
RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Green Tree Agreement over Bakassi: The Perception of the Bakassi Inhabitants towards its Implementation

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<i>Article Info</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
<p>Keywords: <i>Cameroon, Nigeria, Perception, Bakassi Inhabitants, Green Tree Agreement</i></p>	<p><i>The Bakassi ruckus between Cameroon and Nigeria was primarily caused by colonialism and the discovery of natural resources in the area. This conflict was solved by the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) ruling of October 10, 2002. To agree that they have stopped hostilities, Cameroon and Nigeria signed the Green Tree Agreement (GTA). The main thrust of this paper is to showcase the Bakassi inhabitants' perception and views of Cameroon's implementation of GTA. We obtained data from secondary interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted in the Bamusso, and Idabato subdivisions in Bakassi using snowball and purposive sample techniques. To analyse the data obtained, content and thematic analyses were used, as well as liaising them with the concepts of peace agreement and perception. From the paper's findings, it reveals that the level of development, security, interaction with official, and environmental problems are the inhabitants' main views. It also reveals that, according to the people, the Cameroon government needs to do a lot on development and tackling environmental issues. The issue of security and interaction with Cameroon officials has positive thumbs up. This paper suggests that the Cameroon government should prioritize infrastructure development and address environmental issues in the Bakassi region. This will go a long way to ensure and preserve peace in the area.</i></p>

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Introduction

Agreements have often been used by countries, individuals, or political entities to resolve an issue, promote cooperation, or further alienation. International agreements between states for a particular course is usually in written form and governed by international law and it is embodied in a singular or plural instrument. According to Article 102 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, international agreements must be registered and published in the UN secretariat.¹ Cameroon and Nigeria being limitrophe neighbours have often signed and ratified agreements among themselves. However, the struggle over the resource rich Bakassi Peninsula since the 1960s gave both the countries no choice, but to enter into an international agreement known as the Green Tree Agreement (GTA) signed on June 12, 2006. Akpan and Onya opine that the Green Tree Agreement between Cameroon and Nigeria did not only resolve the weaknesses of implementing the World Court's verdict of October 10, 2002, but it also marked an end to the old Bakassi conflict.²

The Bakassi Peninsula is located at the extreme end of the Gulf of Guinea and stretches over a surface area of 665 square kilometres. It is situated between latitudes 4.26°C and 5.10°C north and south of the Equator, and longitudes 8.20°C and 9.08°C east and west of the Greenwich meridian.³ Rainfall in the area ranges from between 4000mm and 7000mm and has a 1000 square km of mangrove swamp. It also has a relative humidity of above 85% and temperatures ranges between 25°C and 35°C. The area is divided into five subdivisions and has a population of between 150000 and

¹ G. R Berridge, *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Palgrave, 2002):71-72.

² Nse Etim Akpan and Reason Onya, "The Paradox of Treaties in International Politics: A Focus on The Green Tree Agreement Between Nigeria and Cameroon Over Bakassi Peninsula", *International Journal of Arts, Languages and Business Studies (IJALBS)*, Vol.1, No 1(2018): 98.

³ Lucky Igohosa Ugbudian, "The Role of Natural Resources in Nigeria- Cameroun Border Dispute", *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: H Interdisciplinary* , Vol. 18, No. 5(2018): 1.

300000 people, with fishing as their primary source of livelihood.⁴ The (Cold Benguela and Warm Guinea) makes it a favourable hub for fish and other maritime wildlife to thrive in.⁵ Most importantly, the area is very rich in oil and gas which amounts to about 10% of the world's oil and gas reserves.⁶ From the Cameroonian viewpoint, the Bakassi peninsula is located in the Ndiain Division, Southwest region while from the Nigerian perspective, it is located in Calabar, Cross River State.⁷

A good number of scholarly works abound to the Cameroon-Nigeria Bakassi Conflict. Some have succinctly looked at the origins and causes of the conflict, blaming it on numerous reasons, but more precisely on the vestiges of colonialism and the discovery of oil, gas, and maritime resources in the area.⁸ Others have delved into the case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) with emphasis on jurisprudence of the court, arguments before the court, and impacts

⁴Agbor Tabetah Beckly, "*The Perceptions/Views of Cameroon–Nigerian Bakassi border conflict by the Bakassi people* (Master's Dissertation, Uppsala University, Sweden, 2013): 40-41.

⁵Makanjuola T. Shaibu, Stephen Nnaemeka Azom, E S Nwanze "An Appraisal of the Dominant Causes of Boundary Conflict between Nigeria and Cameroon: The Bakassi Peninsula Perspective", *Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, No.9 (2015): 37. Nwokolo, Ndubuisi N., "Peace-building or structural violence? Deconstructing the aftermath of Nigeria/Cameroon boundary demarcation", *African Security Review*, (2020):<https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2020.1734644>

⁶ Ndubuisi N. Nwokolo, "Peace-building or structural violence? Deconstructing the aftermath of Nigeria/Cameroon boundary demarcation": 3. Amin, Julius. A, "Cameroon's Relations toward Nigeria: A Foreign Policy of Pragmatism", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol 58, No 1(2020): 9. DOI:10.1017/S0022278X19000545

⁷ Familugba, Jonathan Oluropo and Ojo, Olayinka Olabinpe, "Nigeria – Cameroon Border Relations: An Analysis of the Conflict and Cooperation (1970-2004)", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, No. 11(2013): 181-190. Obodo, I.N and Akwen, G. T, "Nigeria-Cameroon Border Relations: A Historical Analysis of the Bakassi Peninsula Region", *Kaduna Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 1, No.1(2017): 243.<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338024653>

⁸Lucky Igohosa Ugbugdian, "The Role of Natural Resources in Nigeria- Cameroon Border Dispute". *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: H Interdisciplinary*, Vol. 18, No. 5 (2018): 9-16 Okoi, O, "Why Nations Fight: The Causes of the Nigeria–Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula Conflict", *African Security* Vol. 9, No. 1(2016): 42-65, DOI: 10.1080/19392206.2016.1132904

and criticisms of the court's verdict.⁹ Scholars like Ariye, Ariye and Etemike, and Amin have looked at the relationship between Cameroon and Nigeria prior and during the Bakassi conflict and have laid many appraisals on the triumph of bilateralism.¹⁰ Again, some scholars have examined the issue of human rights violations during the conflict. They also suggest that the aspect of human rights was greatly neglected during the military skirmishes and administration of the area, even though the concept of human rights is a living phenomenon.¹¹ Historically, and from analysing these works, the Bakassi peninsula had been an area of domestic and military skirmishes as well as gross human right violations. This therefore set an undertone for some peace measures to be put in place.

