EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.   Methodology

A Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria was carried out by IPCR in collaboration with a group of international donors (DFID, UNDP, USAID and World Bank) between July and October 2002. The work was conducted in two phases. Phase One mapped out the conflicts and made a preliminary analysis of the literature. Phase Two tested and expanded this analysis by fieldwork. The Consolidated Report brings together the findings of eleven reports conducted by nearly thirty researchers.

2.   General Findings

The study has focused sharply on the interaction between resource competition and the corruption of the political system. Out of the forty two years since Independence, Nigeria has experienced thirty years of military dictatorship and during this period political and social values have been deeply undermined. Since 1999 Nigeria has turned towards democracy but this does not mean that conflicts will dissolve or be resolved instantly. Instead the immediate effect of democracy, as the Phase Two report concludes, has been to generate more conflict- 'Three years into democratic practice the intense competition for political space has heated up the polity leading to violence, which has continued to threaten the survival of the democratic process.'

Although democracy may allow more conflict to emerge in the short-term, in the long-term it is the only possible solution. Political corruption is the outcome of inter-ethnic group elite rivalry, with the military wing of each

group as a reserve ace. Manifestations of this inter-elite rivalry, and which the elites employ to draft the populace behind them include, the indigene/citizen contention. This, basically, has to do with privileges - political appointments, public service appointments, admission into schools, siting of projects, elections, states creation, siting of headquarters of states and local governments etc. As the Phase One report concludes:

"The consolidation of democracy and even the survival of the Nigerian State have come to depend on the ability of the centre to manage these centrifugal pressures. To date the response has been mainly the use of military force. Root causes have been allowed to persist and in cases have been exacerbated by money-oriented politics. In order to preserve democracy these root causes now need to be addressed and a wider range of policy responses should be considered. Failure to resolve basic issues relating to resource competition and politics will allow the situation to degenerate into violent conflict."

The problem is not democracy in itself, but the fact that democracy has not had time to develop. The danger is that, especially with national elections scheduled for 2003, violent conflict could become a pretext for the resumption of military power (which is the bringing into play of one or a combination of elites' reserve - not hidden - aces).

3.   Specific Findings

In the process of this assessment, fourteen reports have been written, including six studies examining conflict in Nigeria zone by zone. It is impossible to capture all these perceptions in this overall report and readers are referred to the individual field studies.

4. Conclusions

The overall conclusions were-

1. There has been a common political experience during the years of military rule.

2. This has led to a political crisis in which political actions are often dominated by self-interest and money ('prebendal politics').

3. The nation's dependence on oil revenues from a relatively small part of the country has exacerbated this crisis. All factions involved in the extant inter-ethnic elites rivalry have their focus on oil revenues. Naturally, the minorities' elites lay first or especial claim to these revenues as a bargaining chip to garner more shares of oil revenues.

4. Violent conflict represents a serious threat to democracy.

5. Until now government's response to conflict has been limited –in practice- almost entirely to suppression by the military.

6. Civil Society (with support from international donors) has been active in research and local peacemaking but lacks strategic vision and engagement.

7. The media have not yet played a constructive role.

8. Business leaders and investors have been ignored, yet are major players in some of the conflicts.

9. The result is that government and civil society work in isolation or even in a spirit of mutual distrust.

10. Closer collaboration between the parties, led by government's strategic vision could unite significant forces to limit violent conflict and support the development of democracy as the best long-term protection against the spread of violence in society.

5. Recommendations

In terms of future responses the Phase Two report concludes with a detailed agenda for change on the wider political stage (See Section Six). With immediate attention on Early Warning and Prevention. Currently, Nigeria lacks early warning systems and there is no systematic provision for preventive responses. The over-reliance on military responses almost always fails to resolve conflict and may in some cases exacerbate it. The military response is a blunt instrument with which to address the many causes and issues analysed in this report.

If problems could be addressed earlier, and through political, economic and social processes, there is a chance that violent conflict could be permanently averted. By addressing the root causes of conflict instead of their symptoms, IPCR and other organisations could assist the evolution of democracy and thereby tackle the very root of the problem. By developing skills in analysis, early warning and prevention IPCR could also develop its capacity to assist other African countries, according to its mandate.

Ideas for the development of early warning and preventive action are still being developed, but a preliminary outline or 'Peace-Building Framework' is attached to the Consolidated Report as an Annex.

In summary the Strategic Conflict Assessment has achieved the following outcomes-

- Developed and applied a methodology for modelling the complexity of conflict;
- Equipped IPCR with a methodology that can be further adapted and applied in its future case studies;
- Equipped IPCR with the capacity to train others in conflict analysis;
- Produced a total of thirteen reports, including many detailed studies of specific conflicts, that will be a resource for the future;

- Produced a set of recommendations for the national response to different manifestations of conflict;
- Identified the strategic limitations of current responses and suggested a strong focus on early warning and prevention;
- Produced an outline plan that is capable of taking those issues forward;
- Produced a close partnership between Nigeria and her international partners to address the peace and development agenda;
- Produced the first multi-donor conflict assessment;
- Produced the first national conflict assessment in Africa;
- Produced the first Strategic Conflict Assessment led by a local (national) organisation.

ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development (British Government)
EU	European Union
FGN	Federal Government of Nigeria
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCR	Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NOA	National Orientation Agency
OPC	Odua People's Congress
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (World Bank)
SCA	Strategic Conflict Assessment
UNDP	UN Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Background to the Report

The Federal Government of Nigeria is deeply concerned about the issue of conflict and the threat that it poses to national existence and democracy. The proliferation of violent conflict in West Africa and the prospect of national elections –with widespread fears of violence- in 2003 are two of the major factors driving this concern. Accordingly, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) has undertaken to conduct a Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) to develop a closer understanding of the underlying causes of conflict in Nigeria and to develop new policy responses.

The overall objective is to provide an analysis of conflict in Nigeria at the strategic or policy level in order to inform national and international debates about possible responses. A second key objective is to make specific recommendations to government, the international community, the private sector and to the civil society. Thirdly the study is intended to develop and inform IPCR's own work and capacity.

Methodology

The methodology has been adapted from a framework that has been developed over the last two years by DFID. Full details of the methodology have been published (see Bibliography) and will not be repeated here. In summary there are three stages in the assessment:

- Analysis of causes, actors and dynamics
- Responses to conflict

- Policy options and strategies

The methodology takes a political economy approach, examining the interests of conflict actors, and focuses strongly on the linkages between underlying causes of conflict. The process began with a workshop on the methodology in July. The field teams and IPCR made a number of modifications to the methodology, especially relating to the analysis of causes –see Section Three.

IPCR has undertaken the SCA in two phases. Phase One was a mapping of the causes, actors and dynamics based on written sources. Phase Two tested the findings of Phase One through fieldwork and focused more on responses and policy options. Many of the same persons were involved in both Phases, ensuring continuity in the approach.

Each team has written a report for each phase and the team leaders also collaborated in writing a summary report of each phase. These reports should be regarded as an integral part of the process. They contain many individual studies of conflicts both by review of written sources and by fieldwork. Professor Celestine Bassey has developed an approach to analysing dynamics, which is presented as Annex 3.

The research was undertaken by teams of IPCR staff and consultants led by:

- Professor Osita Eze (IPCR)   South-East Zone
- Professor Celestine Bassey   South-South Zone
- Mrs Dayo Oluyemi-Kusa   South-West Zone
- Mr Imran Abdulrahman   North-Central Zone
- Dr Fatima Adamu   North-West Zone
- Dr Joseph Golwa (IPCR)   North-East Zone

For a full list of the teams see Annex 1.

The process of discussion was facilitated by DFID consultants Dr Robin Luckham (Phase One) and Mr Tony Vaux (Phase Two). The Phase Two report was scrutinised in a technical workshop in October and this led to several important improvements, especially relating to the presentation of dynamics. The list of participants in the Panel is given in Annex 2.

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SECTION TWO

THE BACKGROUND TO CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

2.1   History

With more than 120 million people divided into nearly 300 ethnic groups, Nigeria inevitably faces major problems of governance. Today, 65% of budgetary revenues derive from oil, located in the south, while the north remains relatively poor. But the north has dominated the political landscape since independence in 1960. Nigeria has opted to balance resources and limit the risk of secession through a federal structure but the tensions have often proved too great and for 30 of its 42 years of existence Nigeria has been subjected to military rule.

These military regimes have used force to control the people, and have done little to address their concerns and grievances. Institutions that make for good and effective governance, especially in a democracy, e.g. judiciary, police, legislature, etc were allowed to decay. The removal of the military yoke in 1999 has left the underlying problems more exposed, and in greater need of attention. Three years into democratic practice the intense competition for political space has heated up the polity leading to violence, which has continued to threaten the survival of the democratic process.

On the positive side it can be said that since the Biafra War more than thirty years ago, Nigeria has been spared conflict on the scale experienced by many other African countries. On the other hand, Nigeria experiences a mass of relatively minor conflicts. Literature review and fieldwork confirm that there are conflicts in all parts of Nigeria, and it appeared to the researchers that they were on the increase. A total number of casualties is not available

due to paucity of data. However, the often publicly quoted number of 10,000 deaths since May, 1999, seems to be an underestimation.

2.2   **Geographical Spread and Categorisation of Conflict**

There are so many layers and instances of conflict in Nigeria, active and latent, that it has proved impossible to 'map' them all in a geographical sense. The six studies demonstrate that conflict exists as a substantial problem in all the Six Zones . It is by no means easy to decide which are the most significant, nor how far back into history it is appropriate to go. Furthermore it is difficult to measure the geographical spread even of a single conflict. Finally, there are deep tensions in some areas that have not yet erupted into violent conflict. Consequently it is not possible to specify an area of the country on which the attention of conflict managers should be focused. While a prioritisation may be necessary for practical purposes , the country will ultimately have to be considered as a whole. The studies also indicated that despite the huge number of specific conflicts in each Zone, many causes are essentially similar and can be explained within a single national typology of conflict. This reflects the central importance of the role of government institutions in both causation and resolution of conflict.

In Phase Two, the Team Leaders decided to categorise the manifestations of conflicts as ethnic, succession/dethronement or religious. However, over the course of time, their original causes have been lost and the conflicts manifested themselves around a single issue that had become a focus of antagonistic and intractable attitudes. The Ife-Modakeke conflict , for example, began over territorial disputes in 1835, but now has a dynamic of its own based in human behaviour. The Niger Delta struggle has gone from one about the environment, about compensation, to "resource control". The penchant for attacking Nigerians from other parts of the country,

particularly Igbos in northern cities like Kaduna and Kano, over religion that has little or no bearing to those being attacked, defy logic. The consistency with which Jos boils suggests the beginnings of another conflict hot spot.

2.3   The importance of 'prebendal politics'

The continuity of causes of conflict in Nigeria is indeed remarkable. A number of recent conflicts have their roots in pre-colonial and colonial history. It is impossible to say whether a conflict that may have occurred in the distant past is 'over' or persists as a problem today.

A second uniting factor is that oil revenue is an all-pervasive national phenomenon. A characteristic of Nigeria is that (except in the oil-producing areas) resources tend to flow from the top downwards rather than the other way.

A number of other common features can be cited. The review of written sources undertaken in Phase One indicates a wealth of studies of individual conflicts (see Bibliography) and many different sources of tension. Analysts have commented on the deep divisions between north and south, Islam and Christianity and so on. Others point to the stresses and strains of modernisation and globalisation, with striking contrasts between the polity of a modern state and the polity of traditional villages.

