



Niger Delta Dialogue



IIth Niger Delta Dialogue: Election Violence: Who Wins?

November 14-15, 2018
Best Western Hotel, Warri, Delta State

And NDD Technical Sessions subsequently held in 3 States



Academic Associates PeaceWorks

Niger Delta Dialogue

A World of Peace



**11TH NIGER DELTA DIALOGUE:
ELECTION VIOLENCE: WHO WINS?
November 14-15, 2018
Best Western Hotel, Warri, Delta State
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HELD IN 3 STATES**

ACADEMIC ASSOCIATES PEACEWORKS
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Introduction



Cross Section of Participants at the 11th NDD

The 11th session of the Niger Delta Dialogue (NDD) held in Warri on November 14th and 15th 2018 at the Best Western Wetland Hotel, Warri, with the theme: “Election Violence: Who Wins”? The main thrust of the two-day event was to analyze and seek ways of reducing violence, particularly, election related violence in the Niger Delta region come 2019. In attendance at the meeting were members of the Niger Delta Dialogue, representatives of the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF), traditional rulers, youth leaders from 30 ethnic nationalities across the nine states of the Niger Delta, religious leaders, representatives of INEC, youth influencers, civil society actors and members of the international community.

The dialogue started in the afternoon of November 14 with a welcome by Ambassador Nkoyo Toyo, one of the facilitators of the Niger Delta Dialogue. The background of the NDD was given by Chief Dr. Judith Burdin Asuni who stated that the Niger Delta Dialogue started in June 2016 at a time when there were hostilities in the region including militancy, destruction of oil facilities and use of military force. She further stated that the need to change the narrative and redirect energy towards better ways of seeking redress for the deprivation suffered by the region led to the formation of the NDD. The NDD has so far held 10 Dialogues with focus on critical regional issues of peace and development.

The 11th NDD is focused on election violence which has killed hundreds of people. In an effort to reduce this needless trend, the 11th NDD has brought together stakeholders to carefully look at scenarios and potential triggers of election related violence as well as finding new ways of reducing violence to its barest minimum in the forthcoming elections. In conclusion, Dr. Asuni thanked the many development partners, particularly the European Union for its support in funding the process.

A minute silence was observed in honour of Pastor P.Z Aginigha, a frontline member of the NDD who passed on recently. Amb Nkoyo Toyo emphasized the need for participants to close ranks, mobilize support and facilitate the activities of PANDEF, She gave credence to the formation of the body, noting that the region lacked a strong united voice prior to the birth of the Forum. And described the NDD as a Think Tank of PANDEF, while admitting that PANDEF has much work to do in securing a better deal for the people of the region. She urged stakeholders to guard against taking steps or utterances that could negate the successes recorded so far as the group deserves accolades.

Presentations



Dr Sofiri Peterside (Standing)

Dr Sofiri Peterside, a Political Scientist of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, presented a lead paper titled: **“Election Violence, Leadership and Development in the Niger Delta”**. He asserted that the theme of the dialogue underscores the fact that Nigeria democracy faces the danger of being swallowed by election violence and how the situation has degenerated from election to election. 'Votes' he said no longer count and elections are (greeted) with a plethora of litigations. He identified weak institutions, poverty in the region despite the enormous wealth, proliferation arms market, drug abuse, conspiracy by security agencies, political godfatherism, over monetization of the election process and unguarded statements as some factors that lead to election violence. Dr. Peterside was however optimistic that the situation is not beyond redemption as he maintained that it is the duty of the citizen to choose and entrench transformational leadership.

Nobert Chiazor, in speaking on **“Social and traditional media as tools for promoting conflict or peace”**, opined that the power of the social media cannot be overemphasized, while acknowledging the fact that the social media has made everyone a journalist of some sort. He cited instances where the media has been used to fuel political, ethnic and religious conflicts. He therefore admonished participants on the need to sensitize people to be careful in their application of the social media.

On **“Election violence and the law”**, **Barr Henry Peter Ekine** argued that though there are noticeable legal loopholes in the constitution and the Electoral Act, there are laws good enough to check cases of election violence. He however, agreed that what is lacking is the political will to implement the laws. Weak institutions, godfatherism and a corrupt

judiciary, also contribute to difficulty in the application of the law.