Concerning the GTA, scholars like Chidi, Akpan and Onya, and Akonye have given their thoughts, saying that frailty of the

⁹ Duyile, A. Willam, "Nigeria-Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula Crisis: A retrospect of Nigerian Technocrats views prior to the Court Case of The Hague", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Invention*, Vol. 4, No. 5(2015): 66-69. Bassey, J.R, "Anglo-German Treaty Of 1913 and Its Influence on World Court Decision in The Nigeria V. Cameroon Case Concerning Bakassi", *International Journal of Current Research*, Vol. 6, No 11(2014):9832-9840. Kpwa, S.A, "World Court's Verdict Towards Bakassi Peninsula: Portraying Gains and Losses". *Indonesian Journal of Social Research (IJSR)*, Vol. 4, No. 2(2022): 83-95. <https://doi.org/10.30997/ijsr.v4i2.201>

¹⁰ Ariye, E. Charles "Nigeria, Cameroon and the Bakassi Territorial Dispute Settlement: The Triumph of Bilateralism", *International Affairs and Global Strategy*, 38(2015) 24-33. Ariye, E.C and Etemike, L, "Contextualizing the Use of The Diplomatic Alternative in Conflict Resolution in The Dispute Between Nigeria and Cameroon Over Bakassi 1994-2006", *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, N. 2, no 3(2017): 93-110. Amin, "Cameroon's Relations toward Nigeria: A foreign Policy of Pragmatism"(2020):1-22.

¹¹ Sone, Patience M, "Human Rights and Peace Building in the Bakassi Peninsula in Cameroon", *Journal of International Politics and Development*, Vol.12, No. 2(2014): 123-132. Nwoko, K.C, "Human Rights Abuses against the Bakassi People: Are Nigeria and Cameroon Liable?", *Kujenga Amani* (2016): 1-3. <https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2016/01/11/human-rights-abuses-against-the-bakassi-people-are-nigeria-and-cameroon-liable/>. Tangko, Hans N.N, "Human rights violations in the rich-oil Bakassi Peninsula". *Research Gate*, (2020): 1-19. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.28778.34241. Kpwa, S.A, "The Violation of Human Rights during the Bakassi Peninsula Conflict from 1965 to 2013", *Interdisciplinary Journal on Law, Social Sciences and Humanities*, Vol. 4, No. 1(2023): 111-115. DOI: 10.19184/idj.v4i1.38085

agreement could be a bedrock for a future and endless war in the Bakassi area.¹² Corroborating these views of future possibility of wars in the Bakassi region due to the ineffectiveness of the Green Tree Agreement, scholars like Yerima and Singh, Ogunnoiki, and Chia and Kpwa have pointed out possible ways to retake the Bakassi Peninsula from Cameroon. They further opined that this drive to retake the peninsula back from Cameroon has led to rise in militancy in the area.¹³ However, these analyses provide valuable information about the historical and contemporary events surrounding the Bakassi Peninsula. With these works mentioned above, one aspect is still missing - that is, how the inhabitants in Bakassi perceive Cameroon's implementation of the GTA. The works of Tabetah, Ngalim, Nwoko, and Nwokolo have tried to get the views of the Bakassi inhabitants but on different topics. They base their findings on the views of the inhabitants on the causes of the conflict and their take about their lives as returnees living in the resettlement areas.¹⁴ It is no doubt that from these research works, the inhabitants of the Bakassi Peninsula had for some time felt unsafe and angry towards

¹² Chidi, J. Lloyd, "Critical Analysis of The Greentree Agreement Between Nigeria and Cameroon", *International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies (IJIRAS)* , Vol. 5, No. 1(2018):27-33. Akpan & Onya, "The Paradox", 97-107. Akonye, Joseph E, "Bakassi Peninsula Contestation: The Failure of The Green Tree Agreement to Resolve the Bakassi Issue, 2006-2018", *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, Vol. 9, No 2(2019): 485-499. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.9.02.2019.p8663>

¹³ Yerima, H.M and Singh, D.S.R, "The Bakassi Dispute: People's Dynamics and the rise of Militancy", *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, Vol. 22, No. 1(2017): 67-70. Ogunnoiki, A. O, "Regaining Bakassi Peninsula from Cameroon: The Options Available to Nigeria. *African Journal of Law, Political Research and Administration*, Vol. 2, No. 1(2020):16-21. Chia, C and Kpwa, S.A, "The Biafra Nations League (BNL): A New Scare in the Bakassi Peninsula. *Global Journal of Arts Humanity and Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No. 6(2023): 673-681.

¹⁴ Tabetah, " The Perception", 2013. Ngalim, A.N, "African Boundary Conflicts and International Mediation: The Absence of Inclusivity in Mediating the Bakassi Peninsula Conflict", *African Peacebuilding Network* 9(2016): 1-27. Nwoko, Kenneth. C, "Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in A Contested International Border: The Nigeria-Cameroon Border Conflict Settlement and Matters Arising", *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 5(2018): 65-83. Nwokolo, "Peace-building or structural violence? Deconstructing the aftermath of Nigeria/Cameroon boundary demarcation": 1-17.

the skirmishes and the neglect from both the Cameroonian and Nigerian government.