But the most important common factor today is the phenomenon of political corruption. The concentration of resources in the state makes the possession of political power very lucrative and the competition for political positions very intense. As Richards Joseph has contended- 'Nigeria's present and future depend upon a prior understanding of the nature, extent and persistence of a certain mode of political behaviour, and of its social and economic ramifications' (1991:1). This mode of political behaviour is the

'prebendal culture' which sees politics as the clearing house for jobs, contracts, and official plunder. In Joseph's exposition:

> *'Democratic politics and prebendal politics are two sides of the same coin in Nigeria; each can be turned over to reveal the other...The system of prebendal politics enables divergent groups and constituencies to seek to accommodate their interest ... The system is often wasteful, unproductive, and contributes to the increasing affluence of the relative few, paltry gains for a larger number, and misery for the great majority of people. Since it is a self-justifying system which grants legitimacy to a pattern of persistent conflict, and since its modus operandi is to politicise ethnic, religious and linguistic differences, it serves to make the Nigerian polity a simmering cauldron of un-resolvable tension over which a lid must regularly be clamped, and just as regularly removed (Joseph, 1991:10).*

The pioneer President of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, forewarned: 'with the vice permeating the country, the prestige of our nation will dwindle to the vanishing point, defacing our national image and bringing shame to those who wear the "agbada" of Nigerian citizenship'.

Unfortunately, Dr. Azikiwe's warning went unheeded even by subsequent national leaders (military and civilian) and the consequent damage to the national psyche could be seen in a world outlook where every Nigerian is perceived to be a potential '4-1-9' (criminal). As Karl Maier puts it in his scathing treatise on Nigeria, This House Has Fallen (2001), 'to most outsiders, the name Nigeria conjures up images of chaos and confusion, military coups, repression, drug trafficking and business fraud.'

The scale and prevalence of conflict in Nigeria is a matter of the gravest concern and requiring a proactive political response. Nigeria, according to Boer, "appears to be a nation in chaos, a nation on the brink." (USAID/OTI, 2001)

The different factors causing conflict cannot be addressed in a fair and convincing way because of 'prebendal politics' and so they may become deeper and more connected, one with another. Religious factors become dangerous when they are linked to politics, but even more so when linked to ethnicity and north-south divisions. The age-old competition between pastoralists and farmers becomes intense when the political system fails to regulate that competition over resources and may turn to violence if arms are readily available. The Police is both inefficient and corrupt. Policemen are ill-equipped to function effectively and ill-remunerated to be able to resist attempts to corrupt them. The effect is that transgressors are not apprehended either because the Police cannot or are paid to look the other way, thereby breeding the culture of impunity. The Judiciary, which is touted as the common man's last hope, has not lived up to its billing. The wheel of justice grinds slowly and with an unsure gait, which aggrieved parties find both frustrating and expensive. The breakdown of order in society makes people call for extreme solutions such as 'Bakassi Boys' (vigilantes) and military repression. But such 'solutions' may only make things worse by weakening the State and diverting attention from the need to improve basic institutions of governance, notably the police.

In this way all paths turn back towards the need for a functioning democracy, including functioning institutions, and the need to reverse the influence of the long years of military rule. The Police and Judiciary need special and urgent attention if the quest to de-escalate tension, and turn the focus of the nation resolutely toward development are to have realistic chances of success.

SECTION THREE

THE STRUCTURAL CAUSES OF CONFLICT

3.0.   Methodological issues

In the DFID methodology, the causes of conflict are categorised as follows:

- Security
- Political
- Economic
- Social

The categories are analysed at different levels:

- International/Regional
- National
- State
- Local

The aim is to explore the overlap and linkages between the different categories and levels in order to identify cases in which a cause may develop into a greater threat. A social issue, for example, may turn out to have economic aspects, and if neglected could progress from local to State or Federal levels. This leads into an analysis of dynamics.

In considering their findings, the Team Leaders found it useful to adopt a typology of conflict manifestations as:

- Political
- Related to Traditional Institutions
- Economic
- Ethnic/communal
- Religious

The Technical Advisory Group questioned this exposition as relatively 'static' and requested greater attention to linkages and dynamics. For example, ethnic conflicts often take on such important political and religious overtones that the term 'ethnic conflict' can be misleading. IPCR has tried to address this issue by referring back to the field reports, placing the conflict typology within the format of the original methodology and bringing out linkages and dynamics.

3.1   Security-related Manifestations of Conflict

3.1.1   Proliferation of Small Arms

The deployment of Nigerian troops elsewhere in West Africa is perceived as a major cause of the 'leakage' of small arms into the hands of unauthorised persons. There is also extensive smuggling and the incidence of mercenary involvement, especially in the conflicts of the ethnic/communal hue notably in the Northern zone and the South West. This poses a political dilemma for the country since the mercenaries are reported to be from neighbouring countries like Chad and Niger, with Nigeria's leadership role in fostering African integration through the African Union and NEPAD. Field reports suggest that in many areas of Nigeria, including the highly volatile South-South, many people —perhaps even a majority —are now in possession of arms.

The retrenchment of soldiers is also cited as a cause of the intensity of conflicts in the society. During the years of military rule there was an excess of soldiers. As they are retrenched they often take their fighting skills back into society.

The manufacture of home-made guns has been cited as an issue in the South-West and North-Central field reports.

3.1.2   Corruption of law-enforcement agents

This was widely cited in field studies as a source of conflict and reason for conflict to escalate. It is not unknown for policemen to become involved directly in crime, or to 'license' criminal activity. The systematic degradation of the police force is partly attributable to the excessive power of the military forces during the years of military rule. It is also caused by low morale, and this in turn arises from poor conditions of service and the influence of political corruption.

3.1.3   Vigilante Groups

Corruption manifests itself in the incapacity of the state to guarantee security. Perpetrators of conflict or conflict entrepreneurs have taken the opportunity of lapses in the political system to run parallel gangster outfits. These unconventional outfits are used for political thuggery, destruction and vandalisation of public property, and assaults on the lives of citizens.

In some areas the response to the spread of violent crime and the breakdown of police protection has been to create vigilante groups. The remarkable feature of some of these groups is that they operate with the full sanction of the State and the cooperation, in many cases, of ordinary people. A prominent example was the 'Bakassi Boys' in Abia and Anambra States where they were endorsed as 'Vigilance Services'. A person interviewed in the field studies said that "it is an abnormality in civilized society that ethnic militias like the Bakassi Boys should be used to do the duties of the law enforcement agents, the police and even the judiciary. But this became the case due to high insecurity and wastage of life and properties."

Respondents attested that the crime rate in the States where the Bakassi Boys operated was much lower than the States where they were absent.

But problems have arisen where the Bakassi Boys went beyond what the public expected. Since they have no structure and terms of reference, those of them who were found guilty of getting involved in other things could not be sanctioned or disciplined. In Abia and Anambra States their official endorsement has now been suspended .

Field studies also raised concerns about the links between Transnational Companies, notably the oil companies, and such vigilante groups. By engaging such groups in the protection of oil installations the companies may be undermining the formal security systems and at least potentially, encouraging violence.

3.1.4 Foreign Mercenaries and International Tensions

The involvement of mercenaries from Cameroun and Chad in support of Mambilla militia group has been cited in the SCA field report as a cause of escalating conflict in Taraba State,- Mercenaries from Chad and Niger are also fingered as factors in the conflicts in Plateau, Nasarawa, Bauchi and Kaduna states.

3.1.5 Misuse of Military Responses

The deployment of the military to suppress conflict without addressing underlying issues may exacerbate conflict further. The impunity of military personnel may cause deeper grievances, as in the case in Benue state.

3.2. Political Manifestations of Conflict

3.2.1 'Political Conflicts'

Political conflicts emanate from power struggles within the political class, and often involve the manipulation of the people, who are inevitably less informed about the essence of the political struggle. The elite and the politicians often influence government policies for their own selfish purposes. This is usually done without consultation with the people or civil society. For example, in the creation and location of local government headquarters, community members are often not consulted. The struggle for political position may then be presented along ethnic and religious lines in order to earn the support of the populace and make them the vanguard for the fight of the elite for the latter's ambition. Relevance, or consideration for political appointments and ability to influence contract awards depend on the ability to 'deliver' an area or people (the fact of being able to determine which way a people will respond). No effort is spared to stake claims to ability to 'deliver'. Where others are in doubt, a conflict is created to show that the claimant is in charge, i.e., that the people will file behind him.

In the South-East zone, for example, such directly 'political' conflict manifests itself in the following forms:

1. Conflict between the Governor and his Deputy
2. Conflict between the Governor and the State House of Assembly
3. Conflict between the Governor and the churches
4. Conflict within the political parties (more than between them)
5. Tensions and manipulations between the Federal Government and the State

6.   Tensions between politicians and their financial backers

A particular problem is the 'incumbency syndrome', known in the local parlance as 'tazarce' (Hausa word for succession). Political office-holders concentrate their efforts entirely on the issue of retaining their post into a second term. This has created a lot of conflict in Nigeria at the three levels of government. But given the enormous economic interests attached to these offices, there are always political aspirants resolved to contest against them. While the incumbents strive to maintain the status quo, the opposition is bent on dislodging them from the use of state machinery to perpetuate themselves. Issues are seldom raised. Rather, sentiments on and about geo-political zones, religion and historical (real or imagined) animosities are dredged up.

It could be added that another form of 'political' conflict is the failure to take action on Commissions of Enquiry, thus allowing the perpetuation and escalation of conflict. Examples are the cases of Warri, Tafawa Balewa and Jos. That kind of conflict, however, is one the government cannot come out of unscathed. Because the issues at stake have to do with the interests, positions and values of different parties, it is a tough call to expect Reports of Commissions of Enquiry and White Papers based on them to satisfy all parties. Such reports and White Papers are based, not so much on "justice", but on what makes sense in terms of political expediency and or legality. As such, implementing such reports and White Papers would be in the interest of one or some of the parties to a conflict. Refusing to implement would also not go down well with those who stand to benefit from the implementation of such reports and White Papers.

3.2.2 'Succession and Dethronement Conflicts'

Conflicts over chieftaincy in the traditional institutions have been on the increase in Nigeria, particularly in the last twenty years. The military

found traditional rulers useful in legitimising itself in office, having dismantled the democratic structures. Though the power/influence of traditional rulers have diminished over time, the economic interest attached to those offices and the calibre of persons seeking them have continued to engender stiff competition and rivalry.   Attempts to influence the government in favour of one candidate against another have empowered the government to become active participant in the selection process as against the known traditional methods. This has led to the politicisation of traditional institutions and the proliferation of chieftaincy thrones. Where the interest of the government of the day is perceived as threatened, the occupant of the traditional throne is removed without regard to due process. A classic example is the manipulation of the Sultan's selection and dethronement during the Babangida and Abacha regimes. Similarly in the South West, the fracas that ensued as a result of the contest for the vacant throne of the Olowo of Owo has been politicised with different political parties allying with different contestants.

Field reports also suggest that the flow of State resources through traditional leaders is a cause of widespread concern.

3.2.3   Territorial Disputes

Territorial boundaries are frequently changed, and often without proper reason and consultation. In extreme cases this may result directly in conflict, or it may produce a situation of deep grievance that may simmer for many years:

> *'Thousands of people from a particular ethnic group associated with Cross River State found themselves suddenly part of Akwa Ibom. Over the last eighteen months or so they have been displaced to Cross River and are effectively living as refugees with little State or local government support. The likelihood of*

these groups retaliating if nothing is done to resolve their grievances is high.'

3.3   Economic Manifestations of Conflict

3.3.0   General

Government economic policies have not sufficiently addressed poverty, under-development and unemployment, which are a breeding ground for grievances. Greed has manifested itself in the various strata of the Nigerian society, paving way for unhealthy economic rivalry and wealth accumulation at the expense of the nation. This interaction of 'Grievance' and 'Greed' is the background against which specific issues play out.

