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College Of Law

GST 201

Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution

Write an essay on Violent Conflict on the Geopolitical Zone you’re from

**SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA**

Nigeria is plagued by various kinds of violent conflicts. These conflicts include ethnic, religious, social, economic, political and many other forms of conflicts. Violent conflicts have many consequences in Nigeria, but very often the consequences on the environment are ignored as if the natural world does not matter.

Southeast Nigeria, is a region of Nigeria that borders from Cameron to the East and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. It is the homeland of **“Kwa”** speaking people and the dominant language of this region is Igbo. Southeast is also where the oil wealth of Nigeria originates from, which has led to environmental degradation of its extreme south in the mangroves, rivers, and swamps facing the Atlantic. The various states in the southeastern geopolitical zone in Nigeria are:

* Imo
* Anambra
* Abia
* Enugu
* Ebonyi

Although, southeast which is often referred to as region by Nigerians, stopped being an official region in 1967 after Nigeria switched to states. Currently there are around ten states that make up what is now officially known as the southeast region or just eastern region.

As elsewhere in Nigeria, politics and armed violence have been closely interlinked in the Southeast region, with formal political processes and electoral cycles frequently accompanied by violence. Arms made available to political thugs during election periods have a deep link to post-election violence in the region. Although, it is relatively rare to have specific violence during voter registration and even during elections in the southeast, rather violence is fueled in the region by the anger of being disenfranchised and the arming of thugs.

Armed Violence in the region has been characterized by spikes in communal violence and more persistent low-grade struggle amongst vigilante and criminal networks. This has been partly fueled by the high levels of drug consumption in the region, the long term legacies of civil war and also by inter-religious clashes. In 2000, for instance, religious tension spread across Abia and Anambra following the riot in the Northern state of Kaduna which resulted to a lot of killings.

Land disputes have also been a source of tension between rival communal groups. In 2012,at least fifty people were killed as a result of violent clashes between “Ezza and Ezilo groups” in the state of Ebonyi. In the early 2000s, vigilante violence was widespread in the region, with the most prominent militant vigilante group, the Bakassi Boys, active in the large market town in Abia, Anambra, and Imo state. Vigilante violence has persisted at a lower rate in recent years but still remains a major concern in the region.

An additional form of violence, perhaps influenced by the militancy in the south-south, is kidnapping which has persisted beyond the introduction of 2009 amnesty for militant groups in the Niger Delta. As of 2011, there have been at least 350 recorded kidnappings of expatriates, although the number of these kidnappings are accurately unknown. Finally, there is very high gun ownership (both licensed and illegal) in the southeast in relation to other states.

It is the fact that violent conflict have plagued Nigeria up to the present day. The consequences of violent conflicts are immeasurable. For this reason, many recommendation have been given and implemented in order to eradicate violent conflicts in Nigeria. This include the establishment;

* The Niger Delta Development commission
* The Federal Government Amnesty Program
* The Nigerian Inter-religious Council amongst others

**References:**

* The Violent Road: Nigeria’s Southeast by AOAV and NWGAV on 12 Dec, 2013
* The National Word and Violent Conflict in Nigeria: An appraisal- Mark Omorovie Ikeke