All in all, the scholarly works give us an insight into the scenario that led to the signing of the GTA. Even though these works set the stage for writing this paper, they have failed to get the views of the Bakassi inhabitants regarding Cameroon's implementation of the GTA. Even the works which tried to get the views of the people did not look their views towards GTA implementation. They mostly concentrated on the views of the people in resettlement camps- an aspect not mentioned in the clauses of the GTA. It is against this logjam that the main thrust of this paper is to showcase the perception/views of the Bakassi Inhabitants towards Cameroon's implementation of the GTA. This paper also has the goal of understanding the views of the Bakassi inhabitants, determining whether they are happy or disgruntled with the Cameroonian government, and how she implements the GTA Finally, this paper provides a brief overview of the events that led to the signing of the GTA.

Conceptualising Peace Agreement and Perception

Peace Agreement

This paper hinges on a peace agreement, a concept that is based on the assumption that it has the potential to offer timely and effective access points for the international and local communities to engage in state building processes in post-conflict situations.¹⁵ It should be noted here that International Law does not contain a legal definition of peace agreement, but they are however proposed different definitions in legal writings.¹⁶ Rybicki defines a peace agreement as an international agreement concluded between hitherto warring parties, the purpose of which is to end the armed conflict in a final and permanent manner, establish peace and to restore normal

¹⁵ Mezzera, Michael, Pavicic, Michael & Specker, L. Governance Components in Peace Agreements: Fundamental Elements of State and Peace Building? *Conflict Research Unit – CRU*, (2009): 4.

¹⁶ Czepek Vita and Karska Elzbieta. "Peace Agreements as International Legal Acts Protecting National Minorities: The Scope Ratione Personae". *Bialystok Legal Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 5(2021): 76. DOI: 10.15290/bsp.2021.26.05.05

relations between them.¹⁷ For Anderlini, a peace agreement is a formal commitment between hostile parties to end a war. Anderlini goes further to say that peace agreements can vary considerably, as one may be to end current wars and the other to end protracted wars.¹⁸ It is one thing to sign a peace agreement, and it is another thing to implement it. The next step, implementation, and the actors' ability to transition from war to sustainable peace have received little attention. It is important to highlight here that the implementation of a peace agreement is crucial to sustaining peace, which could either be a narrow or short-term effort.¹⁹

Stanley and Holiday submit that for peace agreements to lay the foundations for a more democratic post-war environment, implementation needs to move quickly and reorganise political institutions so that newly integrating elements of the institution have sufficient guarantees.²⁰ Peace negotiators must always brace themselves for spoilers and public rejection. When we talk of spoilers, we mean groups that have an interest in sabotaging the peace process. The GTA is a practical example of a peace agreement, with lots of spoilers. Ever since the signing of the GTA, militant activities have increased in the Bakassi area. In terms of public rejection, the Bakassi people themselves, coupled with some statemen from Nigeria, outrightly rejected the GTA, some belittling it as a western ploy to rub the Bakassi and Nigerians of their resource rich area. However, it stands to reason that when the public has

¹⁷ Cited in Czepek and Karska, "Peace Agreements as International Legal Acts Protecting National Minorities: The Scope Ratione Personae":77. DOI: 10.15290/bsp.2021.26.05.05

¹⁸ Anderlini, Sanam N. "Peace Negotiations and Agreements." In *Inclusive Security, Sustainable Peace: A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action*, edited by International Alert and Women Waging Peace (London: International Alert, 2004): 16-32.

¹⁹ Stedman, Stephen John. "Implementing Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: Lessons and Recommendations for Policymakers." IPA Policy Paper Series on Peace Implementation (2001). https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ImplementingPeaceAgreementsinCivilWars_IPI2001.pdf

²⁰ Stanley, William, and David, Holiday. 2002. "Broad Participation, Diffuse Responsibility: Peace Implementation in Guatemala." In *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, edited by Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth. M. Cousens (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers): 421-462.

experienced significant trauma, it may not be ready to make compromises or accept a negotiated solution. This is especially true for the Bakassi people, who have endured long-term trauma in their own homeland.

Perception

This paper is largely grounded on perception, a concept which for some time now has lacked global consensus based on the availability of numerous subjective instruments that measure it.²¹ Perception is an English word that was borrowed from the Latin word 'perceptio' which means 'accept or take.'²² According to Slameto, perception is the process by which a message or piece of information enters into the human brain. It has a relationship with its environment because of continuous human perception. This connection is done via the senses, such as sensory-viewer, listen, touch, taste and olfactory.²³ Huffman and Vernoy define perception as a process of selecting, organising, and interpreting sensory data into useable mental representation of the world.²⁴ Szilagy and Wallace see perception as a process by which individuals attend to incoming stimuli, organise, and interpret such stimuli into messages that in turn indicate an appropriate action or behaviour.²⁵ According to Bimo Warlitoon, perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret the stimuli they receive to transform it into something meaningful and an integrated activity within themselves.²⁶

From the definitions of perception, we can see that it is an interdisciplinary concept, and it has many layers. Also, these definitions dwell on touch, smell, taste, hearing, and vision. This is

²¹ Susan, M.D., "Perception: A Concept Analysis"(PhD Thesis, University of Texas, 2011), 3-4).

²² Desmita, *Psikologi Perkembangan Peserta Didik* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010).

²³ Slameto, I, *Belajar dan Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhinya* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2010).

²⁴ Huffman, L., and Vernoy, J, *Psychology in action* (4th ed.) (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley& Sons. Inc., 2002).

²⁵ Szilagy, A. D., and Wallace, M. J, *Organizational behaviour and performances* (Santa Monica: Good Year Publishing Company, 1980).