3.3.1   Poverty and Inequality

Nigeria is going through a difficult economic and political transition after 30 years of economic mismanagement and corruption under military rule. According to the UNDP's Human Development Index, Nigeria ranks in the low human development category - 151st out of 174 countries for which UNDP has data, and 22nd out of 45 African countries. The proportion of the population which lives on less than a dollar a day is at least 50% and may be as high as 70% . The fundamental cause of poverty in Nigeria is the economic stagnation that the country has experienced for almost two decades. Persistent low productivity in agriculture has meant that most of the rural population has had limited opportunities to increase income. In addition, stagnation in the non-agricultural economy has meant no growth in formal employment and limited demand for informal activity.

In the late 1980s, the World Bank supported a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) that proved controversial. Reports suggest that the SAP led to increased growth and reduction of poverty, particularly in the rural

areas. In the six years prior to the SAP (1980-86), GDP declined by 2%, while in the 5 years after the SAP was instituted (1986-91), GDP grew by 5% per year. However, implementation problems, together with erosion of urban incomes largely caused by erosion of fiscal discipline, made the SAP highly unpopular. These problems also damaged the reputations of the World Bank and IMF, whose policies were seen by ordinary Nigerians to have led to unemployment and labour unrest, thus increasing conflict. In the years since the SAP reforms, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty has increased steeply. Urban poverty has increased faster than rural poverty due to massive migration from rural to urban areas, with the incidence of urban poverty now matching that of rural poverty.

3.3.2   Resource Competition 1: Dividing the benefits from oil

The allocation of Nigeria's massive income from oil has a deeply pervasive effect on the political system. As stated earlier, many Nigerians see politics as a competition for resources derived mainly from oil. A political appointment or election marks the beginning of all manner of felicitation and celebration. The often unspoken sentiment is: 'our time has come' (it is now the turn of the elected or appointed to benefit maximally from oil revenues alongside his kith, kin, associates and friends).

Oil has had a profound economic effect arising from its dominance of the economy. This effect has been observed in many similar situations and has been given the name 'Dutch Disease'. internally, oil draws economic activity towards itself, sterilising other sectors of the economy. While the effect is further increased by oil exports leading to an artificially appreciated national currency that undermines other possibilities for export.

By attempting to spread resources evenly, Nigeria has created deep resentments in the oil-producing areas and their attempts to raise the issue have too often been dismissed as separatism and suppressed with violence. The problem manifests itself not only as an ideological issue but also in terms of employment. The Imo and Anambra State governments have cited the reduction of their share of Federal oil income from 13% to 3% as a reason for their inability to pay their workers. The process of enacting a law that will remove the dichotomy between on and off shore oil, and revenues derivable to communities where these are sited, is in progress. This may well soothe frayed nerves for now.

At the local level, people experience constant uncertainty about the benefits of the oil industry. Sudden changes in oil price, the production policy of companies or decisions about the labour force can drastically affect them. Although such matters are supposed to be regulated through open Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the government and the companies the practice there is widespread suspicion about these 'MOUs'. In one case recorded in the South-South report the issue quickly transformed into an 'ethnic' issue:

> *'The Okrikans believe that the refinery was employing less of their community than they were entitled to, and as a result youth groups demonstrated violently and set up road blocks to prevent the public (including Elemes) from getting to the refinery. The Elemes reacted to the demonstration and the situation quickly turned into violent conflict with properties destroyed, as well as a number of people killed.'*

Shell's list of 'Typical Community Issues with Oil Industry'
- Demand for community assistance/development
- Demand for employment
- Demand for community recognition/attention
- Contractor-related disputes
- Disputes over unfulfilled promises
- Demand for amenities
- Intra and Inter communal disputes
- Ownership claims/disputes
- Perception of Inequity

But there are many interests that would prefer to have disputes over the treatment of labour or damage to the environment considered as 'tribal' or 'ethnic'. Shell's list of issues with local communities focuses on 'demands', refers to 'communal' disputes and omits environmental damage entirely.

3.3.3   Resource Competition 2: Access to Land

Field studies show that the intensification of conflict between pastoralists and cultivators is becoming a matter of concern across the country. The issue seems to be particularly strong in the case of pastoralists from outside Nigeria, notably from Niger, Chad and Cameroun and the issue may be compounded not by any new patterns of migration but by the presence of armed mercenaries from the above named countries.

Elsewhere it has been suggested that competition for farmland may have been exaggerated as a cause of conflict. Tiv farmers, for example, said that the issue was not so much lack of land as a perception of different political and social status as 'indigenes' and 'settlers', and that the significance of this difference lay in access to political power and land. .

But as with so many manifestations of conflict listed here, the primary issue in many cases is the politicisation of the problem. The Tiv have often been able to enlist the support of the Fulani against their enemies but:

There is a strong feeling among the farmers across the Zone that the Fulani are able to encroach on farmland annually because the Fulani have the money to buy up government officials (police and judiciary). Consequently the farmers take the law into their own hands by attacking the Fulani whenever there is an encroachment into their farmland.'

3.3.4   Unequal Development

Field reports suggest that strong grievances have arisen around the perception that a particular State or ethnic group has been unfairly treated, resulting in great differences in the standard of living. Exception was taken by many southern respondents to the fact that the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), when it held sway under the military government of General Sani Abacha, tarred more roads and provided more infrastructural amenities for the North than for the South; although the petroleum revenues from which it derived its funds is in the South.

3.3.5   Market Competition

In the absence of a proper regulatory framework, competition between traders can go out of hand and turn violent. For example, conflict between Hausa and Egba women in the market over the price of onions and brocades has led to conflict. But the factor that exacerbated the problem was an underlying tension between settlers and indigenes .

3.4   Social Manifestations of Conflict

3.4.1   'Ethnic and Communal Conflicts'

This type of conflict in Nigeria is closely linked to resource competition and contest for political power. In competing for political positions, ethnic differences are sometimes used for selfish interest, leading to heavy casualties among the masses that are not necessarily the beneficiaries of the economic gains of the coveted office. Some of these conflicts emanate from governmental policies, which do not seem to carry the populace along, but are tied to the interest of the elite, particularly the political class. The North-West report concludes that such conflict is often a manifestation of other problems:

'The respondents cited corruption, self-centred leadership, poor implementation of government policies like NAPEP, the glaring gap between the rich and the poor, and the arrogant display of stolen public fund by government officials etc as the underlying causes of public anger and frustration that needed religious and ethnic disagreements to erupt into violent conflict'.   Examples of inter-ethnic conflict are Shagamu crisis between the Hausa and Yoruba in Ogun State(South West), Kano crisis between the Ibo and the Hausa (North West), Taroh/Hausa in Wase and Langtang crisis, Plateau State (North Central), Sayawa/Fulani in Bogoro/Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi State (North East).

Demographic explosion has sometimes been identified as the root cause of some of these conflicts and Western sources may be more readily inclined to give this issue prominence. But the real cause is more likely to be that an ethnic group's population is expanding in relation to the population of another group. Some of these ethnic groups have migrated in search of space for economic activities, thereby triggering the fear of domination by the minority ethnic groups. Examples of this can be seen in the migration of the larger ethnic groups, notably the Tiv, into areas inhabited by smaller minority ethnic groups .

Migration by ethnic groups leads to the development of a common sub-category known in Nigeria as 'indigene/settler' conflict. Examples are: Ife/Modakeke (South west), Jos (Plateau State), Southern senatorial district of Nasarawa State (North Central), Tiv/ Jukun,Taraba State (North East), Hausa/Dakarki , Kebbi State (North West), and Oruku, Enugu State (South East).

A third set of conflicts related to ethnicity are those where disputes and changes in boundaries have caused severe tensions relating to political power and representation manifested along ethnic or communal lines.

Examples of intra-state boundary and communal disputes are, Demsa/Numan, Adamawa State (North East) Umuleri/Aguleri, Anambra State (South East), Ugep/Idomi, Cross River State (South South). Examples of inter-state boundary disputes are Nasarawa/Benue, Benue/Taraba, Akwa Ibom/Cross River, Akwa Ibom/Abia, Cross River/Ebonyi, Benue/Cross River.

3.4.2 'Religious Conflicts'

Most conflicts that end up being classified in the media as religious, when investigated are fundamentally linked to causes other than religion. The tendency to identify some ethnic groups with a particular religion easily gives credence to the use of religion for the manipulation of other differences. Though there have been conflicts described as religious in parts of Nigeria, there has been no national one due to inherent centripetal forces in the country.

The problem is not only tension between different religions but also tensions within the same religious group. In the North-West Zone the struggle for supremacy between the traditional and 'modern' or 'progressive' scholars is noted as a serious problem.

We cannot rule out the role of religious fundamentalism and politicisation of religion in increasing the intensity and magnitudes of the violence recorded in this type of conflict. As the North-West report says:

The respondents view the problem of increasing religious intolerance as a recent development. Substantial number of them did recall, not long ago, how they used to celebrate each other's religious festivals. This practice has disappeared with increasing intolerance and conflict between the Muslims and Christians. A factor that contributed to this development is the politicisation of religion that occurred at both national and local levels'

Examples of 'religious conflicts' are the Kano riot as a result of the coming of Rev. Bunke in 1984, the Kaduna Sharia conflict in 2000, and the Plateau State 2001/2002 crisis. The agitation for (by the Muslims) and objection (by the non-muslim) to the introduction of Sharia legal system in Kaduna led to heavy casualties with attendant reprisal attacks in other parts of the state. The Sharia legal system is still a subject of discussion/ debate in Nigeria as those objecting to it demand a national position on the issue. Meanwhile, in states such as Zamfara kano, Bauchi, Katsina and Sokoto States, Sharia Law is already being implemented based on request by a section of the citizens.

The politicisation of religion could have profound effects. The North-West Report notes that:

There is a definite feeling, especially amoung Muslim clerics in Kano, that the Zone's identity is mainly religious, particularly Islamic, and that such identity should be protected at all costs. The options are for the acceptance of such identity or the division of the country.

3.4.3   Unemployed Youth

There is a widespread depression among the youths because of their economic situation and corruption. The alarming rate of unemployment gives them away as willing tools ready to be used for negative actions such as thuggery and armed robbery. There may also be a social factor involved in the issue of youth unemployment. Most youths are in search of white-collar jobs and may be reluctant to accept jobs with lower status even if they are available. The large number of unemployed youths readily provides hands for the perpetration of violence.

But the issue can also be seen from a more positive perspective. Youth may also represent more idealistic views of society and provide the

driving force for change. In 1994/5 the late President Abacha invited thousands of youth from around the country to Abuja to try to win their support for his election as a democratic leader:

> *'For most of these young people from the South-South it was their first time to leave their States and they were infuriated to discover that the much higher level of development in other parts of the country was financed through the oil that came from 'their soil.'*

3.4.4   Women

The literature review suggested that stresses in society are putting increasing strains on the family and this commonly takes the form of domestic violence. There are many reported cases of rape in the course of conflicts, and probably many more that are not reported. Arguably, children brought up in a climate of violence may be more likely to tolerate or even promote violence in the future.

3.4.5   Breakdown of social values

Lack of respect for elders and changing patterns of family life have been cited in field reports as factors that undermine the social fabric. The fact that those elders do not comport themselves like those of old is also contributive to such lack of respect. Moral values were handed down from generation to generation. New generations knew that it was bad to steal because older generations so instructed them. Elders that pilfer public funds and display such money brazenly can not claim the same moral high ground as elders of yore. As such, unlike olden days when the appearance of an elder was enough to send conflicting youths scampering, the contemporary elder does not possess such aura and is not a conflict preventor and manager as he used to be.

3.4.6   'Psycho-cultural dispositions'

In their earliest stages conflicts may have obvious structural causes but over the course of time they may take on a fixed character of animosity and hatred that can only be analysed in terms of 'psycho-cultural dispositions'. In these extreme cases it may be that conflict prevention or avoidance may become more important. In such cases the type of conflict mediation that focuses on attitudes may be relevant, but in many cases such approaches fail to address the structural causes.

