive measures through legal processes to third party intervention and multi-lateral conferences. For analytical reasons, these methods can be divided into unilateral methods (one party threats) bilateral methods (bargaining and negotiation, deterrence), multi-lateral methods (third party intervention).

Fisher (2000) stated that there is a universally accepted 'typology for the methods used in addressing conflict. These are consistent terms seen as steps in the process. Each step taken includes the previous one'. They classify these steps as conflict prevention, conflict settlement, conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation.

In all these processes there were simple powerful concept of change which improved and evaluated the relationships of individuals or parties in conflicts. The expected change follows particular set of various actions and the result will lead to conflict mitigation, management and peace building (USAID, 2009). The point here is that bringing representatives of belligerent groups together in a safe space to interact, negotiate and mediate is a good strategy for conflict resolutions (USAID, 2009).

The expectation is that the interactions will put a human face on the 'other', foster trust and eventually lead to the reduction of tensions. If key actors from belligerent groups are given opportunity to interact

then they will better understand and appreciate one another, be better able to work with one another, and prefer to resolve conflicts peacefully (Laderach, 2008). These are the basic tenets of the Conflict Resolution/Management Theory. In order to examine and understand the rationale for Amnesty Programmes, the Conflict Resolution theory was fully explored. Using the Conflict Resolution Theory to explain the role of government in the de-escalation of the Niger Delta conflict is as important as understanding the nature and parameters of the Amnesty Programme of Government proclaimed for the militants or terror-based organizations.

The Conflict Resolution Theory is a four-stage process, which enables group representatives to work towards resolving inter-group conflicts in a non-threatening, non-coercive and non-confrontational environment. It often paves the way for official negotiations by initiating attitudinal changes in public opinion and decision makers.

By applying the assumptions of Burton Conflict Resolution Theory to the conflicts managements, we mapped a way forward for the resolution of the crisis. The practical method and processes involved were what Joseph Montville defined as 'an unofficial, informal intention between members of adversary groups that aim to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict' (Montville, 1991).

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDRs) in Conflict Management and Political Stability
Boutros Boutros-Ghali first conceived of post-conflict peace-building as a framework for ensuring that violent conflict

would not reoccur in post-conflict settings. The DDR process originated as a response to the Brahimi Report, which explicitly linked the peacekeeping, peace-building, and socioeconomic development functions of the United Nations (UN) system. This was later elaborated by Kofi Annan (Knight, 2008). The UN adopted “peace building” as part of its official discourse in 1992, when former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali used the term in his Agenda for Peace. In Boutros-Ghali’s view, peace-building was an activity to be undertaken immediately after the cessation of violence. He sees peace-building as an action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict (Knight, 2008). Knight (2008) concludes that from this conceptualization of peace-building, one can easily discern the early outlines of what later became known as the DDR process. In his words: The former UN Secretary General envisioned, for instance, that some of the elements involved in peace-building would be linked directly to preventing the recurrence of violent conflict. These elements include disarming warring factions, restoring law and order, decommissioning and destroying weapons, repatriating refugees, reintegrating internally displaced persons into their communities, providing advisory and training support for security personnel, improving police and judicial systems, monitoring elections, de-mining and other forms of demilitarization, providing technical assistance to fledgling states coming out of conflict, advancing efforts to protect human rights, repatriating refugees, reforming and strengthening institutions of governance, promoting formal and informal participation in the political process, and facilitating social and economic development (Knight, 2008).

From this time onwards, the UN has adopted the DDR process as an indispensable element of post-conflict peace-building; this has been utilized in various peacekeeping missions of the UN. The sole aim is to enhance internal security and build human capacity, and thereby to ensure that sustainable peace is entrenched and becomes a permanent feature of countries and regions coming out of conflict. Knight (2008) explained that post-conflict peace-building has become an international growth industry. This also came as a response to a UN Blue Ribbon Panel Report, at the turn of this century that called on the world body to expand its global peace support role. When the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (known as the Brahimi Report) was released in August 2000, the link between peacekeeping, peace building and socioeconomic development was fully acknowledged.