Patrick Naagbantou- “Incentivizing violence in the Niger Delta: Political Office as Booty”:

On incentivizing violence in the Niger Delta: Political Office as Booty, Patrick Naagbantou, a journalist and activist, said the difference between politicians in the western world and those in Nigeria is that there are regulations in western countries which do not spare offenders of the law. According to him, impunity thrives in Nigerian politics as a result of weak judicial system. The intense struggle for power in the Niger Delta region is fundamentally to gain control over the massive wealth in the States. One major factor that contributes to crisis in the Niger Delta is the culture of celebrating criminals and violence entrepreneurs. He further identified unemployment, poverty, presence of small and light arms, drugs, increasing population, as being factors responsible for the continued violence in the region.

He concluded on the note that in making deliberate attempts towards changing the current narrative, citizens must stop aiding politicians to attain positions of power through violence. Making political offices less lucrative is a good step to ending violence in the Niger Delta region.



Patrick Naagbantou

INEC: An Umpire's Perspective in Halting Election Violence- Ovie Ochuko

The INEC Electoral Officer for Warri South West commenced by thanking the organizers of the event, while describing the initiative as timely, particularly as the general elections draws near.

He noted that election cannot take place in the chaotic environment and as such, the electoral umpire has taken some proactive steps as they are aware that tension can rise where people are disenfranchised. Mr. Ochuko listed early release of election timetable, training and retraining of its staff, creation of RAC for timely distribution of election materials, orientation/public enlightenment and voters' sensitization as part of the early preparations by INEC. He also mentioned continuous voters registration including those who wish to genuinely transfer their voting points, MOU with NYSC for the provision of ad hoc staff, display of voters register, banning of camera in voting cubicles to check vote buying as well as the redesigning of the voting cubicle to ensure confidentiality as additional measures by INEC in reducing uncertainties or lapses that can trigger tension or election violence. He concluded by expressing the hope that once the proposed Electoral Offences Tribunal comes on board, election violence will be reduced drastically.

On **Faith Based** Approach to curbing election violence- **Bishop Diamond Emuabor**, Delta State Chairman, Advisory committee of Clergy Forum for Peace and Development sued for concerted efforts in ending election violence in order to save our children from the confounding situation foisted on the region and the nation at large by politicians. The Forum, he said intends to hold sensitization rallies across the State but that there were saboteurs. He added that the church must be steadfast in educating the youth not to be thugs to anybody as the politicians will never dare to use their own children as thugs. He advocated tolerance and forgiveness as ingredients for enduring peace.



Ovie Ochuko (Standing)



Mrs. Okoro Chigozirim (Standing)

CLEEN Foundation

Mrs. Okoro Chigozirim, Programme Officer of CLEEN Foundation, an Abuja based NGO gave highlights of CLEEN's initiative in marking out areas of threat before election. In their current analysis, almost all the Niger Delta States are caught in the flash point indicators of possible violence, prior to, during or after the 2019 elections.

From CLEEN Map out and Assessment for 2019 Elections, there are clear indicators identified as possible triggers of violence. They are:

- Drug Abuse
- Misconduct by security agencies
- INEC, if not properly managed
- Political parties
- Cultists

CLEEN also suggested the following as panaceas to election violence:

- Effective media monitoring to ensure balanced and responsible reportage
- Youth employment
- Effective job creation strategy
- Stepping up drug interdiction
- Inter security agencies collaboration
- Mopping up of arms
- Capacity building to change our mind set.

Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND)

Livingstone Membere presenting for PIND, gave a rundown of PIND activities including funding to AA PeaceWorks for a project Towards Nonviolent Elections in 22 LGAs from across three states (Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta). A Community Stakeholders Network has been established in each local government held Town Hall Meetings, conducted advocacy visits and interventions into actual conflicts. A roundtable has also been held in each State. He also mentioned sending early warning signs to the PIND IPDU platform for prompt response to mitigate violence as one of the major activities of the Community Stakeholders Network.