1.2   Conflict Actors

The following groups/individuals were identified as key actors in the conflicts:

Security Actors

- Security forces
- Ex-servicemen
- Mercenaries (foreign and Nigerian)
- Vigilantes

Political Actors

- Political Elite
- Government/State governors
- Political parties and internal factions
- Political thugs
- Traditional rulers and aspirants

Economic Actors

- Transnational Companies
- Labour organisations
- Herders and farmers

- Multilateral Finance Institutions

Social Actors

- 'Indigenes and Settlers'

- Ethnic groups

- Religious leaders and organisations

- Youth

- Students (cults)

- Militias

- CBOs, NGOs

Connecting Actors

- The media

These will now be examined in detail.

1.2.1   Security Actors

There is the tendency for the military to over-react and the possibility that funds for security operations can be manipulated and misappropriated, thereby distorting response.

In the case of the police the problem is that they display a degree of incompetence that gives rise to the suspicion that they have an interest in promoting rather than preventing crime. So low is public estimation of the police that members of the public sometimes take the law into their own hands, even against the police:

'Three days before our visit to a Local Government Area, three notorious armed robbers were picked up by a team of Road Safety Corps and handed over to the police. One of the robbers who had sustained injuries was handcuffed and taken to hospital for treatment. In the hospital bed and under the police guard, the armed robber escaped. As soon as the news reached the town, the people spontaneously responded by attacking the police station

and other police officers present or found on the way. The conflict led to a loss of life and destruction of property worth millions.'

1.2.2   Political Actors

The studies have indicated cases in which the creation or location of local government headquarters has led to conflict (e.g. Ife-Modakeke, Warri). Self-interested behaviour by political opportunists has created an enabling environment for conflict. In the language of the DFID methodology this may be called 'Greed'. It has to be recognised that there are elements in society who are prepared to use violent conflict in a deliberate and well-planned manner in order to achieve their objectives. Such people take advantage of 'Grievances' (feelings of injustice). Conflict can usually be described as an interaction between 'Greed' and 'Grievance'. Conventional mediation activity tends to underestimate the importance of 'Greed' and therefore may be limited in its impact. In practice, control of 'Greed' is more likely to fall within the capacity of government.

The Federal Government has directed Local Government Councils to initiate a Committee on Peace, Security and Welfare with members drawn from civil society, security forces and traditional institutions. But this directive has either been ignored by the local political leaders or simply not happened through inertia. The Federal Government has also initiated a number of interventions such as the Boundary Adjustment Committee that have significantly limited the escalation of conflicts but such efforts have been incomplete, indecisive and inconclusive. This suggests an enormous potential for more vigorous action to address structural causes.

1.2.3   Economic Actors

Trans National Companies (TNCs)

Since they often lack transparency, the activities of these companies would require much deeper study than was possible here. As the South-South report explains:

'Unclear policies regarding the designation of certain communities as 'host communities' has been problematic and a source of contention as there are several other communities impacted by the oil industry (e.g. where petrochemical factories are located, gas-flaring takes place, pipelines cut through land etc) .

Business leaders

Investors have much to lose in case of conflict, and are therefore major stakeholders in conflict resolution. But there are few cases of business leaders working effectively with NGOs and others. Instead the efforts move in different directions, and may therefore be ineffective.

Labour Organisations.

Trade Union levies are reported as a potential source of conflict in Enugu and Anambra States. The gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', non-payment of salaries, discrimination in recruitment, dismissals, favouritism etc are cited as possible causes of strike action and violent conflict.

1.2.4 Social Actors

Religious Organisations

Unfortunately, religious organisations are better known for stirring up conflict than resolving it, but one field report concludes that the churches could be a tool for peace-building, and there are in fact many cases of religious leaders from all religions taking a more positive role. The work of

Inter-Faith Mediation Centers is noteworthy in this regard. It seems to be the politicisation of religion that is the pernicious element.

Youth

The elite, youth, security forces, religious/traditional leaders, etc., are the key actors in most conflicts in Nigeria. The elite in the various geopolitical zones are usually at the "vanguard" of most of the conflicts. Many times, the masses and other actors are simply tools in the hands of the elite. At the national level, the military elite dictated the pace during the many years of military rule.

In fact, in Nigeria, it has been said that the parties do not have clear-cut ideologies, only elite interests. Over the years, they have articulated their interests and presented same as national interests.

As a result of the increasing rate of unemployment, the youth, which form the bulk of the idle hands, usually fall prey to the manipulation of the elite. The continued involvement of traditional rulers in politics compromises their conventional role as custodians of the culture of the people. This is perceived by their subjects as negation of their primary role and is usually resisted. The role of ex-servicemen in conflict is becoming more and more negative. Instead of mitigating conflict, they actively participate in fuelling and executing violent ones.

Students

The fieldwork cited few cases of radical student politics. Also, especially given the long periods of forced vacations, which the students have to endure (as a result of strike action by lecturers and non-academic staff and students' demonstrations), there is the recent phenomenon of student armed robbers, student hired assassins and student political thugs.

The breeding ground for this category of conflict amenable social group are the secret cults in various campuses to whom the use of guns and other small arms is second nature.

Non Government Organisations

The activity of NGOs has been focused mainly on training in mediation and conflict resolution. This is no substitute for involvement of government, and it is remarkable that these efforts often ignore government completely. This may be because of suspicions from pre-democracy days, but both sides are now beginning to engage more closely through such interventions as the IPCR stakeholder workshops.

Women

The study notes the existence of many women's organisations but few examples of their constructive engagement in peace processes. Experience throughout the world suggests that women's concern for their children gives them a particularly strong tendency to resist violence.

1.2.5   Connecting Actors

The Media

The different mass media are important actors that need to be linked into the process and have hitherto been neglected. As the North-Central report notes:

'There were examples of the media trying to promote awareness around conflict in special activities, but there is also some indication that the media is contributing to conflict by feeding into the discourse around it and failing to provide even-handed reporting.'

The media have been too easily persuaded to promote sectarian or selfish political perspectives. They have been irresponsible in relation to the risk of violence. Even today they do not seem to have understood that democracy –including their own freedoms- cannot survive without active commitment.

Table 2: Actors in Conflict

Security

Military

Police

Judiciary

Political Opportunists

Government

IPCR- preventive action

National Orientation Agency

Development projects

Ethnic Militias e.g. Egbesu Boys, OPC

Ethnic Associations

NGOs

Cross-border militants

Almajiris

Politically-motivated religious leaders

CBOs

1.3   Conflict Dynamics

1.3.1   Linking the Causes

A particular conflict locale may exhibit the signs of more than one category (manifestation) of conflict. The conflict in the Niger Delta, for instance, is an economic one (struggle for benefits derivable from being an oil producing community), an ethnic/communal one (the economic benefits mentioned above accrue to communities and the ownership of the land where oil is located is therefore crucial to the enjoyment of benefits), a political one (political authorities must be those sympathetic to the competing claims and all efforts to ensure that each party's candidate carries the day is put in), and one about traditional institution (the Urhobo and Ijaw contest the claim of the Itsekiri to exclusive indigeneity of Warri and even the title of the paramount ruler of the Itsekiris as the Olu of Warri.) Other conflicts in the country exhibit this multiple character trait. Actors in these multiple "battle fronts" are often the same.

In the same vein, it should be pointed out that the causes of conflict in the various geopolitical zones keep shifting and, often, response to a stage of the conflict at hand gives rise to what amounts to causes of other stages of the conflict. Elite greed, for example, which often is at the root of economic conflict, gives rise to political conflict in the quest of different factions to corner resources. Such "privatisation of the state" often leads to "privatisation of security" which provide ethnic/communal, traditional institution and other manifestations of conflict the armaments with which they prosecute violence. Often, it is the failure of the police to arrest first transgressors that is responsible for wide scale conflict as others attempt to avenge themselves. The Police is under-funded, ill-equipped, and under-motivated. The Judiciary that should serve as a conflict resolution mechanism does not fare better than the Police. Corruption is rife and

productivity low in the Judiciary. Injunctions are granted frivolously and with reckless abandon. There is the case of the Judge who readies himself with two judgements, and the one he delivers depends on which party paid higher. Repositioning the Judiciary will have to deal with the issue of proper remuneration of judges. The ability of the State to pay such "proper remuneration" would depend on increased productivity in the economy, which, in turn, is dependent on relative peace. All the factors that could lead to better conflict resolution practices are themselves dependent on other variables.
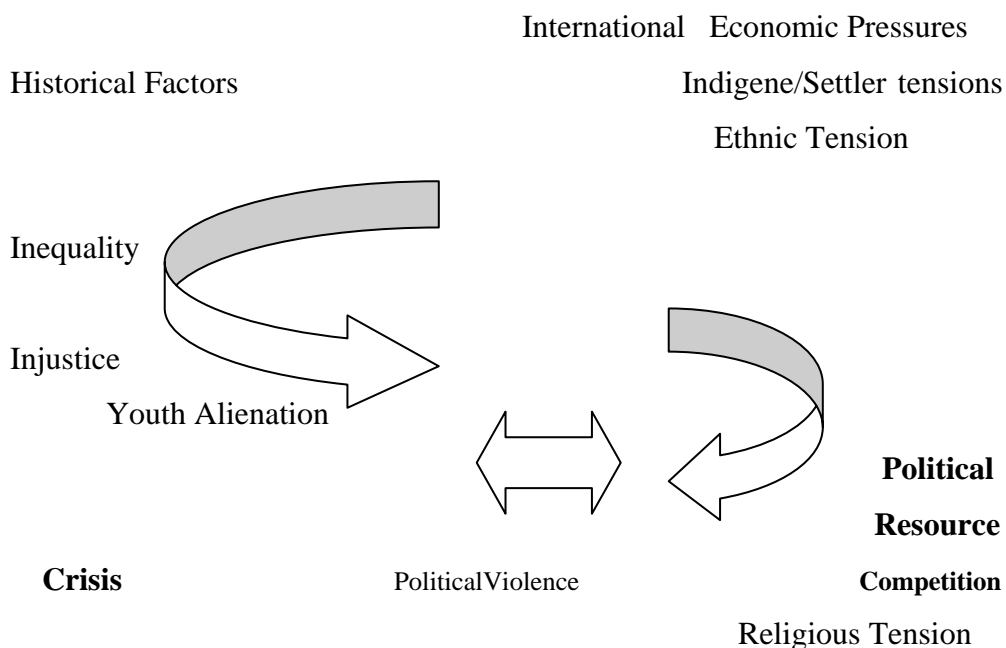
The establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission, for instance, was a conflict resolution ploy by Government to calm frayed nerves in the Niger Delta whose indigenes had been crying out against the perceived marginalisation of the region. Today, one criticism levelled against the NDDC is that contracts awarded by the Commission have to be passed by the entire Board of Directors of the Commission and that this practice encourages mediocrity as political patronage is enthroned over performance. But given the antecedents of the Commission and the need to ensure that everyone is carried along, how else can the Board execute its programmes?

In the same vein, the policy of "quota system", whereby admission into schools of higher learning and employment are offered in a way to ensure that no part of the country is marginalised, was put in place as a deliberate conflict management mechanism by Government to manage Nigeria's diversity. Those who feel qualified but can not be offered such admission into schools or employment hold a grievance against the system for discriminating against them.

Conflict in Nigeria may be conceptualised as an interaction between Political Crisis (caused by the politics of money) and Resource Competition

taking place against a background of various predisposing factors. Diagrammatically this may be presented as:

Figure 1: Conflict in Nigeria and its background

International   Economic Pressures

Historical Factors   Indigene/Settler tensions

Ethnic Tension

Inequality

Injustice

Youth Alienation

Political

Resource

Crisis   PoliticalViolence   **Competition**

Religious Tension

Note: The term 'political crisis is used here to refer to corruption or 'prebendal politics'.