²⁶ Warlito, B, *Pengantar Psikologi Umum* (Yogyakarta: ANDI OFFSET, 2004).

partly because these definitions are from the viewpoints of psychologists and psychiatrists. However, in history, perception can be defined as an individual's own frame of reference—the product of one's own personal experiences.²⁷ Attesting to this, Shiraev reveals that experience will shape and influence perception²⁸. Thus, this paper dwells on Susan's definition of perception according to historians. It is in line with the foregoing that the voiced out individualistic experiences of Bakassi inhabitants on Cameroon's implementation of the GTA will be summed up and explained. Thus, for one to give his or her views, there must be an experience, either actively or passively. This paper uses views and perceptions interchangeably for clarity.

Understanding the Trajectory to the Green Tree Agreement

The events leading up to the signing of the GTA between Cameroon and Nigeria over the Bakassi Peninsula date back to the colonial era. Germany annexed Cameroon right up to the Akwayafe waterways in July 1884 while Britain by signing treaties with the traditional rulers of the Ancient Calabar kingdom, annexed the region in September 1884.²⁹ The annexation process was marred with a lot of problems, mainly among the colonialist. To settle these differences, these European powers signed agreements/arrangements among themselves to demarcate or delineate the territories.³⁰ This particular incident led division about tribes, ethnic groups, kith and kins.³¹ When the first world war broke out, Germany lost Cameroon

²⁷ Susan, "Perception: A Concept Analysis"(2011): 3-4.

²⁸ Shiraev, E.B, *Cross Cultural Psychology: Critical Thinking and Contemporary Applications* (Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2016).

²⁹ Okoi, "Why Nations Fight: The Causes of the Nigeria–Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula Conflict": 49. Umoh, U.E, "Cameroon, Nigeria and the Bakassi conflict: building blocks for a Non-Democratic Peace Theory", *Journal of International Relations and Development* 8(2015): 228. DOI:10.1057/jird.2013.21

³⁰ Ariye, and Etemike, "Contextualizing the Use of The Diplomatic Alternative in Conflict Resolution in The Dispute Between Nigeria and Cameroon Over Bakassi 1994-2006": 93-110.

³¹ Funteh, Mark Bolak, "The Concept of Boundary and Indigenous Application in Africa: The Case of the Bakassi Boarder Lines of Cameroon and Nigeria", *International Journal on Humanities and Cultural Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4(2015): 220-237.

(including Bakassi) to France and Britain and Cameroon was unevenly share among these new landlords.³² With the new colonial regimes, the issue of demarcation/delineation especially along the Cameroon- Nigeria Bakassi border still ensued. This caused the new landlords to enter into further agreements and arrangements.³³

Nigeria gained independence on October 1, 1960. The story was quite different with Cameroon as French Cameroon, gained independence on January 1, 1960, and the controversial British Southern Cameroon through a UN organised plebiscite on February 11, 1961, gained independence by reuniting with French Cameroon on October 1, 1961.³⁴ With this change in ownership, the Bakassi border problem did not go away. The dauntless nature of the leaders of Cameroon and Nigeria to solve this issue caused them to enter into agreements and arrangements.³⁵ However, the lack of mutual trust and suspicion, economic interests, and the popularity criteria between these leaders made them not to genuinely seek for lasting solutions to the Bakassi upheaval.³⁶ On May 15-16, 1981, Cameroon and Nigeria almost entered into a protracted war following the killing of 5 Nigerian soldiers by Cameroonian soldiers in the Bakassi waterways. This was however resorted by an apology, compensation and strict disciplinary measures on the perpetrators.³⁷

³² Okoi, "Why Nations Fight: The Causes of the Nigeria–Cameroon Bakassi Peninsula Conflict": 49-50.

³³ Nwoko, "Post-Conflict Peace-Building in A Contested International Border: The Nigeria-Cameroon Border Conflict Settlement and Matters Arising": 65-83.

³⁴ Funteh, "The Concept of Boundary and Indigenous Application in Africa: The Case of the Bakassi Boarder Lines of Cameroon and Nigeria" 222. Obodo and Akwen, "Nigeria-Cameroon Border Relations: A Historical Analysis of the Bakassi Peninsula Region": 248.

³⁵ Amin, "Cameroon's Relations toward Nigeria: A foreign Policy of Pragmatism": 1–22.

³⁶ Fombo, Gregory Fah., "International Politics of Border Conflicts: A Study of the Nigeria-Cameroon Dispute, 1960-2002"(Thesis, not published. University of Nsukka, Nigeria, 2006).

³⁷ Henry Kam Kah "The Bakassi Crisis: The Role of The Nigerian and Cameroonian Military, 1981-2013", *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, No. 6 (2014): 3-22. G. F Fombo, "International Politics of Border Conflicts: A Study of the Nigeria-Cameroon Dispute, 1960-2002".

Many factors have been posited as to why there were skirmishes between Cameroon and Nigeria over Bakassi. The most prominent ones were the setbacks of colonialism and the discovery of abundant natural and maritime resources in the area. The haphazard nature in which the colonial masters demarcated the Cameroon-Nigeria border set the stage for this conflict.³⁸ The most compelling cause was the discovery of abundant natural and maritime resources in the area in the late 1960s. This new knowledge suddenly drew the attention of Cameroon and Nigeria to Bakassi, a land which was neglected by both parties.³⁹ This among many other factors made the region to be a seething hive for military skirmishes. Summarising the main causes of the Bakassi brouhaha, Asobie puts that, “essentially, the struggle over Bakassi was neither for the people nor for an empty barren territory. It was primarily for some natural resources: for some object of labour. And the roots of the dispute laid in colonial frontiers, particularly the Nigeria-Cameroon international frontiers.”⁴⁰

Between 1981 to 1994, Cameroon and Nigeria were locked head-to-head with their military over the Bakassi area. Such heightened tension did not however push both the countries into a full-blown war, mainly because of the enormous negative externalities that accrue to war.⁴¹ Exhausted by these military scruffles, Paul Biya of Cameroon mounted a case against Nigeria, putting the issue of sovereignty over Bakassi as primordial, and filed

³⁸.AT Aghemelo and S Ibhasebhor "Colonialism as a Source of Boundary Dispute and Conflict among African States: The World Court Judgement on the Bakassi Peninsula and its Implications for Nigeria", *Journal for Social Sciences*, Vol. 13, No 3(2006): 177-181. Nicholas, K. Tarlebba and Sam Baroni "The Cameroon and Nigeria negotiation process over the contested oil-rich Bakassi peninsula", *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, No. 1(2010): 198-210.