Messages from PANDEF



His Highness, Anabs Sara Igbe (Standing) with Chief Dr. Judith Burdin Asuni

In his goodwill message, **HH Anabs Sara Igbe**, a political activist and Publicity Secretary of PANDEF, gave a rundown of PANDEF activities since the emergence of the group in 2016. The group he said, has been playing the role of mouth piece and a unifying platform of the region. He also traced the sources of election violence in the region to include the political class, criminals, cultists and gun runners etc. The PANDEF spokesman, stated that both the judiciary and the law enforcement agencies are not doing enough in curbing election violence. He identified state governors and elected politicians as well as their appointees as beneficiaries who in turn provide cover for the actual perpetrators. His conclusion was that the situation was redeemable but “we need to change the narrative now”.

His Highness, Anabs Sara Igbe, lamented the gross intimidation within the party groups during the primaries. He stated that the contestants are the sponsors of the various groups who try to intimidate through violence or other tactics. He also mentioned ethnic colourization in engineering violence, just as he maintained that the candidates do the funding and even get the thugs and cult groups released when arrested, using their connections.

Chief Sara Igbe averred that the high cost of buying the forms for party primaries generates some desperation and consequently propels crisis. This he said, makes the contestants to see the process as a do or die affair. Though political violence might be difficult to eradicate totally, according to the chief, “concerted efforts by the relevant stakeholders can reduce it to a reasonable level”. While stating that

both INEC and the police have key roles to play in reducing election violence, he concluded that adopting electronic voting will be a final solution.

Another contributor and chieftain of PANDEF, **Elder T.K. Ogoriba** also gave highlights of the peace building efforts of the groups since 2016. He was the leader of the Niger Delta Dialogue's team 'B' that took risky trips into the creeks to negotiate for a ceasefire with the armed agitators. According to him, dialogue prevailed and since 12th August 2016, there was a ceasefire which has resulted in relative peace in the region and oil production is ongoing without hitches. He stated that the perpetrators of election violence are identifiable and that there are people feeding fat from the violence. In proffering solution, Elder Ogoriba suggested “constant talking to the larger society, going on enlightenment campaign across all wards and local government areas, while the youths should also strive to go into governance and things will be better”;

PANDEF woman leader, **Chief Mrs. Betty Igbeyi**, said though PANDEF as a regional body had only existed for two and a half years, it has achieved tremendous results in dousing the tension which brought the Nation's economy to a standstill in 2016. She noted that the body has continued to dialogue with the federal government to attend to the 16 Point Agenda, which according to her, is the only way to sustain the peace and boost the Nation's Economy as oil production continues.

She thanked all members and facilitators of the NDD for the efforts so far in ensuring that the region continues to enjoy peace, as well as



Elder T.K. Ogoriba (Standing) with Chief (Mrs) Betty Igbeyi

encouraged stakeholders to embrace the dialogue model rather than violent confrontations as often seen in the region. She maintained that so far, the NDD has been a think tank for PANDEF, adding that the achievements of PANDEF are not without efforts of the NDD.

She called on all stakeholders, particularly youths, to build on the gains of the NDD in reducing election violence in the region come 2019, while thanking the European Union for the continued support of the Dialogue process.

Triple Chief Vero Tanghowei O. Emmanuel (JP) from Gbaramatu Kingdom, also thanked the NDD for the role it has played since 2016 in ensuring that the region continues to enjoy calm while also engaging with critical stakeholders for the



Triple Chief Vero Tanghowei O. Emmanuel (JP) with HRM Obi Martha and Chief Judith Burdin Asuni (ED AA PeaceWorks & Facilitator)

development of the region. She stated that the focus of the 11th NDD was timely, while urging youths to support peace processes to ensure violence free elections in 2019.

YOUTHS SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES ON ELECTION VIOLENCE



SOS, Ogoni Youth (Standing)



Bishop Diamond Emuabor (Third Left)



Lizzy Jarikre with Mudiaga Ajilo (Standing)



Steven Akemu, Ekpan Youth (Standing)

State Syndicate Groups

While some formal presentations were made, much time was spent in state level syndicate groups which allowed participants interact intensely with their colleagues, analyze issues in their own geographical areas and come up with action plans.