The panel recommended a number of peace-building tools and strategies that could become part of any peace support operation. These included the adoption of quick impact projects (QIPs), the establishment of a fund for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), the adoption of a doctrinal shift away from civilian policing to rule of law teams, the creation of a pilot Peace-building Unit, and regularized funding of the Electoral Affairs Division at the UN Headquarters in New York. Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan wrote in his report to the Sixtieth Session of the UN General Assembly that since February 11, 2000, six UN peacekeeping operations have included disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration as part of their mandate. The DDR tasks involved in those operations included, inter alia, the broad provision of security; collecting, securing, and destroying light and heavy weapons; de-

mining; demobilizing ex-combatants; dismantling militia groups; enhancing regional security to stem the spill over of conflicts across borders; identifying and resettling foreign ex-combatants, including children and women; supporting national disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs; promoting sensitization programs within communities; and meeting specific needs of women, children, and disabled ex-combatants (Knight 2008). DDR programs do not have a single definition. Isaczai (2006) argued: That integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (IDDR) principles assert that the reintegration of former combatants should be the essential focus and objective of DDR programming and should involve national ownership, capacity development, and be situated within the larger recovery strategy, from the support of individuals, to the community at large.

From the perspective of the UN Secretary-General (1992), discussing the background to conflict in Africa, in most of the insurrections in Africa, irregular militia groups and large numbers of soldiers are recruited (which includes both children and women). This conflict has also included the proliferation of lethal weapons, mostly small arms and light weapons (SALW). It is therefore argued that this group of people requires special attention since they portend a threat to the peace process and could also undermine progress towards the development of security (UN Agenda for Peace 1992).

Having a large number of ex-combatants who are still in possession of weapons can pose a threat to the security of a state and its civilian population. The situation also threatens countries bordering on the state in question. Thus, DDR programs are

generally put in place to dissipate threats to the security of a post-conflict society, and a particular region, by helping ex-combatants disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate into communities of their choice. These programs should ultimately provide ex-combatants with the kind of skills necessary for them to become productive members in a peaceful society. DDR programs, combined with security sector reform (SSR), are designed, ideally, to forestall any return to violence. To this end, they consist of three principal components, or a three-stage process, that involves the surrender of weapons, the discharge of active combatants, and the reintegration of ex-combatants into society (Knight 2008). Curtis (2012) conceptualises DDR within the praxis of peace-building defined as ‘a set of ideas and practices, mediated by the interactions between local communities, and international, national, and regional actors’. The aim as Obi (2014) puts it is in ‘preventing the resumption or escalation of violent conflict and establishing durable and self-sustaining peace’ (Newman, Paris, and Richmond). The objective of the DDR process, according to the UN’s DDR Resource Centre, is:

To contribute to security and stability in post conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. This entire process, linked to broader national recovery, is a complex one, with political, military, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic dimensions (Knight, 2008). One of the other major aims of DDR is to address the post-conflict security problems that arise when ex-combatants are left without livelihoods or support networks (other than their former comrades) during the transition from conflict to peace. By relieving combatants of weapons and by taking these individuals out of their military structures and routines, the DDR

process can then facilitate integration of the ex-combatants into society and help them become active participants in the peace process (UN report on DDR 2012).

