Volume 18 Issue 31
Originally issued as H5



Global Journal of human-social science: H Interdisciplinary
Volume 18 Issue 5 Version 1.0 Year 2018
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

The Role of Natural Resources in Nigeria- Cameroun Border Dispute

By Lucky Igohosa, Ugbudian
Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike

Abstract- The paper examines the role of natural resources in Nigeria-Cameroun border dispute. Nigerian state administered the areas commonly known as Bakassi peninsula which falls along the borders between Nigeria and Cameroun for decades peacefully. However from 1991 the Cameroun government challenged the rights of Nigeria government over the peninsula which culminated in a suit at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague. Reflecting on archival materials and relevant documents analysed qualitatively using historical approach revealed that the dispute was driven largely by the availability of natural resources such as crude oil and sea products in the peninsula. The contestation of the ownership of the peninsula made the Cameroonians forces to terrorised Nigerians living in the area which drew the intervention of the Nigerian armed forces in a punitive mission to the peninsula and beyond from 198.1 Consequently, the government of Cameroun took the matter to ICJ for adjudication which ruled in favour of Cameroun relying largely on the 11 March 1913 and 29 April 1913Anglo-German colonial boundaries agreements. The paper posited that the contribution that the exploration of huge natural resources including crude oil deposit that the peninsula possess will do to the economy of both countries influenced the violent dimensions the dispute took including the formation of Bakassi Volunteer Force even after the case was taken to the ICJ.

GJHSS-H Classification: *FOR Code: 050209*



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



© 2018. Lucky Igohosa, Ugbudian. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecom-mons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The Role of Natural Resources in Nigeria-Cameroun Border Dispute

Lucky Igohosa, Ugbudian

Abstract- The paper examines the role of natural resources in Nigeria-Cameroun border dispute. Nigerian state administered the areas commonly known as Bakassi peninsula which falls along the borders between Nigeria and Cameroun for decades peacefully. However from 1991 the Cameroun government challenged the rights of Nigeria government over the peninsula which culminated in a suit at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague. Reflecting on archival materials and relevant documents analysed qualitatively using historical approach revealed that the dispute was driven largely by the availability of natural resources such as crude oil and sea products in the peninsula. The contestation of the ownership of the peninsula made the Cameroonians forces to terrorised Nigerians living in the area which drew the intervention of the Nigerian armed forces in a punitive mission to the peninsula and beyond from 198.1 Consequently, the government of Cameroun took the matter to ICJ for adjudication which ruled in favour of Cameroun relying largely on the 11 March 1913 and 29 April 1913Anglo-German colonial boundaries agreements. The paper posited that the contribution that the exploration of huge natural resources including crude oil deposit that the peninsula possess will do to the economy of both countries influenced the violent dimensions the dispute took including the formation of Bakassi Volunteer Force even after the case was taken to the ICJ.

I. Introduction

The discovering of huge natural oil deposit in the waters surrounding the Bakassi Peninsula changed the relations between Nigeria and Cameroun commencing from 1981. This dynamics was to set in motion series of events that strained the relations between both countries that even culminated in violent conflict. The military of both countries engaged themselves in combat that led to the loss of lives and destruction of property in the peninsula. The violent conflict reached its climax in 1994 when the intensity of the battles led Nigeria to stationed 3000 troops at the peninsula while Cameroun instituted a suit at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The key prayers of the Cameroonian government was that the Bakassi peninsula was part of its territory and demanded the armed forces of Nigeria been withdraw. Similarly, Nigeria accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ and filed counter claims to the ownership of the peninsula. The Justices of the ICJ after over eight years of reviewing documents dating back to over 100 years delivered ruling in favour of the Cameroonians on 10 October 2002. The majority of the Justices of the ICJ relied copiously on the colonial powers, Britain and Germany agreements on both countries boundaries in giving the judgement. The degeneration of the relations between neighbouring Nigeria and Cameroun that had harmonious coexistence prior to the discovering of natural oil in the peninsula deserved further studies. The harmonious relations between both countries even led to several bilateral agreements including neutrality of the Camerounian government during the Nigerian Civil War. The bilateral agreements related to the peaceful and mutual agreements on the boundaries including the Bakassi peninsula held in Lagos, Kano, Yaoundé and Maroua between 1970 and 1975.