Akwa-Ibom State Syndicate Group

Akwa- Ibom: Effects of defection by ranking politicians and unguarded utterances that are inciting, identified as possible triggers of violence. The issues of ballot snatching, impunity, result writing against the wish of the people are also possible triggers. Another trigger listed here is the high rate of cultism said to be very prevalent both in Akwa-Ibom and Rivers States. There is also pent up anger built up from the congresses to the primaries and interstate recruitment of thugs is ongoing. Greed and desperate struggle for power are some critical elements that lead to election violence. As a solution, there should be mass sensitization and Town Hall meetings as avenues to douse the rising tension.

Delta State (Uvwie): There were reported shootout between factions recently. The factions created by political interests are also geared towards control of the resources. Greed and struggle for power is quite high. Community matters in Delta State have tendencies of spilling into political issues which ultimately lead to violence. Furthermore, power tussle, laced with ethnic interest and balance makes the area volatile

especially in Delta South and Central Senatorial Districts. The churches are expected to play more

roles in preaching peace, forgiveness, unity and reconciliation.

Abia State: Issues of rotation and imposition of candidates, threats to make the state ungovernable by top contenders if they lose as well as ethnicity factors (Nngwa) are very strong violence triggers. The Social media is also fingered as capable of heightening tension.

Rivers State: A narration of past election violence in ONELGA was given, listing killings and serious security issues was given. However, the last party primaries were violence free as several proactive measures were taken to avoid a relapse to the dark days. Lack of trust, respect and factionalisation in the parties, lack of equity, pecuniary influence as well as domination by CDC and youth leaders play a major role in influencing election violence. Bunkers and cultists are also great influencers of violence.



Rivers State Syndicate Group

Edo State: The state has some peculiarities amidst a change in the dynamics of the political space. Imposition of candidates as well as spiritual attacks were mentioned in the buildup to election crisis. Amnesty for politicians was suggested to create a rebirth on the system as solution to persistent election violence.

Ondo State: The rough terrain in some parts of the state enhances election violence. Domination by a party and resisting opposition are identified possible triggers of violence. There is need for understanding, tolerance and unity. Ethnicity is also an identified factor here.

Cross River State: Violence is a stark reality here. There are people who believe in getting political ascension through dubious means including killing, kidnapping and cultism. Politicians are identified as sponsors while hunger and poverty also influence conflict. Also identified are inter and intra party conflicts, marginalization and monopoly of elective positions as triggers of election violence.

Bayelsa State: Instances of recent killings were reported including an undergraduate. Violence is high just as the control of oil resources by way of juicy contracts plays a major role. Decamping from political party to another by top politicians amidst inciting comments also influences election violence.

State by State take Home Action Point

Bayelsa: To hold rallies in all Local Government Areas to create awareness

Akwa-Ibom/Cross Rivers: Continuous sensitization and enlightenment of the youths in

collaboration with other stake holders including traditional rulers, security agencies, women group etc. A meeting with the candidates of the various political parties is also imperative.

Rivers: To convene a meeting of ethnic leaders and interface with PANDEF and other stake holders

Delta: Reach out to youths, women group and the churches. Use Dr. Charles Apoki's programme on Quest FM to reach out to the entire state and beyond simultaneously.

Edo: Joint meeting with the Governor and Civil Society groups, PANDEF and other stake holders to sensitize the populace.

CAN/PFN: immediately convene a meeting of all ministers to intensify the message of nonviolence in the 2019 general elections in their various churches



Shashank Iyer with Otis Holloway US Consulate

Closing Remark by Obi Martha



Chief Betty Igbeyi, HH Sara Igbe with HRM Obi Martha Dunkwu, Omu of Anioma (Standing)

HRM Obi Martha Dunkwu, Omu of Anioma, in her closing remarks, thanked the facilitators, members of the NDD and the participants for attending the meeting, while saying the focus of the 11th NDD was timely and critical to reducing election violence, particularly as the general elections are few months away. Drawing inspiration from comments by participants, she explained that man was endowed with the ability to conquer religion, politics and other challenges he may encounter, from creation. God made man the head of all creation. Yet, man was not complete until God made woman and gave her to man as a companion and helper. She described the woman as the water that quenches the fire in man, whether of violence, intolerance, lack of self-control etc. Therefore, the woman is an integral part of nature as no nation can survive in isolation of women.