³⁹ Ugbudian, "The Role of Natural Resources in Nigeria- Cameroun Border Dispute": 8-16; Amin, "Cameroon's Relations toward Nigeria: A Foreign Policy of Pragmatism": 1-22.

⁴⁰ Asobie, Humphrey Assisi, "The Conflict between Nigeria and Cameroun over Land and Sea Borders and Territories: The Political Context and the Contending Principles", *University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 1, No 1(2005): 82.

⁴¹ Henry Kam Kah "The Bakassi Crisis: The Role of The Nigerian and Cameroonian Military, 1981-2013": 3-22.

it to the ICJ on March 29, 1994.⁴² Kah opined that although Cameroon took the matter to the ICJ for ruling, hostilities between the military of both countries continued even after the verdict of the court in 2002.⁴³ Following intense court sessions and proceedings, the ICJ on October 10, 2002 ruled that sovereignty over Bakassi laid with Cameroon.⁴⁴ Before the ruling, the UN Secretary General (SG) Kofi Annan invited Biya of Cameroon and Obasanjo for a meeting in France on September 5, 2002. At the end of the meeting, both the leaders vowed to respect the decision of the court. The difficulty to implement the court's ruling forced the UN SG Kofi Annan to yet again invite Biya and Obasanjo for a meeting in Geneva on November 15, 2002. The outcome of this meeting was the creation of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission.⁴⁵

The sole mandate of the Cameroon Nigeria Mixed Commission (CNMC) was to implement the court's ruling in a peaceful way.⁴⁶ Members of the CNMC held their meeting every 2 months, shuttling between Abuja and Yaoundé. An agreement seemed to have been reached as Nigeria promised to pull away from Bakassi on September 15, 2004. This did not come into reality and Nigeria continued deploying her military to Bakassi.⁴⁷ Consequently, after 14 successive meetings held by the CNMC, an agreement was finally drafted. Hence, Biya of Cameroon, Obasanjo of Nigeria, witnesses, and the UN SG Kofi Annan meet in green tree estate, Manhasset, New York and signed the drafted agreement of the CNMC. This was finally called the GTA and it was signed on

⁴²Ambily Etekpe, "ICJ judgment on Bakassi Peninsula and Lake Chad: Litmus test for peace and integration in Africa". *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, Vol.7, No.6(2013):286–294. DOI:10.5897/AJPSIR2013.0608

⁴³ Kah, "The Bakassi Crisis: The Role of The Nigerian and Cameroonian Military, 1981-2013": 3-22.

⁴⁴ Kpwa, "World Court's Verdict Towards Bakassi Peninsula: Portraying Gains and Losses": 85.

⁴⁵ Kamto, Maurice, "The Bakassi Affair: Cameroon's Challenge for Peace", *International Peace Institute (IPI) Publications*, (2008): 15-16.

⁴⁶Francis Menjo Baye, "Implications of the Bakassi conflict resolution for Cameroon", *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 10, No 1(2010): 14.

⁴⁷ Jean Mbaga, and Zachee Njo, "Globalisation and New Resource Wars: Armed Conflicts over the Bakassi Peninsula between Cameroon and Nigeria", *Association Freedom Life*, (2007): 10.

June 12, 2006.⁴⁸ This agreement obligated Nigeria to remove her military and administration from Bakassi within 2 years. Cameroon was also obligated to respect the rights of Nigerian nationals living in Bakassi within that time. A special 5-year transition period was introduced after Nigeria must have pulled out her troops and administration completely from Bakassi. This transition period was for Nigerian nationals who wanted to stay to be prepared for Cameroon's final takeover.⁴⁹ On August 14, 2013, Cameroon gained full control over the Bakassi Peninsula.⁵⁰

Methods

This paper adopts the qualitative research method in terms of research design. In terms of data collection, this paper makes use of primary and secondary data about the Bakassi issue ranging from books, official reports, journal articles, online magazines, newspapers, dissertations and theses, and among others. This research also hinges on interviews during two field research undertakings from March to May 2019 and February to April 2021 in Bamusso, Isangele and Idabato subdivisions in the Bakassi region. The reason why these areas were chosen is because Nigerian indigenes dominate these areas. Here, data was gathered using semi-structured, qualitative interviews held at these different areas. The snowball and purposive samplings were used to identify 44 research subjects, of whom approximately were 10 administrators, 6 community leaders, 11 fishermen, and 18 civilians. To ensure a safe and ethical research, ethical clearance was gotten from the Department of History, University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon. In order to safeguard respondents and maintain the confidentiality of the responses, we agreed that original names should be replaced with initials. Some participants when asked about issues concerning their views on Cameroon's implementation of the Green Tree Agreement (GTA) in the area, some were slightly willing, and unwilling to respond for fear of the unknown despite the

⁴⁸ Kamto, "The Bakassi Affair: Cameroon's Challenge for Peace": 17.

⁴⁹ Baye, "Implications of the Bakassi conflict resolution for Cameroon":9-34.: Kamto, "The Bakassi Affair: Cameroon's Challenge for Peace":13-19.