Attention is generally focused on the manifestations of conflict rather than the roots in issues of governance. Conflict is caused by inefficiency in institutions of state and threatens the survival of whatever limited democracy exists. As democratic institutions develop they may succeed in managing conflict, but the outcome is finely balanced. As democratic institutions succeed in controlling political corruption they will inevitably face opposition from those who are beginning to lose out.

The dynamics of conflict can be described in terms of an interaction of 'Greed' and 'Grievance'. Fundamentally this means an opposition between the self-interest of the individual and the interest of the wider community. The excess of 'Greed' lies at the root of much conflict in Nigeria today and the challenge is how to limit it.

But in the short-term the analysis of dynamics suggests that conflicts tend to evolve through stages toward the intractable stage at which only 'psycho-social dispositions' can explain what is happening. At that point it may be impossible to resolve. This implies that it is extremely important to intervene earlier when the linkages between politics, ethnicity, religion and other factors are being formed and to ensure, for example, that a dispute over land does not take on an ethnic dimension.

Also, since those in charge of government offices are individuals who hail from particular communities, there is the perception that they use their offices to further the interests of their communities. In such a situation (e.g., Eleme-Okrika, Itsekiri-Urhobo-Ijaw), the state is not perceived as an umpire but a party to the conflict. Our study also brings out clearly the profound limitation of the judiciary as a conflict resolution mechanism. Court processes often result in a win-lose situation, and given that, culturally, Nigerian peoples do not take losing in court in good faith but see it as the beginning of a feud, taking the legal option in determining between protagonists in a conflict may, in reality be fuelling such conflicts. Starting in 1913, some thirty-six cases have been decided between Aguleri and Umuleri and both are still embroiled in conflict.

What is referred to as psycho-cultural variables of conflict take their cue from the foregoing. At times, the real causes of conflict may have been transcended, but because so much animosity and blood had attended the

earlier efforts of the protagonists, being in conflict with a particular community simply becomes a fact of life that needs no explanation.

1.3.2 Examples

Youth and Unemployment

The social factor of youth anomie is closely linked to the economic issue of unemployment and this has connections with street violence and the emergence of gangsterism. There is always a danger that organised crime could develop from such groups. Alienated youths are always ready to take advantage of other issues (ethnic, religious etc) for their own immediate gains.

In relation to this fundamental issue of youth alienation, there is evidence that in the absence of a properly functioning regulatory and institutional framework, certain economic policies - including trade reforms - could generate unemployment and labour unrest in some sectors in the short term. It is important that IFIs and other international donors recognise this more fully in their policy dialogue with Government, and help analyse the likely short term employment effects of their economic policies as well as feasible options for redressing any adverse effects during policy design and implementation. This will help avoid creating conditions for conflict through economic policies.

Small Arms

A second set of linkages begins with the proliferation of small arms. This arises both because of greater demand at local level and also because of easy supply of arms at the regional and international levels. License to armed groups such as the Bakassi Boys to carry arms is a political decision with profound consequences in the security, economic and social sectors. Lack of

control of small arms has its causes in inefficiency and corruption of law enforcement agencies. Political clientelism and other affiliations make it difficult to prosecute offenders. But perhaps the major underlying factor is lack of public confidence in the police. If this can be restored the street gangs will disappear.

Indigene/Settler Disputes

Indigene/settler tensions are a widespread source of conflict in Nigeria today, and have a long history. But history indicates that such differences do not inevitably lead to violence. Today, communities that have co-existed for centuries in relative peace are suddenly redefining their relationships and sense of identity in order to justify their (or their leaders') quest for greater control of resources and political institutions. Levels of poverty and the sense of exclusion and injustice have contributed to an increasing sense of grievance. But in many cases conflict is deliberately manipulated and exploited by political leaders. Government has neither restrained such 'Greed' nor taken timely action to implement the findings of enquiries.

Religion

Religious tensions have been exacerbated by politicians who use the issue of Sharia Law as a tool for their own political purposes. They risk violence in order to secure their position, and even as a way to protect themselves against genuine complaints. In the long term, the people may learn to decide whether their enemy is really the other religious group –as they are told- or the politician who exploits religious sentiments. But public opinion need not be left to develop on its own. Constructive use of the media might ensure that the facts are more widely known.

This implies the need for early warning, and preventive responses.

1.4   Triggers

Conflicts develop through a series of steady progressions punctuated by specific events that may suddenly make matters worse. Professor Bassey has conceptualised this process as a series of variables –see Annex 3. The sudden events can be used as early warning signals and may indicate the need for preventive action.

In the case of Nigeria today, the study found two particularly striking cases of 'Triggers' that can lead to serious tensions or even violent conflict, namely: election and boundary dispute.

Elections

The main trigger in the Nigerian polity now is the forthcoming general election, 2003. This is manifest in the self-succession (tazarce) bid of most incumbents at all levels of the government. Politicians spare no efforts to get themselves re-elected, disregarding legal and moral constraints. Another trigger related to this is the event of election itself, which is likely to result in accusation and counter-accusation of rigging, political rascality and vandalism under different guises, viz. religious, ethnic, etc.

Boundary Disputes

A history of internal economic migration, displacement of those affected by conflict and the creation of state boundaries without taking the ethnic reach into full account mean that local conflicts expand to involve a number of states and populations within them. This is particularly the case with Nasarawa, Benue and Taraba (North Central region). Tensions therefore

remain unchecked and can build-up to the point that violent conflict can easily be triggered by individual events or recurrences of previous disputes.

Others

Other triggers identified were:

- Individual political and chieftaincy appointments or challenges to established chieftaincy rights and means of succession by excluded groups

- The use of political thuggery and political assassinations

- Creation of Local Government wards and districts

- Individual disputes over land

- Crop damage or theft or killing of cattle

- Migration, notably concerning displaced persons

- Changes introduced by development projects

Development projects can be a trigger (or even a prime cause) of conflict. The conflict that followed the construction of the Bakolori dam in 1980 is said to have arisen from grievances about compensation and the fate of those displaced . Both the Federal and Sokoto State governments were taken aback to see docile peasants dare the firearms of mobile policemen to protest the fact that compensations routed through traditional rulers by government did not get to them. The loss of life of 24 peasant farmers to police bullets could have been averted if the government had properly factored in conflict of interest and the consequences of such in planning and executing the project.

SECTION FOUR

RESPONSES TO CONFLICT

'The usual response of the government in most conflicts is the deployment of armed forces to the conflict zone. In some circumstances relief packages are sent to the communities. This is then followed by a Commission of Enquiry that is usually given the mandate to look into the causes of the crisis and make recommendations as to its resolution. In most cases, the reports of such Commissions are not made public and the findings are not implemented.' (South West Report Phase Two p14)

4.0 Methodology

Following common international practice responses are divided into three 'Tracks'-

- 'Track One' = Government
- 'Track Two' = Non-government actors and civil society
- 'Track Three' = International responses.

Using this typology the conclusions of this study are as follows:

4.1.0 'Track One': Government Response

The various levels of government - Federal, State and local government - and their agencies have responded to conflicts in a number of ways. The following are some of the response patterns gathered during the field research:

4.1.1   Security Response

Government often makes a reactive response to conflict relying almost entirely on the use of force. Such deployments fail to address the root cause of conflict and it is extremely unusual for them to include any attempt to facilitate reconciliation among the warring factions.

The police have attempted to respond at different stages of conflict, but lack the capacity to do so effectively. In many cases they have been overwhelmed by the proliferation of arms in the community. Their lack of capacity to guarantee security has in itself encouraged arms proliferation.

4.1.2   Relief Response

Federal and State governments provide relief to victims of crisis but the management and distribution of the relief materials by the government and its agencies are sometimes poor and disproportionate to the number of people affected.

The Federal government has also provided political and financial support for the return of displaced groups, notably in the case of the Bassa people in Nasarawa State. This example, where the returned population fled once again following further violence, illustrates that such initiatives can fail unless the root causes of the conflict have been addressed to the satisfaction of both communities.

4.1.3   Political Response

Establishing Commissions and panels of inquiry by Federal, State and local governments has been a common means of response. Commissions and panels of enquiry are routine and well-intentioned processes of governance, but in most cases their recommendations are not implemented. In the case of the Cross River/Akwa Ibom and Okrika/Eleme

conflicts in the South, for example: 'The recommendations based on results of the enquiries or White Papers were highly contested and had not yet been enforced. Even court rulings are for the most part ignored.' Non-implementation means that the conflicts remain unresolved and could be a source of grievance, which could lead to another.

A further problem is that the composition and method of such Enquiries do not usually allow for adequate local representation and participation .

The creation of new administrative units (states, local government areas, districts and wards) has also been a historical means of response by the government. However, this is just as likely to be a key cause of conflict as a solution.

Co-operation between State Governors over inter-state conflicts has also been a response. This can have substantial impact on strained relationships. There are other cases where governors have been parties to the conflicts or their negligence has resulted in conflict.

One response to conflict in the past has been the use of quota systems for admission into some levels of education and government employment to reduce the risk of domination. However, it is believed that this system creates resentment among qualified candidates who fall outside the quota. It can also reduce the quality of governance by not prioritising merit.

Peace and Security Committees have been established at the Federal, State and local government levels, forming an important strategic response to conflict. This seems to be a positive development but fieldwork for this study, notably in the South-South, suggests that- few such Committees had actually been created, and those that have are largely ineffective. Clearly this structure could have massive impact and deserves additional attention and support.

The Federal government may seek an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) as a means of reducing tension between oil companies and local communities. Issues have been raised about the level of participation of local communities in such arrangements.

The establishment of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), to provide the Government with policy-relevant options on fundamental issues to be taken into full account in designing an effective and durable peace process, is a major response to the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

4.1.4 Economic Response

The possibility that conflict may be reduced by substantial development inputs has not been totally overlooked although such responses have been focused heavily on the oil producing areas. The prime example is the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) which has as one of its objectives to make the area 'politically peaceful'. Fieldwork for this study suggests that there is not yet much to show for the two years' investment so far and this may be largely due to 'the rapid politicisation of the Commission'-

' Any decision on projects or the award of contracts has to pass through the Board. The problem seems to be that the Board members are mostly politicians who are more concerned about who is awarded contracts rather than about the quality, efficiency or speed within which projects are delivered on the ground,'

NDDC is now developing a regional development plan in which Conflict is to be one of the cross-cutting themes. This is at a very early stage, but researchers note that:

'Stakeholders' participation even during the planning process will be critical if there is to be ownership at a later stage.'

The oil companies are becoming increasingly concerned about their image and are engaging more actively in community development and have set aside substantial sums for that purpose. There continues to be some doubt, as with NDDC, whether these large sums have been converted into proportionate benefits, but the companies are tightening up their systems and demanding more results themselves. As the South-South report comments- 'Many will say that they have just become better at 'spinning their story' but if the oil companies are half as committed to change as they claim they are, then they should soon be able to demonstrate this commitment in tangible terms'. .

Donors are also starting to support community-driven development projects and other operations intended to spur economic and social development.

4.1.5   Social Response

The government, along with others, has also supported enlightenment campaigns, principally through the National Orientation Agency.   The impact of such campaigns is difficult to measure and may not convince those most likely to take part in conflict;

4.1.6   Conclusion

The main thrust of government response is to use the military to suppress conflict. The problem is that this may stop the use of violence in the short term but it does not address genuine underlying problems. As our analysis shows, some of the underlying causes (youth alienation, for example) may even be exacerbated by such a response. Secondly, it has been

found that military responses often take place in isolation from other responses, despite opportunities for joint activity and sharing of perspectives. This is not to say that military responses are no longer required. When the security of the state and its fundamental institutions are threatened there is no alternative to the use of force and it is even possible that the response may need to be of an exemplary character in dealing with conflict entrepreneurs no matter how highly placed (security agencies can help in this direction by investigating the antecedents of 'community leaders' with a view to discrediting those who work in conflict for private benefits). But the strategic focus should shift toward preventive and collaborative approaches, and to the use of public policy as a tool of conflict mitigation.

