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COURSE: PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES (GST 201)

QUESTION

Write an essay on violent conflict on the geographical zone you are from not less than 2 pages. Times new roman.

**Answer**

The current conflict in Niger delta started in the early 90’s when problems started between foreign oil corporations and the people of Niger delta. The people all felt exploited especially because the Ogoni and Ijaw. Even though Nigeria went back to democracy there was still great unrest in the area. The constant struggle for oil wealth has greatly contributed to the constant violence. The delta region accounts from more than 25% of Nigeria’s total population and it continues to grow every day. Economical oil was first discovered in Ogoniland and soon after international companies came to build on it. The government then began to force the people to abandon their land for oil companies without notice or any compensation. The 1979 constitution gave the governments right over every land in the area, so they did what they wanted at that time.

The Ogoni people continued growing dissatisfied and angry and a movement started called the movement of the Ogoni people (MOSOP) 1992 and it was spearheaded by Kenn Saro-Wiwa. The movement was mainly aimed at the Nigerian government and the Royal Dutch Shell. Both sides started attacking each other and MOSOP demanded payment for damages and an immediate stop to all future drillings. the government instead responded by banning public gathering and declaring that any disturbance to oil companies is an act of treason. Elders in the village were all killed and nine other men including Ken Saro-Wiwa were arrested and accused of trying to murder people. They were not giving a fair hearing but were immediately hanged by the government. Nigeria’s action brought a lot of backlash to the county from human activist, the commonwealth of nations and many more. By 2006 the situation had eased a lot due to the move to a democratic rule by 1999, but up till now the government has made no attempt to bring justice for the people against those who violated the Ogboni people and their land.

For the case pf the people of Ijaw a movement was formed called the Ijaw youth council (IYC) and the kaiama declaration was formed. The main aim of this declaration was to state ther concerns over the loss of their homeland and lives lost to oil companies in the area. On December 28 “operation climate change” began and the government responded by sending war ships and soldiers to Bayelsa state and delta state, respectively. On December 30 when many peaceful protesters, youths all wore black and sang in sorrow the soldiers opened fire on them and three people were killed and up till 20 arrested. The youths also tried to protest for the rest of the people that were arrested the soldiers till attacked them and three more people died. At night soldiers went to homes to terrorize many families and they raped women and girls. Many villages were attacked and burnt to the ground with villagers shot at.

The people did not relent at all and operation climate change continued by turning of all the pipes around Ijaw area. The Niger delta development commission was formed by President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2000 and it was created to focus on human development, social and physical infrastructures too. However, the people have continued to protest and demand for their homeland back.