II. Bakassi Peninsula: Historical Perspective

Bakassi peninsula is situated along the 1600 kilometre Nigeria-Cameroun borders that extend from Lake Chad in the North to the extreme of the Gulf of Guinea. The Peninsula size is about 665 km² (257 sq mi) largely mangrove and halve of the area submerged are occupied by fishermen settlers (Anene, 1970:56). The Bakassi lies between latitudes 4°25′ and 5°10′N and longitudes 8°20′ and 9°08′E. The population of the peninsula is put at between 150,000 and 300,000 who are mostly Nigerians. Indeed, the population of Nigerians of the Efik ethnic stock found largely in Cross Rivers and Akwa Ibom states of Nigeria constitute not less than 90 per cent of the peninsula's demography. The huge Nigerian population in the peninsula is traceable to the ancient period when the Obong of Calabar exercised authority over several communities and settlements including Bakassi and adjourning kingdoms. This integrated the diverse ethnic group including Ibibio, Efik in the kingdom strengthened by trade and common language. The quest for colonial possession influenced the British Console Hewett pressured by the Germans signing treaties with the kings and chiefs of Akwa and Bell of Douala in Cameroon on 14 July 1884, met and signed treaties with the kings and chiefs of old Calabar on 10 September, 1884. This gave the British strong footing in laying claims to the territories on the Nigerian side including Bakassi while Germany declared protectorate over a large spans of over that cut across Rio del Rey area to

Author: *Department History and Strategic Studies Faculty of Humanities Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo Ebonyi State, Nigeria. e-mails: liugbudian@gmail.com, luckysenator2004@yahoo.com*

© 2018 Global Journals

Gabon (Weladji, 1975). The claims of both Germany and Britain in Nigeria and Cameroun were given a legal seal, approval and recognition by other European powers at the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885. It must be said that the Berlin Conference on Africa was held to avert wars among other powers scrambling for Africa territories without the consent of the concern African kingdoms and people. In addition, the European powers used different strategies including deception and falsehood to lay claim to many African lands as their colonies in order to meet up with the effective occupation criterion outlined in the conference as a prerequisite for validation of claims. The consequence of the foregoing is that the European powers at the conference and beyond agreements were not concern about the ancient allegiance and culture of the people but more about establishing outpost for exploitation of its resources and creation of overseas markets for its finished commodities.

Britain formally established colonial rule in Nigeria in 1900, and made Bakassi part of the Niger protectorate in 1893 which was a significant part of Southern Nigeria. At this time, the peninsula was effectively part of Nigeria and had its administrative headquarters in Clabber. The status of the peninsula undergone a dynamic change following series of agreements signed between Britain and Germany in addressing boundaries issues. It must be said that the two of the agreements were the Anglo-German agreement of 11 March 1913 and Anglo-German Protocol of 12 April 1913. The agreement of 11 March 1913 signed in London resolved that the Nigerian-Cameroonian border extends from Yola in the northern area to the sea in the Cross river estuary. The second agreement signed in Obokun between the representatives W. V. Nugent of Britain and Hans Detzner of Germany readjusted the earlier boundary demarcation and the new boundary placed it southward line west of Bakassi which effectively placed the peninsula under the Germany Cameroun control. The impact of this agreement was however not manifested physically because of the outbreak of the First World War which Germany lost and its colonies in Africa was placed under the mandate of Britain and France by the League and validated by the Trust ship of the United Nations at the end of the second World in 1946. The point in emphasis is that the allocation of southern Cameroun to Britain under the mandate system in 1919 meant that it was administered along with Nigeria. By 10 July 1919, there was Anglo-Franco agreement on the Cameroun question following the transferred of the colonies to both countries. Henry Simon, the French minister for colonies and Vincent Milner, the British Secretary for colonies reinforced the 1913 agreements settled the boundary of British Cameroun and French Cameroun. The British at this time administered British Cameroun along with Bakassi jointly with Nigeria (Omoigui, 2012). The declaration of December and January 1930 and the United Nations recognised and strengthened the previous agreements on the on the status of Cameroun including Bakassi. The point in emphasis is that since the 1913 Anglo-German pact, Bakassi peninsula became part of Cameroun and 1919 as British mandate from 1919 until 1961 hence not part of Nigeria (Eze, 2007). It must however be said that the majority of the population of the peninsula remained Nigerians. The UN as part of the regulation guiding its charter on the mandate status of British Cameroun conducted a referendum in 1959 and 1961. The majority of the people in southern Cameroun voted to be united with the French Cameroun. Indeed, not less than 75 per cent of the population in Bakassi voted to be integrated with Cameroun during the referendum. The result of the referendum was accepted by the Nigerian government leading to the exchange of diplomatic documents between Nigeria and Cameroun which included Map which Nigeria sent to the latter in 1961 (www.postwatchmagazine.com). At the same time, the results of the plebiscite were also accepted by the UN General Assembly and the ICJ on 11 and 12 February, 1961. The history of Bakassi undergone twists and turns between 1884 and 1961 while under the mandate system. However, by 1961 it became part of the independent Cameroun when the majority of the inhabitants agreed to be integrated with it in a referendum. Nigerian and Cameroonian government engaged in diplomatic exchanges particularly during the 30 month Nigerian Civil War, 1967 to 1970. Consequently, there were summits of both countries in Kano, Lagos, Yaoundé and Marou between 1970 and 1975. These summits resulted in the settlement of the northern and southern boundaries both countries per Yaoundé II and Marou declaration that placed Bakassi on the side of Cameroun. It must be said that despite the referendum and the declaration by Nigerian and Cameroun governments, Bakassi remained under Nigerian effective governance and control without reservation by the Cameroonian government.