4.2   'Track Two': Non-Government Response

4.2.1   Political Response

Traditional and religious leaders can play positive roles in the wider political sphere by managing and transforming conflict through interaction with their communities. Some have led peace campaigns and participated in cross-communal/religious peace initiatives. This response is highly dependent on individual motivation and ability to convince their communities.

4.2.2   Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

Non-Governmental Organisations have been active in providing and coordinating relief, as have religious organisations. These have enjoyed some success, but some organisations have been limited by insufficient capacity and limited experience. Sometimes this can mean relief does not reach those who need it. Religious organisations are more widely established and have a

greater following. In addition to the reputation of the Nigerian Red Cross Society in most conflict situations, there are other Non-Governmental Organisations that have given good account of themselves in facilitating the peace process and providing relief materials to displaced persons.

Civil Society has been active in conducting studies of conflicts and organising workshops on various techniques of conflict resolution. A number of local successes have been recorded. But it cannot be claimed that these initiatives have materially altered Nigeria's underlying problems.

Such organisations remain limited in their scope and connections. Many of their activities have been driven by external donors and funding has been on a project-by-project basis. Donor policies are notoriously fickle, moving from organisation to organisation and area to area. This makes it difficult for such organisations to sustain themselves or even to keep up the involvements that they have begun. Unfortunately, many civil society organisations are just as vulnerable to accusations of 'prebendal' behaviour as the politicians whom they so often criticise. It may be that, without compromising the independence of such organisations, government can assist them to play a more constructive role.

NGOs have also implemented peace-building initiatives in response to individual community conflicts, focused on bringing parties together and encouraging dialogue between them through capacity building and joint problem solving workshops. Some are not reaching relevant parts of the communities they are focused on. Even when they did work directly with the communities, interventions resulting in apparent agreements amongst leading figures subsequently failed because they were short-term. Some of the conflicts require a change in governmental policies, which may be the root cause. The inability of the NGOs to carry intervention project beyond the international donors' grants usually leave the intervention inconclusive.

Some of the shortcomings of NGOs can be overcome through effective networking and coalition building. Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network (CRESNET), an existing network can serve this purpose if strengthened. The Network of African Peace-builders (NAPS) and West African Network on Peace (WANEP) are initiatives that could also facilitate information sharing and organisational empowerment.

4.2.3 Business and Labour

Transnational companies have become increasingly involved in the response to conflict. In some cases the oil companies have become associated with security operations in highly controversial ways. Today, the emphasis is more on the display of 'social responsibility'. As the South-South report notes- 'As oil companies are encouraged to support programmes to improve the conditions of host communities, compensate them for environmental damage and institute recruitment policies that favour indigenous people from these communities, this question [tension between communities caused by feelings of injustice] becomes all the more pertinent and has resulted in violent conflict erupting in some cases where it has not been resolved.'

Hitherto, national business organisations have not been much involved in conflict, and this suggests some potential to seek their assistance, as very often the assets of businesses are destroyed when conflict erupts.

Labour organisations have also been involved in enlightenment and sensitisation campaigns to reduce conflict and promote the peaceful return of displaced persons.

4.2.1 Youth

Students have been actors in conflict. In some States, students have been known to respond positively to the plight of IDPs and other victims of conflict near their institutions. At other times, they could also have destructive effect on conflict situations. For example, student cult members who are known to have sizeable quantities of small arms and light weapons blackmail their way to lead in student union elections. Besides, some of these cultist activities derive support from some Vice-Chancellors and lecturers. Sometimes, some of the cultists use the apparatus of the students' union to further aggravate ongoing conflicts or initiate new ones.

4.2.5 The Media

Field studies indicated that the media do not usually play a constructive role in the management of conflict and may often spread sensational stories and motivated opinions.

On the positive side, radio stations had been involved in promoting peace through jingles and discussion.

4.2   Track Three: International Organisations

In most cases, the impact of the international community and aid donors is not very pronounced with respect to development and conflict situations. But more donor agencies are now showing interest in working on conflicts issues rather than in or around it in the post military era in Nigeria. The efforts of the British Council/BHC in the mid 1990s and that of USAID-OTI with the inception of democratic governance are acknowledged. Recent interventions include the Stakeholders of Peace Workshop and the Strategic Conflict Assessment process jointly sponsored by the World Bank, DFID, UNDP, and USAID.

Donors and the international community's response to development and conflict are limited and agenda-focused. They are usually donor-driven. Support of aid donors to the NGOs is usually not adequate for addressing the root causes of conflicts – making the intervention inconclusive. Field reports refer to many cases in which good work was started with international funding, only to stop at a crucial moment because that funding has ceased due to changes in donor policy. USAID/OTI funding for CRESNET relating to the Ife-Modakake conflict is an example.

Typically, donor programmes follow universal patterns (e.g. governance, security sector reform, livelihoods, structural adjustment, etc.) without design modification related to conflict. As one field report concludes:

'There was little evidence of development interventions being designed with the explicit intention of building peace between warring communities, nor was there evidence of programmes having set up effective systems for arbitrating any disputes that might arise in the areas affected by the projects.'

It is not unknown for donors to discover that their programmes are causing conflict, and then to pay for a couple of mediation workshops to compensate or bring in consultants to add some activities directly addressing conflict. Such 'bolt on' elements are unlikely to address the fundamental faults of design.

The South-South report indicates that donors assume that by addressing poverty they may (inadvertently) address conflict:

Whilst none of the programmes seems to address conflict issues explicitly, it is assumed that they will have some impact on reducing conflict simply by reducing poverty at a community level...'

But this study suggests that although poverty is a deep underlying cause of grievance, the causes of conflict are likely to be more immediate, notably in sudden changes in the relative wealth of different groups. By choosing to support one group rather than another donors are likely to have a negative effect that may counteract any other more positive impacts of their programmes.

As the same report makes clear, there is an in-built tendency for development to benefit better-off communities, not only because of their better political representation but also because:

'Another question is how these programmes will benefit the poorest communities who may not be able to organise themselves well enough to produce a decent project proposal or, even if they can, will not be able to come up with the necessary counterpart funding.'

Donors should integrate conflict analysis into their strategic thinking so that conflict-sensitive approaches are integrated into individual programmes from the start. It is also important that aid agencies develop better mechanisms to check that specific activities, at the least, do no harm.

4.4 Conclusion (Response)

There exists ample evidence in all the six geo-political zones of Nigeria that violent conflicts do not just occur in the country. More often than not, early warning indicators keep blinking without the necessary actions being taken to avert the bloodshed, anguish and enmity with which the country is saddled today. The conclusion of this study is that an early warning mechanism does not exist yet in Nigeria and there is a need to put one in place. An Early Warning mechanism or system is not such until an early warning has been fed into the system and appropriate responses elicited as a result of such warning.

4.4.1 The Importance of Early Warning Systems

The SCA field study shows that there is an enormous amount of early warning signals and information in the politico-socio-economic landscape in the country. Indeed, it confirms that all conflicts have a gestation period. What is lacking is proper identification, interpretation and commensurate policy at the level of the different "tracks" of response (to potential conflict). This could prevent conflicts of catastrophic dimension at every level. Clearly, it is cheaper to do so. As the old saying goes- 'a stitch in time saves nine'. The evidence suggests that Nigeria has a plethora of potential conflicts and that the main tool of response, military force, will neither produce long-term solutions nor strengthen democracy. Democratic solutions will involve a wider range of actors and closer collaboration among all those parties.

4.4.2 Other Preventive Actions

The study also suggests that conflict can be prevented by:

- Training key personnel in conflict analysis, especially those involved in the Peace and Security committees.

- Developing tests to ensure that new policies and development initiatives are conflict-sensitive. This could amount to a 'Conflict Impact Assessment' similar to the Environmental Impact Assessment.

- Making linkages between conflict actors to promote sharing of information and analysis.

SECTION FIVE

GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.1   Gaps in the Literature

The Phase One study concluded that the literature extensively covered the structural factors responsible for the variety of conflict in Nigeria. Particularly notable are Anifwose (1982), Okoye (1998), Otite and Albert (1999), Osagae et al (2001), Olowu (Ed) (2001) and Albert (2001). There are also studies on most of the major long-standing conflicts in Nigeria. See Bibliography for further details.

Professor Bassey has divided and listed the literature into three categories -General Texts on Conflict in Nigeria, Zonal Studies, Social Movement Literature and Studies in Conflict Management and Resolution . The only major gap he detects is that 'the psycho-cultural dispositions which determine the escalation of conflict in the zone have been hardly addressed'.   The individual Phase One reports contain further reviews of the literature and regional bibliographies. Mrs Oluyemi-Kusa has compiled an important list of newspaper articles, journal articles, and unpublished papers .

5.2.   Gaps in the Response

While the study of conflict has been rich and extensive, the range of conflict responses has been distinctly limited. With government hitherto focused on military options and civil society on mediation workshops, there are major gaps notably in:

- Security sector reform relating to the police and judiciary

- Early Warning

- Training in conflict analysis

- Integration of conflict analysis into policy-making

- Developing Conflict Impact Assessment

- Management of information, especially through the media

- Linking up conflict actors

Given that so many of the problems arise from 'prebendal' behaviour –and at the same time there is increasing commitment to the development of democracy- there may be scope for the use of codes of conduct that gradually spread good practice throughout society. But the real issue is not so much 'gaps' as lack of cohesion in the response. This may suggest that the real 'gap' is the lack of a national conflict prevention strategy.

5.3   Defining the problem

Respondents have suggested that a key factor behind all the conflicts is the dependence of the state on a single source of revenue, oil, derived mainly from a single area of the country. The Federal Government's role as 'broker' of the oil wealth is both a source of potential resolution, but too often also a source of conflict. This may be because the struggle for access to the nation's oil wealth has interacted with various political crises, notably very long periods of military rule, to produce a situation in which a large proportion of political activity is simply competition for resources.

Against this, the forces of democracy are now reviving and are challenging the political corruption that has emerged from the past. Conflict is not only a threat to the lives of innocent people in Nigeria, it is also a threat to democracy and even to the concept of the nation. If conflict is controlled, democracy can progress. If the opposite happens, it may be that

military rule and other non-democratic processes will return. Much of this study is concerned with the problem of managing conflict with minimum resort to military force and with the strategic objective of enhancing democracy, which is in turn the best protection against conflict. This study concludes that:

1. There has been a common political experience during the long years of military rule.

2. This has led to a political crisis in which political actions are often driven by self-interest and money (prebendal politics).

3. The nation's dependence on oil revenues from a relatively small part of the country has exacerbated this crisis.

4. Conflict represents a serious threat to democracy.

5. Until now government's response to conflict has been limited to suppression by the military.

6. The media have not yet played a constructive role.

7. Business leaders and investors have been ignored.

8. Civil Society (with support from international donors) has been active in research and local peacemaking but lacks strategic vision.

9. The result is that government and civil society work in isolation or even in a spirit of mutual distrust.

10. Closer collaboration between the parties led by government's strategic vision could unite significant forces to oppose violent conflict and support the development of democracy as the best long-term protection against the spread of violence in society.

SECTION SIX

RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Addressing the different manifestations of conflict along the various tracks

It is a characteristic of conflict that it shifts from one outward form to another, and the same conflict may have many different causes and manifestations. But from the point of view of response it may be useful to separate before coordinating responses for maximum effect. In the following sections we set out the responses proposed to the different tracks. This is not a water-tight compartmentalisation, however. Nothing stops an actor different from the one a recommendation is made to to take action recommended if it sees itself in a position to so do, and if it envisages that results will ensue. We also have divided the recommendations into those that need immediate action (delay in these will affect results in other areas and will have dire consequences for the country's democracy and unity); medium term (those that could wait for another couple of years; and, long term (those on which work can start now but on which results are not expected in another eight to ten years).