⁵⁰ Amin, "Cameroon's Relations toward Nigeria: A foreign Policy of Pragmatism": 14.

presentation of the ethical clearance. In order to meander through this limitation, the researcher also used the observation technique which entails the systematic recording of observable phenomenon or behaviour in a natural setting.⁵¹ Consequently, keen observations were made and any issue relating to any reaction made by the inhabitants on any implemented aspect of the GTA.

To analyse the data obtained, this paper uses content and thematic analyses. After having analysed the data obtained, the thematic approach was employed. The thematic approach entails identifying, analysing and reporting patterns(themes) within the data.⁵² Some aspects of how the inhabitants saw Cameroon's implementation of the GTA right from 2006 were decoded. This was in a bid to understand their past views, and to compare with their current views. The researcher uses these successive steps in bringing out the views of the Bakassi inhabitants towards the implementation of the GTA: (1) the researcher identified common threats or opportunities to the wellbeing of the Bakassi inhabitants; (2) the researcher groups these threats or opportunity into codes; (3) the researcher decodes these threats or opportunities into potential and actual themes of the people's views. From these steps, the researcher was able to accentuate, from a global perspective, the common or general views of the people. The researcher identified the following themes: (1) the level of infrastructural development in the Bakassi Peninsula; (2) the level of security in the peninsula; (3) interaction with Cameroon security forces; (4) high prevalence of environmental hazards in the peninsula. These themes are the most widely mentioned and anticipated aspects in the Bakassi Peninsula. The analysis from this data so far reveals that the Bakassi Peninsula even with the abundant natural resource has slow infrastructural development. It also reveals that the people feel more secure from piracy that had plagued the area for years. It also reveals that

⁵¹ Henryk Dźwigoł, and Piotr Barosz. "Observation as a research method in social science." *Zeszyty Naukowe. Organizacja i Zarządzanie/Politechnika Śląska* 148 (2020): 141-149.

⁵² Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, and Paul Weate "Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research," in *Routledge Handbook of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, ed. Smith, B and Sparkes, A. C (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016): 191-205.

environmental problems are a big threat to the livelihood of the inhabitants.

To ensure the trustworthiness and accuracy of the data acquired, this paper adopts the triangulation technique, which is a method used to increase the credibility and validity of research findings.⁵³ More precisely, this paper uses the data triangulation technique which, includes matters such as period of time, space, and people; the investigator triangulation technique which includes the use of several researchers of a study, and the methodological triangulation technique which promotes the use of several data collection methods such as interviews and observations.⁵⁴ In applying the aforementioned technique, some aspects of the implementation of the GTA by Cameroon following its immediate signing like infrastructural development, security activities, and administrative activities were collected. Also, information gotten from interviews were compared with one another so as to deduce common threats or opportunities following the implementation of the GTA. This information was then verified among one or two other information, specifically official reports, newspapers and online magazines. Finally, we carefully and unbiasedly recorded the information from observations as they occurred, ensuring we did not omit any relevant aspects. We then properly analysed these raw observations and fitted them into the themes that best suited them. All these information when put and verified/compared together, revealed a more than proportionate trustworthiness and accuracy to the main thrust of this paper which is to showcase the views of the Bakassi Inhabitants towards Cameroon's implementation of the Green Tree Agreement.

Results and Discussions

The interviews, observations, and analyses of some secondary data was geared towards examining how Cameroon has implemented Annex II, Article 5 of the GTA. It states, "At the end of the special transitional regime, Cameroon shall fully exercise its rights of

⁵³ Helen Noble and Robert Heale., "Triangulation in Research, with examples", *Evidence-Based Nursing*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2019): 67-68.

⁵⁴ Denzin, N.K, *Sociological Methods: A Sourcebook* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017).

sovereignty over the Zone (Bakassi). How was Cameroon to exercise her full rights over Bakassi? Such sovereign rights mean that Cameroon was first to take the area as her responsibilities, and as her responsibilities, she must intervene in all aspect of the zone's life. In fact, the influence of Cameroon has to be felt in the social, political, economic and cultural perspective in the region. The government of Cameroon according to the International Law, and particularly according to the GTA , has as duty to protect, provide and to fulfil for Bakassi Peninsula and its Inhabitants. The ownership, influence and control of a State over a territory is measured in the extent to which it fulfils the principle of protection, fulfilment, and provision. The following themes will attempt to analyse, through the Bakassi inhabitants' views, how the Cameroon government has implemented the GTA.

Level of Infrastructural Development

A run down infrastructural developmental projects being carried by the Cameroon government in her pursue to implement the GTA needs to be first examined. In 2008, to boost development in the Bakassi area, the Cameroon government created the Coordination and Follow-up Committee of Priority Projects to be realized in the Bakassi zone. Also in 2017, following a Prime Ministerial order, the Bakassi Development Program (BADEP) was created to facilitate speedily development projects in the Bakassi.⁵⁵ The Cameroon government also created programs that would support and modernise the fishery and livestock sector in the Bakassi Peninsula. So far, Cameroon has spent more than FCFA 40 billion to carry out infrastructural development in the once neglected Bakassi Peninsula. It is easy to find at least a primary or secondary school, vocational and technical schools, empowerment centres, Integrated Health Centres (IHC), modern periodic markets, and few good toilets. Roads linking major towns in Bakassi to other external towns have been improved and telecommunication especially in Isangele,

⁵⁵ Francis Belibi "Cameroun: BADEP - Une présence camerounaise à renforcer". All Africa (September 8, 2017).<https://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201709080507.html>

Bamusso, and Idabato have been improved.⁵⁶ Also, local Cameroon administrations in these subdivisions have also been carrying out developmental projects.⁵⁷