III. The Bakassi Dispute

Conflict is generally regarded as inevitable in human relations. Conflict is part of human existence and the way it is handled determines societal and human growth and development. Conflict often results over incompatible interests among people or countries. Lund (1997) defined conflict as a fall out of parties that promotes incompatible interests that often culminate in competition over power, resource, status and identity. The incompatibility of the interests of the parties makes each of the actors to be driven by personal interest without caring about the interests of other actors. The view of Lund on conflict made remarkable contribution to the issue though focus on general overview. Albert

© 2018 Global Journals

(2001) averred that conflict involved the existence of two opposing parties fighting against each other over needs, values, resources and lack of communication. Albert noted that information management is quite critical as it mainly determines the perceptions and reactions of the parties to the issues at stake. The lack of access to the resources in the society by the parties to meet their needs usually triggers the violent behaviour. Albert made a very useful and insightful contribution to the meaning of conflict however was not specific on international conflicts especially Nigerian and Cameroun Igwe (2002) submitted that conflict is a natural and unavoidable phenomenon to human existence. The author postulated that conflict is a universal and permanent attribute of life and society necessary and unavoidable in terms of dialectics. According to Igwe, conflict serves to advance the positive evolution of phenomena and necessary and unavoidable, when irresolvable and their consequences are negative for society and man. The author made telling contribution to discourse on conflict, it however dwell on conflict generally without focusing on the Nigerian-Cameroonian dimensions

Asobie (2003) analysis of international conflict revealed that international conflicts are 'struggles between primary social classes, clashing across national boundaries'. According to the author the social classes are the real actors in international conflicts used and mobilised the states apparatus to promote their objectives. The objectives of the social classes are the exploitation of productive resources and when exploited are distributed unequally in favour of the ruling elites. The author averred some frustrated people may be attracted to support social movements that and play the role of opposition arm to the ruling elites. These elites generally determine the course of conflict whether sub-national or international often arise from disagreement in the exploitation of resource. Although the view of Asobie is apt and capture the dynamics in international dispute, it focus is limited and narrowed without taking into cognisance the Nigerian-Cameroonian peculiarities beyond social classes. The paper therefore conceived conflict as the emergence of disagreement among parties that shared incompatible interests. The interest of the parties could be resource, values or other concerns. The adversarial attitudes of the parties can degenerate the disagreement into violence except compromise is reached. International conflict could be described as the existence of dispute or disagreement by two or more countries often influence by incompatible interests and goals. These interests and goals could be socio-cultural, economic or political.