Sadly, the problem of our nation today is rooted in the failure of man and woman who were given power to control other creations. Obi Martha maintained that man has failed in his leadership position, adding that man's selfish interest has destroyed the nation. She condemned the notion of superiority of ethnicity and religion of one group over another, adding that God will hold each one accountable for their wrong doings, not the religion to which they belong. However, she commended the Ijaw nation for being united in the pursuit of their common interest, while encouraging other ethnic groups to find their bearing with unity of purpose rather than blaming those who are united as being responsible for the problems in the country.

According to HRM, women have also failed in certain areas i.e. failure to inculcate sound moral values in their children (youths and men, who are the main characters in any violence), adding that the role of women in violence should not be overlooked as it is tied to failure of motherhood and the abandonment of womanhood. Women must hold themselves responsible for the failure of the nation, even though the nation has also failed women in some areas. The failure to train the trainer, who will in turn train the child, is evident in the quality of leadership at all levels. She called on the NDD to organize a session to redefine the role of women in nation building and conflict resolution.

In repositioning the minds of youths towards quality leadership, she cited the example of a 31 year old chancellor in Austria, This shows that youth can be leaders. She challenged the youths to end buying arms just so they could kill for politicians. "Your power is not in the gun in your hand to help the politicians but in being educated, broad minded, courageous and self-discipline".

She concluding by calling for concerted effort of all stakeholders in changing the current narrative, while also urging the youths to refrain from electoral violence and utilize their energies positively for their common good. She also thanked the European Union and other international organizations for their interest in supporting peace processes in Nigeria, particularly the Niger Delta region.



Barr. Pereotubo Roland Oweilami (President Ijaw Youth Council)

State Technical Sessions

To further consolidate on the gains of the 11th Niger Delta Dialogue focused on reducing violence in the 2019 general elections, ethnic youth leaders of Delta, Rivers and Akwa-Ibom states called for partnership with the NDD to hold technical sessions to further deepen the sensitization on nonviolence in the states.

1. Delta State Ethnic Nationality Youth Leaders Forum in partnership with the NDD, held a technical session on 22nd January, 2019 at the Best Western Wetland Hotel, Warri. The session was organised by the Delta State Ethnic Nationality Youth Leaders Forum led by Comr. Agbateyiniro Weyinmi and his team and chaired by HRM Obi Martha Dunkwu, Omu of Anioma Kingdom. In attendance were over 70 youths drawn from the three senatorial districts, traditional rulers, security agencies, INEC, religious leaders, women, youth influencers and the media. The session looked at “Youths as agent of Nonviolent Elections: A Critical Examination of Prospects and Challenges of the 2019 General Elections”.



Comr. Agbateyiniro Weyinmi President, Delta State Ethnic Nationality Youth Leaders Forum (Standing)

2. The technical session for all ethnic youths in Akwa-Ibom State held on 25th January, 2019 at the Oro Civic Center, Oro, with over 100 youths in attendance including kings, security agencies, religious leaders, women, media and others. The focus was “Effect of Electoral Violence on Youth Development”. It was hosted by the President of the Oron Union Youth Wing, Chris Ulap Ante with Amb. Nkoyo Toyo as the guest speaker.



**Ambassador Nkoyo Toyo
Guest Speaker, Akwa-Ibom technical session**

3. The Rivers State Youth Leaders technical session held on 7th February, 2019 at the Grand Montesitto Hotel, with the theme “Sustained Efforts for Peaceful 2019 Elections in Rivers State. Over 85 persons including HRM Eze Leslie Nyenbuchi Eke, Eze Gbakagbaka, Eze Oha Evo 111 of Evo Kingdom (Chairman of the occasion), Rear Admiral Nicholas Bakpo (Rtd), EU delegation, media, religious leaders, INEC, civil society actors, women, youths with information and others. The EU Ambassador HE Ketil Karlsen, his 3 person team including 2 long term observers; the US Consul General John Bray; and a representative of the British High Commission participated in the dialogue.

The technical session was put together by Livingstone Membere and other Ethnic Youth Leaders in Rivers State.