The views of the people towards the level of infrastructural development in Bakassi was twofold. Somewhere of the opinion that the government of Cameroon has done exceedingly much to develop the Bakassi Peninsula. They opined that the Bakassi which was once underdeveloped is not the same as the Bakassi today. In fact, they concluded that the Cameroon government has done a lot in the fields of health, education, transportation and communication.⁵⁸ This same school of thought opine that even with these infrastructural facilities, they are still very much underutilised and most of the Nigerian nationals living in the area would not want to develop the area because they consider Bakassi as temporal settlements.⁵⁹ Another school of thought held the belief that the Cameroonian government has made minimal or no efforts in the area. To them, the Bakassi Peninsula is still backward, and even with the presence of abundant natural resources, they still lack basic amenities. Even the present infrastructural facilities are either understaffed, expensive or incompetent to meet their basic needs.⁶⁰

From field observations, it is visible that the Bakassi of 20 years ago is not the same Bakassi of today. But a closer look at some of the infrastructure in the area revealed that most of these structures were constructed seven years ago, and new structures are rarely added. Moreover, the potential projects to be implemented in the region are not forthcoming due to administrative bottlenecks and corruption in the central and local administrations. Moreover, some

⁵⁶Emmanuel Kendemeh "Bakassi Projects worth CFAF 12 billion to be executed". The Cameroon Tribune, March 15, 2010. Pie, G.P O. "Post Conflict Construction of the Bakassi Peninsula: An Evaluation of Socioeconomic Development", *International Journal of Sustainable Development Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4(2022): 128-132. DOI: 10.11648/j.ijdsr.20220804.13

⁵⁷ Enowsoum Konrad "Cameroon's Post Conflict Policies in the Bakassi Peninsula: Winning the Peace" (Dissertation, University of Buea, Cameroon, 2018). Retrieved on 10/02/2023 from <https://www.grin.com/document/1309054>

⁵⁸ Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with WI, SJ, SE, between March-May 2019.

⁵⁹ Individual interviews with NC, BJ, NH, between March-May 2019.

⁶⁰ Individual interviews with ES, EB between March-May 2019.

projects which were started few years ago have been abandoned. Cameroon has not been able to fulfil wholly, her promises of improving the living conditions of the Bakassi inhabitants. There is little pace of socioeconomic development in the Bakassi Peninsula, irrespective of the fact that the area is the wealthiest region in Cameroon. Given the level of development in the area, the Cameroon government still has a significant amount of work ahead of it. Concerning the underutilisation of these infrastructures, it was observed that schools and hospitals, for example, were neglected because people preferred fishing than schooling, and also preferred traditional medicines than modern medicines. Even the few inhabitants who go for modern medication often buy them from clandestine or roadside vendors.

Level of Security

The security level back then in the Bakassi Peninsula was marred with a lot of uncertainties. The Bakassi border areas was a hub to all kinds of clandestine activities from smuggling, small arms proliferation, piracy and theft. At this time, there was no clear-cut ownership of the area, and it was difficult for the government of Cameroon to improve security in the area. Funteh corroborates this by saying that indigenes in both countries were able to evade gendarmes from Cameroon and police, customs, and immigration officers from Nigeria, given that they cooperated in their actions and were very familiar with the terrain.⁶¹ The Bakassi Peninsula is an important area in the Gulf of Guinea and most hydrocarbon exploitation occur there. Following the 2002 ICJ ruling, pirate attacks in the area increased. As much as 95 percent of Cameroon's oil comes from the peninsula, and attacks on commercial shipping and raids on government outposts have made the area increasingly lawless, threatening the region's exports of oil, natural gas, and bauxite. The insecurity in the villages and towns made the situation even more precarious. Mob justice, human trafficking and sacrifices,

⁶¹ Mark Funteh Bolak, "The Concept of Boundary and Indigenous Application in Africa: The Case of the Bakassi Boarder Lines of Cameroon and Nigeria":225-229.

theft, and arm robbery were common characteristics in these Bakassi towns and villages.⁶²

The Bakassi inhabitants seem to be appreciative of the level of security on the peninsula. According to respondents AC, NC, JE, SJ, AB and many others, piracy has been handled about 80% in the Bakassi zone by the BIRs, which has made navigation in the Idabato zone possible.⁶³ The Cameroon government has established police posts and military barracks in the area, which, according to them, have reduced clandestine movements and crime. On the issue of militancy, respondents like ME, OY, BU, NE, AA, and JI opined that the militants used to disturb their businesses, fishing, and travels for many years. They used to live in fear, and some even relocated back to Nigeria. But so far, according to them, what the Cameroon government has done to these evil people have made the area secure. They can now freely go about their business, fishing and traveling activities.⁶⁴ During field observations, it was possible to see police posts and gendarme posts comprising of 3 to 5 elements in all the villages in Bamusso, Idabato, and Isangele subdivisions. Also, in Idabato, there is the presence of a Cameroon Navy and Cameroon Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) camps, and port of entrance into Bakassi from Idenau, there is also a sophisticated BIR camp. With the presence of these BIR and Navy camps, piracy, smuggling, and small arm proliferation have greatly been reduced in the Bakassi area.

Interaction with Cameroon Security Forces

Before the signing of the GTA, it was generally alleged that the Bakassi inhabitants, especially Nigerian nationals, suffered from arbitrary arrest, rape, arson, torture and extra-judicial killings in the

⁶² Okon Edet *Bakassi Peninsula: The Untold Story of a People Betrayed* (Singapore: Partridge Publishing, 2015). Kpwa, S.A, "The Cameroon- Nigeria Bakassi Peace Process: The Workability of the ICJ's verdict and the Green Tree Accord, 2002-2018(Master's Dissertation, not published. University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon, 2019).

⁶³ Individual interviews with AC, NC, JE, SJ, AB between March-May 2019 and February- April 2021.