The seemingly harmonious relations between Nigeria and Cameroun became adversarial when the potentials of high deposits of hydrocarbon and other resources were reported. The Cameroonian government began to clandestinely harassed Nigerians living in the peninsula that culminated in the 15 May 1981 military invasion. The Cameroonian government had broadcast on the media regularly that the Nigerian armed forces illegally entered its territory through the peninsula before the invasion. The Nigerian government in retaliation sent a special military force that effectively drove the Cameroonian forces out of the peninsula. This set in motion frequent attacks of the people living in the peninsula by the Cameroonian forces with the attendants' loss of lives and property. By 1993, the unrestrained attacks by the Cameroonians forces led the Nigerian military to stationed not less than 3000 forces to curtail and combat any invasion on the peninsula. The clash by the two countries armed forces led to the death of several people including five Nigerian soldiers. The violent dimensions according to diplomatic report released on 6 May 1996 revealed that the Nigerian military lost not less than fifty personnel while the Cameroonian forces army suffered no casualties in the peninsula battles (New York Times, 1996:5). It must be said that the actual number of casualties on both sides remained relatively unknown because of non-disclosed of such information by the two countries.

The overwhelming powers of Nigerian state in terms of population, economic and military might, as well as accessed to colonial documents on the peninsula made the Cameroonian government to approach the ICJ on 29 March 1994. Although the Cameroonian was a not yet a signatory to the ICJ statutes, it prayed that injunction should be given to eject Nigerian military from its territory (Bakassi Peninsula). The Nigerian government accepted the jurisdiction of the ICJ and filed a counter claims to the ownership of the peninsula. The Nigerian government relied on effective occupation of the peninsula, the population being largely Nigerian and the colonial agreements between Britain and the king and chiefs of the ancient Calabar kingdom in the 1880s. While the Cameroonian government hinged it case on the 1913 Anglo-Britain agreements and the Yaoundé II and Maroua declaration. The ICJ after eight years of adjudication ruled that the peninsula belonged to Cameroun and ordered Nigerian to transfer it to its rival country on the strength of the documentary evidence provided by both countries.

Given the importance attached to the peninsula, the Cameroun government accepted the ICJ judgement and the Nigerian government and public reacted angrily and disbelief demanding the judgement been rejected. The Nigerian government was more concern about reaching agreement that providing 'peace with honour, with the interest and welfare of the people' than outright rejection of the judgement.' The editorial of The Guardian newspaper captured the mood of the country describing the judgement as 'a rape and unforeseen potential international conspiracy against Nigerian territorial integrity and sovereignty" and "part of a

© 2018 Global Journals

Western ploy to foment and perpetuate trouble in Africa.' The Nigerian government through the office of Special Assistant to the president on National orientation and Public Affairs issued a statement on the position of the country on the judgement thus:

> Having studied the judgement as entered by the Court, it is apparent that a lot of fundamental facts were not taken into consideration in arriving at their declaration. Most disturbing of these being the difficulties arising from the Orders contained in the judgement, particularly, the Order relating to Nigerian communities in which their ancestral homes were adjudged to be in Cameroonian Territory but which are expected to maintain cultural, trade and religious affiliations with their kith and kin in Nigeria. Nigeria takes cognizance of these serious implications and therefore appeals to all her citizens at home and abroad to remain calm, positive and constructive until we can find a peaceful solution to the boundary issue between Nigeria and Cameroon. We appreciate and thank the Secretary General of the United Nations for brokering meeting at the highest political level between Nigeria and Cameroon before the judgement was delivered and for offering his good offices to broker a similar meeting now that the judgement has been delivered with a view to effecting reconciliation, normalization of relations and good neighborliness. Nigeria thanks all leaders of the international community who have expressed concern over the issue and re-assures them that she will spare no efforts to maintain peace between Nigeria and Cameroon and indeed in the entire region. However, Government wishes to assure Nigerians of its constitutional commitment to protect its citizenry. On no account will Nigeria abandon her people and their interests. For Nigeria, it is not a matter of oil or natural resources on land or in coastal waters; it is a matter of the welfare and well-being of her people on their land. We assure the people of Bakassi and all other communities similarly affected by the judgement of the International Court of Justice on the support and solidarity of all other Nigerians. Nigeria will do everything possible to maintain peace in Bakassi or any otherpart of the border with Cameroon and will continue to avail itself of the good office of the Secretary-General of the United Nation and other well-meaning leaders of the International community to achieve peace and to maintain harmony and good neighborliness (The Guardian, 2002).