6.1.1 Recommendations to the Federal Government
Immediate
- Undertake security sector reform relating to the Police and Judiciary
- Develop an early warning and response database and mechanism in the IPCR in conjunction with the relevant security offices

- Train public officers, particularly those responsible for conflict prevention and management at all levels of government (federal, state, and local government) in conflict analysis

- Integrate conflict analysis into policy making by encouraging the Conflict Impact Assessment project being undertaken by IPCR

- Re-orientate and reform the border security forces for enforcement of measures directed towards the control of influx of hired armed mercenaries from neighbouring states

- Control ethnic militias

- Embark upon security sector reform aimed at retraining the police and other security sector agencies

- Create a Peace Fund, to be managed by IPCR, to fund mediation, training, preventive interventions and early warning

- Promote transparency and accountability in combating the pervasive problem of greed and grievances that generates crisis in the system

- Increase the professionalism of security services through training, retraining and acquisition of relevant skills, provision of logistics support and enhancement of staff welfare

- Improve the Judiciary through the full implementation of such Reports as the Justice Kayode Esho Panel's Report on the Judiciary

- Recognise the need for a code of conduct for political parties Sanctioning of party members who either directly or indirectly ferment conflict

- Redress the imbalance in fiscal allocations and Federal/State sectoral responsibilities. Federal presence in the States should be increasing along functional lines e.g. empowering states to repair "federal roads", etc

- Hold international corporations to their corporate responsibilities

- Enforce existing laws on corruption to ensure transparency and accountability

- Evolve policies directed towards sedentary animal husbandry and the creation of grazing reserves

- Enforce existing laws on corruption to ensure transparency and accountability

- Avoid the creation of a National Council of traditional rulers as this may set in motion a conflict involving historical and other claims of hierarchy. In any case, the establishment of such a Council is not seen to solve any problem

- Ensure prompt payment of salaries to forestall industrial crisis and public disenchantment with democratic governance, which often provide one of the excuses for military interventions

- Reverse the availability of small arms and light weapons in society

Medium - term

- The empowerment of INEC as a truly independent and fair umpire in the electioneering process. INEC should be made up of equal membership of all the political parties

- Prompt implementation of the recommendations of reports of tribunals and commissions to forestall the escalation of conflict

- Abolish the State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIEC)

- De-emphasise the deployment of soldiers in peace enforcement duties where the police would cope

- Develop structures for addressing intra and inter party conflicts at all levels of government

- Place a limit to campaign financing to check 'moneybags' who hold parties to ransom

Long-term

▪ Consolidate democratic institutions through the creation of enabling environment (e.g. political parties, human rights, etc.)

• Enforce citizen rights in the light of the spread of brutal manifestation of ethnic violence, notably that directed towards communities considered 'settlers'. Examples are Oruku in Enugu State, Ife-Modakeke in Osun State, Tiv-Jukun in Benue and Taraba States and Ikot Offiong community in Akwa Ibom state

• Encourage networking among NGOs

• Use the IPCR as a bridge between civil society and the government

• Encourage the participation of women and youth in the political process

• Strengthen policies that promote private sector participation in the economy

• Evolve sectoral policies towards employment

• Promote public-private sector partnership so as to generate employment opportunities and general multiplier effect in the economy

• Devolve power and resources so that states would have resources and commensurate roles to allow them realise their development goals

Recommendations to State Governments

Immediate

• Reactivate State conflict management regimes such as Boundary Commissions and Peace Committees

• Empower States Security Council in terms of the necessary resources to cope with conflict flashpoints in their respective jurisdictions

• Promote peace education in schools and the society

- Ensure equitable representation of groups in the State bureaucracy and parastatal organisations as a way of ensuring broad participation in state governance while pursuing merit-based hiring and promotion
- Contribute to the Peace Fund
- Implement the FGN recommendation on setting up the Committee on "Peace, Security and Welfare", as a means of creating a mechanism for sustainable peace
- Seek training in conflict management and mediation for local government officials
- Guarantee equal access of the opposition parties to state media facilities
- Ensure prompt payment of salaries
- Enforce through appropriate legislation the constitutional provisions on secularity of state and freedom of religion
- Monitor religious vigilantism and control the proliferation of sectarian religious movements
- State clear and unambiguous rules and procedures for the selection and dethronement of traditional rulers

Medium-term

- Encourage networking of NGO and state apparatuses on conflict management
- Support the abolition of State Electoral Commissions
- Regulate the establishment of autonomous communities (because of fragmentation of the polity and contentiousness).

Long-term

- Invest in developing infrastructure

- Support alternative industries and employment generating activities through private sector participation
- Respond to basic needs of the local population

Recommendations to Local Governments

Immediate

- Promote peace education in schools and the society
- Contribute to the Peace Fund
- Local governments should ensure compliance with mechanisms that promote transparency and accountability
- Enforce the secularity of the State as provided in the constitution
- Ensure regular consultation between Local Councils and Traditional Institutions for the purpose of peace and security

Long-term

- The councils' apparatus for implementing and monitoring development initiatives should be strengthened by way of augmenting (through screening) the quality of manpower and committee system in the Local Government Councils
- Evolve micro-credit schemes for small-scale industries
- Encourage investment in basic needs of the local population

Recommendations to Civil Society

Immediate

- Develop more capacity in NGOs and CBOs to effectively mediate in community conflict
- Become more involved in programme development and implementation of peace education

- Contribute to the Peace Fund

- Support the expansion and independence of vectors of civil society such as the media, as watchdogs of the democratic process

- Promote community awareness of activities of Government

Long-term

- Become involved in the implementation of poverty alleviation Programmes. (The involvement of religious organisations (such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent and Daughters of Charity of the Catholic church, Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria) has ensured a very laudable outcome in social welfare administration in some parts of the country)

- Act as pressure groups for good governance and implementation of vocational programmes

- Evolve programmes and activities directed towards religious harmony; and

- Promote inter-religious/inter-faith and ecumenical co-existence

Recommendations to the International Community

Immediate

- Support good governance and the rule of law as a means of conflict prevention and sustainable development

- Support economic and social development

- Support peace building programmes and preventive interventions in conflict

- Encourage the social responsibilities of international companies through MOUs

- Contribute to the Peace Fund

- Engage Interpol in monitoring and controlling the proliferation of small arms, and trafficking in persons and drugs

- Support policies designed to counter tendencies that are inimical to stability and those that seek to address grievances

- Assist Nigeria in repatriating corruptly acquired monies stashed in foreign banks

Long-term

- Improve donor collaboration in the verification and evaluation of programmes and projects

- Support the implementation of MOUs between multinational companies, the host communities and government

- Assist in economic reforms as envisaged in NEPAD

- Assist in the fight against poverty

Recommendations to the International Development Community (South-South Report)
- Support Nigerian-led efforts at tackling the structural causes of conflict
- Introduce conflict assessment into design of strategies and programmes, acknowledging the impact of development interventions on violent conflict, and finding opportunities for peace-building within programmes.
- Improve donor collaboration and co-ordination
- Put pressure on oil companies to introduce conflict prevention measures into their operations, limit exploitation of already fragile communities and to conduct their business in an environmentally sustainable manner.

6.2 Recommendations to IPCR

Among the recommendations listed above there may be many which IPCR will wish to take up, but there are some that are directly related to

IPCR, and suggest areas where IPCR may be able to play a particularly useful role.

6.2.1   The Need to Promote Understanding and Co-operation

The focus of these recommendations in this report is on what needs to be done to tackle the root causes underlying violent conflict in Nigeria. As the analysis has shown, there is a complex multiple interplay of factors contributing to conflict, and by necessity, there needs to be multiple and sometimes complex intervention and approaches to tackling them. Our study reveals that responses have hitherto been piecemeal and non-strategic. Agencies and actors have not collaborated, and too often have competed.

For the most part, these issues must be a Federal government responsibility, not least because she is best placed to do so, but also because foreign development assistance to Nigeria is so negligible, that it is unlikely to have much influence on its own, although it can play a valuable role in supporting this long term but inevitable process.

Perhaps the critical issue is that there should be shared ownership and responsibility between all levels of government as well as civil society (including private sector, the media, community groups, etc.), involving the international community where appropriate. In particular there is a perception that the existing Peace and Security apparatus lacks detailed understanding of the linkages between the manifestations of conflict and the underlying causes.

The SCA process has not only enhanced IPCR's capacity to offer support and training to contribute both to deeper understanding of conflict but also to play a supportive but co-ordinating role to ensure that information and understanding are spread more widely, leading to more effective action.

6.2.2 The Need for Early Warning and Preventive action

The second major issue is the need for a much greater focus on prevention rather than 'cure'. The 'cure' that has so far been offered has been a painful medicine which has damaged the patient as much as it has brought relief. Our analysis shows that once conflict has reached the 'psycho-social' level it may become intractable and endemic. Many of the major conflicts in Nigeria today have their roots in the last century, but there are others that are only just beginning and may offer real opportunities for imaginative intervention provided that it takes place at an early stage.

IPCR should develop its early warning and preventive action, and will deserve support from the Federal Government as well as from the international community.

6.2.3 The Need for Flexibility

Preventive action must happen at the right time and cannot wait for cumbersome bureaucratic procedures for the release of funds. Accordingly we have proposed the establishment of a Trust Fund to be held by IPCR to enable it to make pre-emptive responses, such as deploying teams to identify and implement pre-emptive action. The fund could also be used to support similar actions by civil society organisations where their response might be appropriate, and could also form the basis for funding the proposed early warning system.

6.2.4 Summary of Recommendations to IPCR

- Develop the capacity to promote better understanding of conflict through the Peace and Security Committees;

- Play an active role in disseminating information and promoting common understanding;

- Develop plans for pre-emptive deployment of assessment teams and preventive action;

- Establish a Trust Fund to facilitate rapid and flexible response to conflict, with a focus on prevention.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

COMPOSITION OF THE RESEARCH TEAMS

(Team Leader's name in bold)

PHASE ONE

South-East	Professor Osita Eze (IPCR)
South-South	Professor Celestine Bassey
South-West	Mrs Dayo Oluyemi-Kusa
North-Central	Mr Imran Abdulrahman
North-West/North East	Dr Fatima Adamu

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PHASE TWO

South-East	**Professor Osita Eze (IPCR)**
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	Ms Wandia Gichuru (UNDP)
	Mr M.P. Garba
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	Hon Akin Akinteye
	Mr Lanre Obafemi (IPCR)

Mr Onyinye Nzeako

Ms Sarah Lyons (World Bank)

North-Central   **Mr Imran Abdulrahman**

Mrs Maria E. Ngaji

Mr Agev Demenongu

Ms Claire Hickson (DFID)

Mr Emmanuel B. Mamman

North-West   **Dr Fatima Adamu**

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Mr Dirk Reinemann (World Bank)

Mrs Martina Kure (CEPID, Jos)

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ANNEX 2

PARTICIPANTS IN THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL

|	
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Professor Celestine Bassey	Consultant
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Mr Udenta O. Udenta	IPCR
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Mrs I.S. Nkwazema	IPCR
Mr Lanre Obafemi	IPCR (Rapporteur)
Dr Oshita O. Oshita	IPCR (SCA Project Coordinator)

ANNEX 3

A THEORETICAL MODEL OF CONFLICT TRIGGERS

Prof Celestine Bassey

Triggers function as intervening variables determining whether a society with predisposing structural factors will actually experience the eruption of violent conflict. In the simplest case this can be represented as follows-

Figure One

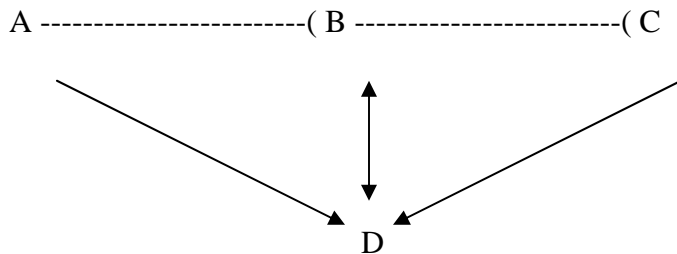A ------------------------(B --------------------------(C
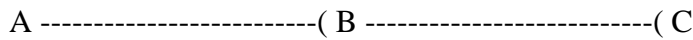
A= Predisposing Variables (underlying situation)
B= Intervening Variables (triggers)
C= Dependent Variables (outcomes)

An example of this relationship is the Warri case where the reversal of the initial location of the local government headquarters at Ogbe-Ijaw led to an unprecedented violent explosion.
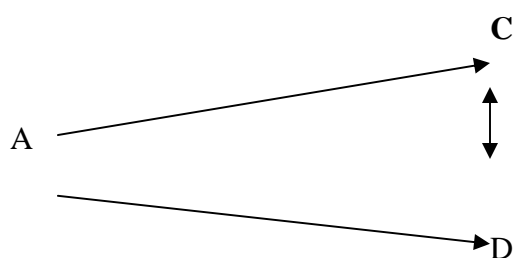
Figure Two

A -----------------------(B -----------------------(C

D

D= More Intervening Variables (multiple triggers)

An example of this model is Jos where a number of triggers coincided (appointment of a coordinator for the National Poverty Eradication programme (NAPEP) and PDP Electoral Primaries).