Disarmament refers to the collection, documentation, control, and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives, and the light and heavy weapons of combatants and, often, of groups within the civilian population in a conflict zone. It involves establishing and initiating arms management programs (e.g. programs for the safe storage and/or destruction of weapons) as well as of demining. When conflict ends through a negotiated settlement, ex-combatants are generally induced to give up their weapons voluntarily. When conflict ends via a clear military victory, the victor will more often than not coerce the vanquished to surrender their weapons. Where UN peacekeepers are involved in the disarmament phase of DDR, they are generally charged with the collection, safe storage, and mature (Knight, 2008). It is also said to occur within assembly areas that are predetermined during the peace negotiations, where fighters are gathered together in camp-like settings. Weapons are confiscated, safely stored and eventually destroyed (Naraghi and Conaway 2004) environment is created in which the peace process can Demobilization is a process by which conflicting armed groups are induced to disband their military organization and structure and shift from combatant to civilian status. It involves, inter alia, the registration and processing of individual ex-combatants in temporary centres; the massing of troops/rebel forces in cantonment sites, encampments, barracks, or other assembly areas; inducements for ex-combatants to give up their weapons (e.g. the exchange of weapons for money); the provision of transitional

support/assistance packages to help them and their families meet their immediate basic needs, such as food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term remedial education, training, employment, and tools (this is usually called reinsertion); discharge; and transportation to get to their home community. In most cases, the dividing line between reinsertion and reintegration is not all that clear. But, given the political and security objectives of DDR, it is perhaps useful to view the reinsertion phase as a bridge between demobilization and reintegration (Ball and DeGoor 2006). It is also known as the formal disbanding of military formations and, at the individual level, is the process of releasing combatants from a mobilised state. The discharge of ex-combatants often occurs over a period of time, during which they are usually transported to their homes or new districts and granted small initial reinsertion packages (Naraghi and Conaway 2004).

Reintegration is a longer-term social and economic process with an open time frame designed to facilitate the assimilation of ex-combatants in a way that allows them, and their families, to adapt to civilian life in communities that may not necessarily be ready to accept them. In most cases, this process involves the provision of cash or some form of compensation package in exchange for the commitment of ex-combatants to refrain from returning to conflict, providing ex-combatants with longer-term job or career training, initiating sustainable income generation projects, repatriating refugees and displaced persons, and establishing a forum and process for truth and reconciliation (Knight 2008). This stage of the DDR process is usually accompanied by efforts at the rehabilitation of war-affected individuals (which in the Niger Delta

context is referred to as people from the impacted community) and the reconstruction of national infrastructure that was damaged as a result of the violence. In some cases, surplus militia and other ex-combatants may be encouraged to merge with a new national military force as part of a process of security sector reform during the reintegration phase of DDR. This is a critical factor in successful post-conflict peace-building since no peace can be assured unless order is maintained and, often, the best method of ensuring order may be to have a unified national army (Knight, 2008).

Corroborating this (Naraghi and Conaway, 2004) aver that it has two phases - initial reinsertion and long-term reintegration. Reinsertion refers to the short-term arrival period of an ex-combatant into his/her former home or a new community. Reintegration is a much longer-term process with the goal of ensuring permanent disarmament and sustainable peace. It includes assisting the community and the ex-combatants during the difficult transition to civilian life. In this phase, former fighters may enter job placement services, participate in skills training, credit schemes, scholarships or rehabilitation programmes.

CONCLUSION

It is important to note that reintegration is sustained when indigenous capacity is enhanced, when ex-combatants and other war-affected individuals become productive members of their communities, and when post-conflict societies begin to learn how to address conflict in nonviolent ways. Knight (2008) however noted that it is necessary for reintegration to be a long-term programme. He argues that the need for this was recognized when the UN distinguished

“reinsertion” to mean a short-term process of reintegration.

The DDR process is multidimensional and exceedingly complex, with political, military, security, humanitarian, and socioeconomic dimensions. Its primary goal is to address the post-conflict security challenge that stems from ex-combatants being left without livelihoods or support networks once wars come to an end and during the critical transition period from conflict to peace. DDR programs seek to support ex-combatants’ economic and social reintegration, so that they can become stakeholders in peace and as productive members of their communities. This transformational strategy helps to foster post amnesty peace-building, and thereby to ensure that the peace is home-grown and thus durable. Unfortunately, the Federal Government Amnesty Program fell short of DDR measures which account for the little success the program has achieved since inception and the continued hostility albeit with significant reduction in the Niger Delta.

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