A violent reaction came from the inhabitants of the peninsula and others groups sympathetic to the cause which led to the formation of several pro Bakassi movements, namely, Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination (BAMOSD), Southern Cameroun Peoples Organisation (SCAPO) and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) tooppose the implementation of the judgement. To this end, the groups on 9 July 2006 declared the peninsula an independent country by naming it 'Democratic Republic of Bakassipursuant to a meeting held by the groups on 2 July 2016(Vanguard, 2006).At the same time, the sufferings of the displaced inhabitants of the peninsula made another organisation, Biafra Nations Youth League (BNYL) under the leadership of Princewill Obuka and Ebuta Ogar Takon to relocate its headquarters of the body to the peninsula to confront the Cameroonian soldiers accused of killing the natives of the area. The leaders of the groups were however arrested by the Nigerian troops in Ikang town, a border community between Nigeria and Cameroun on 9 November, 2016 (The Nations, 2016).

Despite the strong reaction of Nigerians against the judgement, the Cameroonian government dispelled the fear of the people and stated that the situation was under control. This view was conveyed by Jacques Ndongo, the Minister of Communication submitted that his country citizens should take the reaction of Nigeria to the ruling with 'calm, dignity and serenity' (Cameroon Television (CRTV) Online 2002).

The responses of the Nigerian government and public was of much concern to the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan led to the invitation of Presidents Oluegun Obasanjo and Paul Biya as well as the leaders of United States of America, France and Britain for a mutual agreement on the implementation of the judgement in the interests of both countries and inhabitants of the peninsula to a meeting at Green Tree, United States of America in June 2006. Kofi Annan elated by the agreement reached in the meeting submitted that 'with today's Agreement… a comprehensive resolution of the dispute is within our grasp; the momentum achieved must be sustained' (UN Press Release 2006). The Green Tree Agreement (GTA) spelt out the steps for the resolution of the conflict including withdrawal of the Nigerian troops and transfer of the peninsula to the Cameroonian authority as well as the welfare and status of the inhabitants. The Nigerian troops finally withdrew the last batch of the troops from the peninsula in 2008 following the signing of the Treaty of Calabar on 14 August 2008. The Cameroun government pledge to humane in treating of local Nigerians population in the peninsula based of the approved code of conduct in the treaty.

IV. The Natural Resource (Hydrocarbons) Perspective in the Conflict

The wealth and revenue that exploitation and production of natural resource brings to countries, has made resource conflict in the local and international

© 2018 Global Journals

scenes high. This view is demonstrated by the various resource based conflicts included Argentina and Britain over potentially oil rich Falkland islands, Japan and China over oil rich Senkaku Islands, and Soviet Union and Finland war over Finland's Petsamo region that had a huge nickel deposits, which were strategically important for USSR (Darius Mikulenas, 2015).

> Conflicts are not a new phenomenon, and people have been fighting each other since the inception of humanity. The only thing that has changed are the size of respective forces, available technology, and the reasons for the conflict. There has never been a shortage of reasons, however, and they ranged from ideological and religious beliefs, to ego-centric wish to increase ones prestige through acquiring new territories. The bloodshed, justified by the nobility of the goal at hand, has haunted us for generations, each and every time manifesting as a bigger and more brutal battle. Whether it has been lauded that a particular battle will be fought for the protection of democratic values, or liberation of an oppressed nation, primary causes still lay within the realm of resources.

Kishi averred that natural resource such as oil, diamonds, copper, and cobalt has huge positive economic potential for states. Kishi however state that' these resources can also do more harm than good if used towards ulterior motives including corruption, the unequal distribution of wealth, and to fuel violence'. Natural resource according to the author over the years has also promoting violence through financing, corruption, patronage and competition for territorial control by different actors. Amnesty International (2013) stated that it is complicated to ascertain the exact role that natural resource may play in promoting violence. Some of the examples of countries that natural resources has been used to sponsored violence included the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Sierra Leone where diamond played a key role in the violence.