Livingstone Membere, President Kalabari Youth Federation (Standing)

There was a consensus by participants at the various state sessions on the following:

1. Election violence has deprived the states of quality leadership at all levels, thereby impeding the development of various sectors of the states.
2. Politicians are not willing to come to a discussion table to talk about violence and insecurity, especially as it relates to the forthcoming 2019 elections.
3. Issues of poverty, unemployment, unjust judicial system, and ignorance are key factors driving election violence in the states.
4. There are individuals and groups that have persistently stood up against election violence in the states, and these groups become soft targets to the perpetrators of political violence.
5. The incentivization of violence using political offices is contributing to the increasing cases of political violence in Nigeria.
6. Violence and insecurity have reduced commercial/ industrial activities thus reducing the opportunity for youths to be gainfully employed.
7. Lack of strong family and communal values, and the degradation of the traditional belief system has contributed to the increasing insecurity in the states.
8. Factors such as late arrival of voting materials, inadequate logistics arrangement, centralization of the distribution of election materials at the LGAs, and corruption and compromise by staff and ad-hoc personnel of INEC are contributing to election violence in the states.
9. Availability of small and light weapons in the Niger Delta is a very important factor to consider in the fight against election violence. Politicians readily provide funding and arms to youth to intimidate opponents and create an atmosphere of insecurity in the states.
10. Lack of punishment or the prosecution of offenders has created an enabling environment for election violence to thrive.
11. The distortion of security arrangements and reposting of personnel has made it difficult for the swift prosecution of offenders of electoral violence.
12. Godfatherism and lack of internal democracy within political parties is giving rise to politically motivated violence.

13. Presence of drugs also contributes to election violence.

The states came up with the following **action points** which will be immediately carried out to ensure violence free elections.



Cross section of participants at the Delta State technical session

Delta State:

1. The ethnic youth leaders will immediately organize meetings with their followers to further deepen the sensitization on violence free elections in 2019.
2. Youth leaders to discourage their followers from the use of drugs.
3. Christian Association of Nigeria and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, Delta State Chapter to immediately organize a meeting of all ministers to strengthen the message of nonviolence before, during and after the general elections
4. Continued engagement with politicians and their supporters to engender violence free elections
5. Women to work with the youths and the traditional rulers to create awareness on zero tolerance for election violence
6. Engage with INEC to ensure a hitch free process in 2019
7. Youth leaders to discourage their followers from cultism and thuggery even after the general elections.



Chief Judith Asuni, Rear Admiral Nicholas Bakpo (Rtd), HRM Eze Gbakagbaka, HE Ketil Karlsen, Rivers State: Head of EU Delegation (Standing) & Osaro Odemwingie (EU Delegation)

1. Stakeholders of Rivers State should collectively declare a ceasefire on election violence and seek ways of enforcing it. The Youth leaders and Citizens should be adequately mobilized to stand up for the prosecution of offenders, irrespective of who is directly or indirectly involved.
2. There is need to find alternatives to youth engagement in violence through addressing cultism, drug abuse, poverty, unemployment, and population growth.
3. Identifying and engaging the sponsors and major stakeholders critical to reducing election violence and engage them meaningfully
4. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should form a strategic partnership for employing meaningful strategies, using targeted advocacies and social media to promote peace and discourage election violence. CSOs should also intervene directly through strengthening the capacity of community institutions, and creating community level early warning and early response systems.
5. Religious leaders should begin to preach the message of nonviolence to their congregation and should come out strong against election violence. An emergency meeting of the leadership of Faith Based Organizations should immediately be convened to ensure that all members under these organizations concurrently preach the message of nonviolence in their services before, during, and after the 2019 elections
6. The traditional belief system should be reawakened. Oath taking against cultism and political violence.
7. INEC should conduct its activities in a manner that will remain fair, transparent, and with integrity. Proper and continuous voter education should be carried out in all the communities of Rivers State.
8. There should be a deliberate attempt by security and community stakeholders to mop up arms in communities. Real Youth leaders should be engaged to facilitate the process of mopping up of arms
9. Participants identified the need for continued sensitization on nonviolence, it should not be a one-off event. The process should immediately be initiated by AA PeaceWorks and sustained after the 2019 general elections
10. Security agencies should serve the interest of Nigerians as against serving the interest of political parties or those in government.
11. Parents, especially mothers should inculcate the doctrine of nonviolence and social virtues in their children at a very early age