Figure Three

1

In this case the predisposing factors interact with each other without any particular single trigger. Conflict has developed its own internal dynamic and can develop into a larger scale. An example is the case in Lagos, where protracted urban violence has been aggravated by communal tensions between Hausa and Yoruba communities, thus combining to produce conflagration.

ANNEX 4

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION PAPER –FIRST DRAFT

IPCR: A Peace-Building Framework

1.   Background and Purpose of the Paper

Between July and October 2002, IPCR conducted a Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria with the support and involvement of international organisations. The study consisted of two phases: a preliminary study of the existing literature followed by an extensive period of field research conducted by six teams.

The final report highlights a number of areas in which conflict can be addressed by Government, Civil Society and International actors. The most fundamental finding is that conflict in Nigeria is generated primarily from the interaction of resource competition and political corruption –a phenomenon described as 'prebendal politics'.

In terms of practical outcomes the study drew attention to the way in which responses to conflict, especially during the years of military rule, have been limited to efforts to control violence after it has already developed. Too little attention has been given to root causes and to addressing these through early warning and preventive action.

This paper suggests ways in which IPCR and international organisations can take forward these issues.

2.   Summary of the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA)

The SCA process drew on a methodology devised for DFID and based on extensive research over a 2-year period. Essentially it divides into four sections:

- Causes, dynamics and triggers
- Responses
- Policy Options and Solutions

Particular characteristics of the methodology are that it focuses on structural causes and takes a political economy approach.

The conclusions are

1. There has been a common political experience during the years of military rule

2. This has led to a political crisis in which political actions are often driven by self-interest and money ('prebendal politics')

3. The nation's dependence on oil revenues from a relatively small part of the country has exacerbated this crisis

4. Conflict represents a serious threat to democracy

5. Until now government's response to conflict has been limited –in practice- to suppression by the military

6. Civil Society (with support from international donors) has been active in research and local peacemaking but lacks strategic vision and engagement

7. The media have not yet played a constructive role

8. Business leaders and investors have been ignored

9. The result is that government and civil society work in isolation or even in a spirit of mutual distrust

10. Closer collaboration between the parties, led by government's strategic vision could unite significant forces to limit violent conflict and support the development of democracy as the best long-term protection against the spread of violence in society

The study then proceeded to a set of recommendations specific to different types of conflict in which the lack of early warning and preventive action is strongly and explicitly highlighted for IPCR's attention

3. Early Warning

IPCR has already recognised the need for better early warning and has been developing plans. The SCA has given impetus to this process

The immediate problem of early warning systems is to know what information is most relevant; in other words to decide on the 'indicators' that need to be monitored. The first part of the SCA methodology offers a paradigm for early warning systems in its examination of the progression from:

ROOT CAUSES > DYNAMICS > TRIGGERS

This is very similar to the paradigm suggested by Professor Bassey (Annex 3 of the SCA Report) where he envisages a progression from:

Predisposing Variables **>** Intervening Variables > Dependent Variables

Using the findings of the SCA to establish the main causes, dynamics and triggers we can present a predictive model of conflict in Nigeria as follows:

PREBENDAL POLITICS

The above model could be used to monitor the emergence of new conflicts but long-standing conflicts may have a rather different dynamic in which 'psycho-cultural dispositions might substitute in some cases for the dynamics of 'Prebendal Politics' and where provocative actions by individuals might have greater significance than the corruption of the State.

The SCA reports provide a rich analysis of such ongoing conflicts, enabling IPCR to construct a 'map' of conflict divided into-

- Areas predisposed to conflict
- Vulnerable areas

These areas should then be placed under permanent surveillance using the indicators suggested above.

The system could be made more sophisticated by specifying more exactly the indicators for different conflicts or different areas. Again, the SCA provides rich material for such a process. The North-Central report, for example, identifies the following trigger events:

- Elections
- Political violence and assassinations
- Chieftancy appointments
- New demarcations of government wards and districts
- Individual disputes over land, cattle, theft etc
- Migration and internal displacement

It would be greatly preferable to check such analysis through local workshops in which participants would be invited to work through the analysis of causes, dynamics and triggers for themselves. This would be likely to lead to better sharing of information and a more committed response.

4. Prevention

In the SCA, many cases were cited where it had been widely known that conflict was about to erupt and yet no preventive action has been taken. The main actors in the response are the police and the military. Neither organisation is characteristically oriented towards preventive action, and although Nigeria has an extensive network of Peace and Security Committees, the emphasis has been heavily on last-minute response rather than prevention. One reason for this is their lack of training in the analysis of conflict, and particularly the linkages between causes, dynamics and triggers. IPCR could play a valuable role offering such training.

A second problem is that the participants in these Committees, especially the Security Services, are reluctant to share information. This is not only for valid security reasons but for other reasons as well. There is ample room for improving the flow of information. By developing strong links with these organisations and Committees, IPCR would be able to develop the trust necessary to receive and manage conflict-related information in a systematic and confidential way.

Thirdly, the SCA notes that development and policy initiatives in Nigeria are rarely accompanied by any assessment of their impact on conflict even in areas where conflict is endemic and obvious. This applies both to government and aid agencies. The SCA notes many cases where projects have been initiated on the assumption that the changes envisaged in the project objectives can be achieved without conflict, and that there will be no unintended side-effects. Very often, the project disrupts a delicate social or political balance and sometimes this leads to violent results. The Early Warning system proposed above could also be used as the basis for a

predictive process, assessing what impact new initiatives would be likely to have on conflict.

It is not necessarily being proposed here that IPCR should engage directly in responses (such as mediation etc). Although on occasions this may be entirely appropriate, it may be more appropriate to focus on supporting and developing a preventive system and where necessary, as the SCA recommends, support other organisations engaged in mediation and conflict reduction activity.

In summary, there is a need for IPCR to address:

- Training in conflict analysis

  (directed primarily at Police, Military, Security Forces and participants in National Peace and Security Committees at all levels)

- Collecting and disseminating information on conflicts in a discreet manner

- Developing a process for **Conflict Impact Assessment** (see below)

5. Conflict Impact Assessment

Further review of international systems may be necessary before a methodology can be fully established, but the Early Warning system derived from the SCA should provide a valid base for this process and offer IPCR the capacity to advise government and international agencies on their projects and policies.

Firstly, a set of questions can be derived from the Table above that could be applied as a general 'test' for Nigeria. In effect these could be summarised as:

- Has a Strategic Conflict Assessment been undertaken?

In more detail:

- Has the history of conflict in the area been examined?

- Have actual and potential causes of conflict been examined? Including:

  i. Ethnicity

  ii. Religion

  iii. Boundary issues

  iv. Political demarcations and changes

  v. Unemployment and Youth

- Has the likely impact of 'prebendal politics' been realistically assessed?

- Has the project taken into account the impact of critical events?

However, such a 'national' test could be made much more sophisticated when applied to a project in a specific location. Indeed, Conflict Impact Assessment would ideally be tailor-made to each situation and the questions derived from a participatory process involving as many stakeholders as possible. The ideal process might be to conduct a 'Conflict Analysis workshop' as described above and then turn the discussion to drawing up a set of key questions relevant to the particular intervention being proposed. This process might also lead directly into proposals for modifying the project if risks became immediately apparent.

6.   A Conflict Trust Fund

The SCA report concludes that IPCR should have flexible access to a 'Trust Fund' that would enable it to:

- Establish and maintain an Early Warning System

- Engage in training as a Preventive process

- Develop an information network

- Support conflict responses by other organisations

- Develop and conduct Conflict Impact Assessments

It is a particular characteristic of preventive action (including training and communication work) that it must take place at the right time and must have flexibility to respond to the unexpected. This implies that adequate resources should be available for deployment in a flexible and efficient manner. Unfortunately it is a characteristic of government finance in Nigeria that funds tend to flow (at best) in arrears. This results in problems for many government departments but in the case of conflict prevention it may deeply undermine the possibility of averting a crisis. The scale of damage caused by conflict is immense and needs no further emphasis. The scale of funding required for Early Warning and Prevention is, relatively, very small

Abuja
March 2002

Endnotes

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1. IPCR is established in the office of the President. Its mandate was originally to address conflict elsewhere in Africa but has now been changed to focus more sharply on Nigeria. It is likely to become an independent body in the future. IPCR has around 100 staff. Its main constraint is lack of uncommitted finance; this greatly impairs its ability to respond proactively to conflict.
2. Dr. Adamu also covered North-East Zone in Phase One
3. For a particularly comprehensive survey of conflicts see the North East Report Phase Two.
4. USAID suggests that a prioritisation based on the potential, or otherwise, of a conflict to derail the transition process be effected. See W. Marshall et al, "Future Directions for USAID Support to Conflict Mitigation in Nigeria", USAID Nigeria, Abuja; July 2001. P.4
5. See South-West Report Phase Two pages 6-7.
6. South-East Report Phase Two
7. For more information see Human Rights Watch Report May 2002 *'The Bakassi Boys- The Legitimisation of Murder and Torture'.*
8. See South-South report pages 19-21
9. See South-West Report Phase Tow pages 7-8.
10. For example, allocation of 5% of local government revenue through the Obas' Council (South West report p 12)
11. South-South Phase Two Report p16
12. In 1996, the figure was estimated to be 66% (Nigeria: Poverty in the Midst of Plenty, The World Bank, May 1996)
13. Op cit page 16
14. South-South Phase Two report p272
15. North Central Report Phase Two p15
16. North-West Phase Two Report p11
17. South West Phase Two Report p11
18. North-West Phase Two Report p4
19. This issue is referred to in both North-Central and North-East Phase Two Reports.
20. Op cit p5
21. South South Report Phase Two p11-12.
22. For exposition of this see South-South report pages 33-34
23. Based on brainstorming at July workshop and subsequent reports
24. North-West Phase Two Report p13
25. FGN Handbook, November 1999

26. Op cit p11
27. In theory the Bakassi Boys are not armed but see Human Right Watch (2002)
28. e.g. Warri, Ife-Mondakeke, Zango Kataf etc
29. North West Report Phase One
30. South-South Phase Two Report p23
31. As above
32. Op cit p22
33. South-South Phase Two Report p22
34. Op cit p28
35. Op cit p11
36. South-South Phase Two Report p27
37. South-South Phase Two Report p26
38. Op cit p27
39. South-South Report Phase One pp2-4
40. Op cit p10
41. For a Bibliography of these see South West Report Phase One
42. For details see *Conducting Conflict Assessments –Guidance Notes,* DFID 2002, available at www.dfid.gov.uk