The ACLED data base revealed that there is upsurge in violence induced by natural which it put at over five times more than the late 1990s however the fatalities has be decreasing. The ACLED placed more emphasis on sub national resource based violence that manifested in the forms of protests against oil companies and kidnapping of workers in the extractive mining companies, particularly in Africa. Natural resource extraction is also conceived as having huge potentials in the promotion of dispute in Africa that has led to series of violence (Berman et al, 2014). The Institute of Security Studies (2014) blamed the avalanche of natural resource related violence in Africa to poor regulation of the extractive industries and corruption as well as underdevelopment. The poor regulation coupled with corruption and under-development had made the majority of the people on the continent to live in extreme poverty despite the extraction of huge natural resource deposit (ISS, 2013). ISS May 14 2013Basedau and Wegenast (2009) posited that most states that have high reserve of precious natural resources often witnessed conflict. The conflicts are traced inequality and limited opportunities in the distribution of the wealth derived from the natural resources revenue.

Keating identified four types of resource related conflicts. These conflicts are: At a broad level four types of resource dispute can present a general challenge to national stability: secessionist conflicts in which resource-rich regions seek to split away from the rest of a country; disputes over resources as part of a new national compact (i.e. in the context of a peace agreement or new constitution); grievances over standalone projects such as mines and hydroelectric dams; and the cumulative impact of multiple small-scale clashes, typically over land, livestock or fresh water (Keating, 2015b). Keating (2015) also submitted that the unrelenting search for 'hydrocarbons' and other minerals resources is driving the extraction into 'more technically challenging and environmentally complicated sectors. Keating said that this has resulted in conflicts with the impact of undermining the peace and security in the globe. Keating (2015b) reported that there is high turnover of conflicts related to natural resources including minerals, land, fishing and water. The author averred that such conflict over resource also results in violence with the attendant negative consequences of loss and destruction of lives and infrastructures. The violence is most prevalent in countries with socio-economic and ethno-religious disunity, graft and poor governance. Keating concluded that:

> These various trajectories, when taken together, strongly suggest that disputes over resources will occur more frequently in future. They may arise over issues and resources that are hard even to imagine now, and in places that we may not anticipate. In our globalized world the costs of violent conflict are incurred not only locally in terms of human lives and destruction, but also regionally and internationally. It may not be too much of an exaggeration to suggest that politics in the 21st century will be shaped, in part, by how well these disputes can be resolved.

Klare (2004) postulated that the nexus between oil and conflict could be traced to three vital aspects of petroleum, namely, (a) its vital importance to the economic and the military power of nations; (b) its irregular geographical distribution; and (c) its imminent changing centre of gravity. Klare view revealed the dynamics of power relations in international and sub national context in the usage of natural oil. Resource based dispute is often dynamic and sometimes

© 2018 Global Journals

degenerated into large scale violence such as the Congo crises and Argentina and Britain War. Resource based conflict can be described a disagreement over natural resource which could be national or international in scope. Although most resource based dispute are usually sub national, there had been some occasioned it were between nations. The sub national resource based dispute is mostly driven by limited opportunities, degradation and inequalities in the use of the wealth derived from it.The contestation of two or more countries over an area rich in natural resources is usually fuelled by the benefits derivable from it.

The Bakassi peninsula is generally regarded as natural resource rich. These resources with potential huge deposit in the peninsula included sea foods of diverse kind and natural oil. Natural oil is one of the major resources that have change industrialisation in the globe and source of revenue for several countries. For instance, Nigeria began production and exportation of natural oil in commercial quantity in 1957 and remained the largest African producer of the product. The role of natural resource in the dispute between Nigeria and Cameroun is demonstrated by the prior harmonious and non-adversary relations between both countries and the potential huge deposits of hydrocarbon in the Bakassi peninsula. The relations between Nigeria and Cameroun had always been warm and since both countries gained independence in the 1960s. This was manifested by Cameroun during the Nigerian Civil when on the behest of Nigeria was neutral. This was followed up with series of meeting both countries had towards mutual benefit and strengthening the relations. However, the discovering of huge natural oil deposits in the surrounding of the peninsula attracted the interest of the two neighbours.