Akwa-Ibom:

1. Given the history of election violence and its implication for the quality of choice of leaders and the development of the country, there is need for a concerted effort by all youth groups in Akwa-Ibom state to ensure that the 2019 general election is violence free.
2. The ethnic youth organizations represented in the meeting are committed to ensuring that the political class in the state does not exploit the tension in the state to create crisis.
3. The ethnic youths will commit to the monitoring of activities of political parties and their leaders/ supporters – their pronouncements, their statement/speeches, deliberate actions of exclusions and confrontations to ensure that the elections is violence free.
4. The youths will be mobilized across the state in ensuring that institutions such as INEC, security agencies, responsible for upholding the rights of different groups act impartially during the elections so that the interest of the political contestants and that of the Akwa- Ibom youths are not undermined or marred by violence.
5. That the youths of different nationalities are committed to the pursuit of a new political order free of violence but focused on the development of the state and ensuring that the level of poverty, ignorance and helplessness among youths are addressed.
6. That the youths will discourage a future where the youths of Akwa-Ibom are undermined by poverty and absence of opportunities.
7. That all ethnic nationalities adhere to a zero tolerance for violence before, during and after the elections.
8. Canvass among Akwa-Ibom people to observe a 30 days violence free in Akwa-Ibom which will cover the period of 7th February -6th of March, 2019.
9. Reach out to traditional rulers, religious leaders and other segments of the state to observe the 30 day zero tolerance violence



Cross Section of Participants at the Akwa-Ibom State Technical Session.

Conclusion

Many of the causes of election violence are well known, and were mentioned repeatedly by participants in the 11th Niger Delta Dialogue, the 3 state technical sessions, and other meetings organized by Academic Associates PeaceWorks under a different project.

These commonalities include: the huge benefits of elected office and the resulting incentivization of violence to achieve such offices; a high level of 29.7% unemployment of youth, making easy money from political thuggery more attractive; ready availability of small arms and light weapons; lack of punishment or prosecution of election violence offenders; godfatherism and lack of internal democracy in political parties; and ready availability of drugs that both make users feel invulnerable and reduce their decision making powers.

There are also of course structural issues that lead to election violence. These include: an unjust judicial system; an inefficient election body at all levels; sparse and badly trained security forces that are under the control of certain groups of politicians.

One set of factors not always recognized is the breakdown of social norms and values, and general erosion of the social fabric. Numerous speakers have lamented the collapse of the family, with loss of control over the youth by their parents. The traditional belief system, which all across Nigeria, gave respect to elders, integrity, honesty, etc. has been replaced by one that values money over all else. Parents are often missing or inactive. Studies conducted by AA PeaceWorks in 2005, 2006 and 2016 in 5 states of the Niger Delta, showed that a large majority of young men in cults and militant groups came from broken homes where very importantly there was no positive mother role model. This has also led to negative social practices such as dropping out of school, heavy use of drugs and alcohol, and absence of family authority figures.

Election violence results in the choice of poor leaders, who in turn are incapable and not interested in bringing real development to the people. Thus, the cycle continues.

This report contains a number of suggestions on how to address the issues listed above. The violence demonstrated in the first election of 2019 should wake up all parties to their responsibilities to say “Enough! NO ONE wins in election violence”.