While Nigeria since 1957 joined the league of natural oil producing countries with the concomitant benefits accruing to the ruling elites and privileges as well as construction of elephant projects, Cameroun on the hand lack such financial muscle and influence. The potentials of huge natural oil reserves made the hitherto abandoned and desolate as well as remote peninsula a precious area for both countries hence the resort to violence from 1981 when the discovering was made. This view is buttressed by Sango (2012) that Nigeria and Cameroun relations became strained immediately it was discovered that Bakassi has huge oil deposit in the 1980s. The Democratic Socialists Movement was one of the organisations that pointed out that natural oil was the major issue that fuelled the conflict. The Nigerian chapter of the group argued that the Bakassi dispute was induced by oil and strategic land by the two capitalists neighbours:

> By 1975 when Nigerian military ruler Gowon signed what is now termed (Maroua) declaration ceding Bakassi peninsula to Cameroun to compensate for President Ahidjo's neutrality during the Nigerian Civil War. It was not yet discovered it was rich in oil. But interest over the ownership of Bakassi peninsula by Nigeria and Cameroun began immediately was discovered that the peninsula is floating on reserves of crude oil. It was then that the elites of the two countries started making serious claims and counter claims over the territory. The primary motive is the rich oil reserves and fishing ground found in the area and its strategic location in the Atlantic Ocean (DSM, 2002).

A very good demonstration of the role of natural oil in the Bakassi dispute was the establishment of Joint Commission on the exploration of crude oil along the borders of the two countries for mutual benefits. The commission under the supervision of the UN as part of the comprehensive agreement to resolved the fallout of the ICJ judgement on the Bakassi dispute. Nigeria and Cameroun agreed that exploration of cross border oil platforms including wells should start in March 2011 and the Commission contracted Addax Petroleum for the purposes. The selection of the Canadian oil company was based on the assumption that it will be cheaper, manageable, faster and easier and coupled with the fact that Addax Petroleum had investments in the oil and gas in both countries. The Nigerian chief negotiator and member of the Commission, Bola Ajibola put succinctly the aim of the Commission and timeline thus:

> 'This time around, there's been cooperation and good understanding between our two countries to come together and jointly exploit the hydrocarbons deposits that we've on our common borders. The exploited hydrocarbons will be for the mutual benefits of both countries (Cameroun and Nigeria). We think exploration will be faster, cheaper and easier when both of us have one company to do the operations.'

In a related view that further buttressed that hydrocarbon and other resources fuelled the violence, some Nigerian oil and gas analysts assumed that Nigeria might be interested in harnessing hydrocarbon resources in the areas ceded to it, as the country was to discover that its area contained more economic resources than the portions ceded to Cameroun.

The foregoing revealed that the pivotal role that natural resource such as natural oil plays in economic development and growth in country that used it judiciously and effectively. Apart from the foregoing, the rent seeking that dominants most developing countries especially in Africa made struggles for natural resources intense and some cases violent. This was amply demonstrated by the Bakassi dispute fuelled by the likelihood of huge deposits of hydrocarbons in the peninsula.

© 2018 Global Journals

V. Conclusion

The Bakassi dispute is a classic example of international violent driven by natural resource, particularly, hydrocarbon. The peaceful and warm relation between Nigeria and Cameroun since 1960 was shattered by the struggles for the possession of potential huge reserves of hydrocarbons in the peninsula from 1981. This was reflected in the shared values and policies both countries engaged especially during the Nigerian Civil War and followed up exchange of diplomatic visits and agreements in the 1970s. The onset of hostilities by both countries led to the disruption of socioeconomic activities in the peninsula as well as the loss of hundreds of lives. The asymmetry nature of the violent made Cameroun to approach the ICJ which after almost a decade of adjudication rule in its favour to the constellation of Nigeria. This showed the dimensions inherent and explicit in international resource based violence with high rate of escalation with the sub-region and beyond. The paper therefore concludes that the interventional of the international community following the judgement of the ICJ such as the terms of the Green Tree Agreement and the setting up of Joint Commission for the exploration of hydrocarbon in the cross border areas doused the violent despite the postures of several groups including of Bakassi Volunteer Force. The Joint Commission aptly captured the reason behind the violent and also created a platform for win win solution for both countries.