**Attendance List for 11th NDD held 14-15 November,
at Best Western Wetland Hotel, Warri**

S/N	NAME	Organization /Title/Representation	Phone number
1	Chief Igbeyi Betty	PANDEF National Woman Leader	0803 092 0716
2	Hon. Perewari Blessing	Councilor Owan South West, Edo State	0805 885 9530
3	Sofiri Joab – Peterside	Claude Ake School Of Government, University Of Port Harcourt.	0803 340 1408
4	Umukoro Oviemuno	President Isoko National Youth Assembly	0706 706 4986
5	Her Royal Majesty Obi Martha Dunkwu Omu of Anioma	Anioma Delta State	0806 034 7522 0802 332 2698
6	Erhijakpor Darlington	DSS	0703 580 5007
7	Odueley Adagushime	Orashi Youth	0803 674 4336
8	Patrick Naagbantou	Independent Journalist & Research	0803 336 7823
9	Etim John Offong	Oro Union	0803 351 9592
10	Ledum Isode	Ogoni Entertainment/Radio Commentator	0816 543 2056
11	Dr Apoki Charles	Resource Person/Radio Commentator	0802 825 8702
12	Engr. Joseph Ukpata	Ogoja Youth Forum	0803 721 3312
13	Comson Tony	Orashi President	0816 663 6425
14	Denyan Oweifiye	Youth Mobiliser	0803 338 8102
15	Abbey – Kalio Asere	Youth Influence	0806 497 2608
17	Abraham Monty Kali	Bishop/ Clergy	0803 776 0211
18	Stephen Akemu	Youth Leader	0903 846 4712
19	Mudiaga Ajilo	Youth Rep. Ughelli North	0703 568 6797
20	Ahanmisi Edeki	Owan Youth Council	0816 545 4031
21	Victor Inyang	Oron Union	0803 598 9130
22	Ken Godwin	Oguan Youth	0803 461 6372
23	Chief Vanuanikizobe Otobo	Oguan Youth	0806 853 3943
24	Bar. Pereotubo Roland Oweilami	Ijaw Youth Council	0803 336 1305
25	Innocent Ebhotemen	Esan Youth Council	0703 462 6700
26	Eric Oluwole	Ilaje Yoruba Youth Council	0806 029 6855
27	Uchegbuo Godwin	IYM	0803 500 8487

28	Ezeugo Pascal Moschino	Youth Movement	0816 716 6186
29	Elder TK Ogoriba	Izon Owei – PANDEF	0818 877 7770
30	Bristol – Alagbariya Emmanuel	Bonny L.G.A	0803 550 3925
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35	Festus O. Igherebuo	Urhobo Youth Council	0706 611 2173
36	Ovie Ochuko	INEC Warri South West LGA	0805 215 1373
37	Comr. Henry O. Nwaigwe	OYGA / NDYFD Youth coordinator	0806 283 6738
38	Dr Young Nkpah	President, National Youth Council of Ogoni People.	0806 452 5958
39	Comr. Emmanuel Amadi	Etche Ethnic Youth Federation (President)	0703 093 1712
40	Comr. Ewa Bright	Ogbia Brotherhood Youth Council President	0803 468 0957
41	Prince Godswill Edward	Prince 7 youth development Initiative (CRS)	0803 737 0780
42	Ebiegberi Aboh Richson	Federated Youth Council of Twon Brass (President)	0703 648 0112
43	Oseh Ifeanyi	Ika Youth Congress	0803 761 0778
44	Prince Ikim	Annang Youth Movement	0806 800 0046
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46	Ulap Chris Ante	Oro Union Youth	0809 864 9098
47	Okodugha .D. A	Edo Youth Leader Council	0802 826 4445
48	Legbe Saturday O.	Alogbo – Akpata (Ijaw)	0703 169 1553 0805 231 0865
49	Eld. David Osiobe	Urhobo	0806 388 4313
50	Chief N. Emmawwori	Port Harcourt	0803 783 998
51	Shashank Iyer	US Consulate / Lagos	0906 279 0805
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53	Mrs Patience Ataine	Irigbo – Ode – Itsekiri	0803 354 6626
54	Emmanuel Ekebe	Journalist	0803 566 4991
55	Engr. Dr. Nsed Ayip Akoujom	Ejaghan Youth Congress	0803 410 1424
56	Eniwake Orogun	Isoko National Youth Assembly – World wide	0803 863 0662

57	Osaro Odemwingie	EU Delegation	0802 229 2976
58	Chigozirim Okoro	CLEEN Foundation	0813 752 0521
59	Chief Ani Esin	Bakassi Union	0803 723 9487
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61	Brenda Effionm	Efik Leadership Foundation /Brencaire Foundation	0818 995 1218
62	Amos Emoghene	Delta State	0803 784 3741 0807 150 8165
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72	Jarikre Elizabeth	AA PeaceWorks	0810 522 6661
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Niger Delta Dialogue

A World of Peace

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