References Références Referencias

1. Mena FN 2012 Addax Petroleum Discovers New Oil, Gas Resources in Cameroon, *MenaFN.com*, 10 October.
2. Aghemelo, A.T. and S. Ibhasebhor, (2006) 'Colonialism as a Source of Boundary Dispute and Conflict amongAfrican States: The World Court Judgement on the Bakassi Peninsula and its Implications for Nigeria.' *Journal of Social Science* 13 (3), pp. 177-181.
3. Albert I. O 2001. Introduction to Third Party Community Conflict Intervention, Peaceful Transformation Forum, Ibadan: John Archers.
4. Anene, J.C. 1970. The International Boundaries of Nigeria, The Framework of an Emergent African Nation. London: Longman.
5. Anyu, J. Ndumbe (2007) 'The ICJ and Border-Conflict Resolution in Africa: The Bakassi Peninsula Conflict' *Mediterranean Quarterly: A Journal of Global Issues*, Volume 18 (3) Duke University Press.
6. Asobie, A, (2003) 'Nigeria, Cameroon, and the Unending Conflict over Bakassi' *Vanguard* Newspaper,27 February.
7. Ariyei E. C. 2015 Nigeria, Cameroon and the Bakassi Territorial Dispute Settlement: The Triumph of Bilateralism, *International Affairs and Global Strategy* Vol. 38.
8. Avruch K 1998 Culture and Conflict Resolution. Washington, D.C.: Press Bekker, Pieter H.F. 2003 Land and Maritime Boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria (Cameroon v. Nigeria: Equatorial Guinea Intervening). *The American Journal of International Law.* Vol. 97, No. 2.
9. Francis Baye 2010 Implications of Bakassi Conflict Resolution for Cameroun, *Accord.*
10. Eze, O. (2007) 'Nigeria and Cameroon Before the International Court of Justice', paper presented in the International Peace Institute Conference on the Pacific Settlement of Disputes, New York, 18, July.
11. Igwe O 2002 Politics and Global Dictionary, Enugu: James Publishers.
12. Kluckhohn, Clyde 1951. Values and value-orientations in the theory of action: An Exploration in definition and Classification in Toward a General Theory of Action. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
13. Lund M. S. 1997 Preventing and Mitigating Violent Conflict: A Revised guide for Practitioners. Washington D.C.: Creative Association International.
14. New York Times 1996. Nigeria and Cameroon Clash Over Peninsula on the Border. Foreign Desk, P. 5, 7 May.
15. Nick Tar 2010The Cameroon and Nigeria Negotiation Process Over the Contested Oil Rich Bakassi Peninsula *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* Vol 2, No 1.
16. Nowa, O. 2012 The Bakassi Story, *Vanguard Nigerian Newspaper*, 20, September Nugent, W.V. 1914The Geographical Results of the Nigeria-Kamerun Boundary Demarcation Commission', Geographical Journal, pp.630-651.
17. Odje, A.M. (2002) ICJ Judgment on Bakassi: How enforceable? *International Affairs and Global Strategy.*
18. Okoh, W.I 2006 Bakassi Belongs to Nigeria *THE SUN* Nigerian Newspaper, 14 August. www. Chathamhouse.org/publication/addressing-natural-resource-conflicts.
19. Segun Sango 2011 Nigeria: Cameroun Bakassi peninsula - No war for oil Nigeria_Democratic Socialists Movement 9 April.
20. The changing reality of resource-based conflicts ttp://www.futureforeignpolicy.com/resource-based-conflict/ *Roudabeh Kishi* resource-Related Conflict in Africa http://www.crisis.acleddata.com/resource-related-conflict-inafrica/ https://www.chatham house.org/ expert/ comment/way-forward-natural-resource-conflict-resolution.
21. This day Newspaper 2011 Hope Dims for Nigeria, Cameroun Cross Border oil Wells Exploration, Lagos,10 February.

© 2018 Global Journals

22. Ugbudian L. I. 2011. Government – Labour Conflict in the Petroleum and Gas Sector in Lagos State, Nigeria. MA Dissertation Submitted to the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
23. Weladji, C. 1995.The Cameroon-Nigeria Border (2) Cross River to the Sea, In Abbia, 29/30, P. 165.

© 2018 Global Journals