⁶⁴ Individual interviews with ME, OY, BU, NE, AA, and JI between February-April 2021.

hands of the Cameroonian soldiers and gendarmes.⁶⁵ It was also alleged that the people were molested either for failure to pay taxes, caught down trees or fishing. After the GTA was signed, many Nigerians fled for the fear of the unknown from Cameroon gendarmes because they alleged, that they were victimised whenever they went out fishing.⁶⁶ Those who stayed were also alleged to be harassed by Cameroon security agents on issues regarding citizenship, taxes, and fishing.⁶⁷ It was difficult to ascertain or confirm these allegations as most were refuted by the Cameroonian authorities. It should be noted here that most of these allegations were amplified by the Nigerian press.⁶⁸ The Nigerian press used an event oriented, bias and sentimental style of reporting the injustices done by Cameroon security forces and administrators on the inhabitants, and this set hate and disenfranchisement in the hearts and minds of the people.⁶⁹ With all this, it was alleged that they had little or no interaction with Cameroon security agents.

The views of the Bakassi inhabitants towards their interaction with Cameroon security forces seem to be two-fold. The was a school of thought that suggested that the Cameroon security elements and administrators still molest them. To them, the Cameroon police forces were not troublesome, but most of the molestation is being perpetrated by the Cameroon gendarmes. The Cameroon gendarmes according to them, were used by local and school administrators to reclaim taxes and school fees.⁷⁰ Inhabitants of the area most often use the gendarmes for personal vendettas, and these security forces usually exert unnecessary force before getting into the crux of the matter. The other school of thought opined that Cameroon security agents and administrators do not molest the

⁶⁵ Nwoko, "Post-Conflict Peace-Building in A Contested International Border: The Nigeria-Cameroon Border Conflict Settlement and Matters Arising":73-74.

⁶⁶ Aloysius Nyuymengka Ngalim "Post-Conflict Experiences of Resettled Bakassi Peninsula People, 2006-2016", *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2019): 105-123. doi: 10.18588/201905.00a060

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Amin, "Cameroon's Relations toward Nigeria: A Foreign Policy of Pragmatism":1-22.

⁶⁹ Tangko, "Human rights violations in the rich-oil Bakassi Peninsula": 1-19.

⁷⁰ Individual interviews with OG, EH, MA, JS between March-May, 2019 and February- April 2021.

people. To them, these men are simply exercising their duties, and most of the crimes committed in the towns and villages are being perpetrated by Nigerians.⁷¹ On the issue of tax collection, some opined that the inhabitants still believe that the peninsula is for Nigeria, and they sometimes have the impression that they should not pay taxes.⁷² They conclude that most of the inhabitants misconstrue the duties of the forces and administrators because they rely so much on naysayers and hear sayers.⁷³

From field observations, in all the major towns and villages in the Bakassi Peninsula, there are Nigerian Unions, and whenever there is an act of molestation, the victims will then report to the union president, who will in turn transmit the scenario to the Nigeria consulate in Buea. There seems to be a friendly or cordial relationship between the Cameroonian security forces and the Bakassi inhabitants, especially those of Nigerian descent. The Nigerians living in the area are troublesome and these security forces use friendly strategies and education to deal with them. Nigerians living in the Bakassi want to acquire Cameroonian citizenship but, at the same time, still want to be Nigerian. Reasons being that, if they get a Cameroonian citizenship, they will not pay for resident permits but also be called Nigerians. On the issue of taxes, the people are being educated through small forums as to the reason for the tax and why they have to pay it so that they will not be any disgruntlement. Also, from time to time, these local administrators would take one or two Nigerians who have never left the area to visit places like Idenau, Buea, and Douala. And on their return, they will give a positive impact about the payment of taxes.

High Prevalence of Environmental Hazards in the Peninsula

The Bakassi Peninsula is a hub for environmental decadence, making it very susceptible to environmental hazards. There are many oil exploiting companies in the Bakassi Peninsula, and this

⁷¹ Individual interviews with OG and LA between March-May, 2019 and February- April 2021.

⁷² Individual interviews with NC and AT between March-May, 2019 and February- April 2021.

⁷³ Individual interviews with OE and NR between February- April 2021.

has led to the rise heavy metals in soil, foodstuffs and water.⁷⁴ There is no clear-cut potable drinking water in the Bakassi Peninsula, and the people have resorted to buying bottled water for survival. Also, there is a high level of mangrove destruction in the area which has left the eco-system with enormous risks, notably the destruction of the biodiversity, water pollution and indiscriminate loss of aquatic life evident from the drop in fish population. It is evident that the estuaries are very sensitive to pollution, with poor hygiene and sanitation conditions of the communities leading to poor waste disposal, contaminating groundwater and further endangering the fish species in the sea.⁷⁵ The low-lying nature of the Bakassi Peninsula also makes it very susceptible to flooding with prolonged rainfall. As previously mentioned, rainfall in the Bakassi area ranges from 4000 mm to 7000 mm and lasts for nine months. The area has always been a victim of flooding, and environmentalists blamed the flooding not only on the weather but also on the destruction of mangrove forests - crucial to shoreline protection - by the area's growing population.⁷⁶

The views of the Bakassi Inhabitants on the affinity of the peninsula towards environmental hazards is multifaceted. Some blame the government of Cameroon of doing nothing, others blame multinational corporations, many others blame the incessant felling down of mangroves, and still others blame fellow inhabitants of bad fishing practices and habits. To the first view, the people blame the Cameroon government of no embankment efforts in the area to prevent flooding.⁷⁷ For the second view, multinational oil

⁷⁴ Abdourahimi, Saïdou, Wilson y. Fantong, Festus T. Aka, & Moïse G. Kwato Njock "Environmental Pollution by Metals in The Oil Bearing Bakassi Peninsula, Cameroon", *Carpathian Journal of Earth and Environmental Sciences*, Vol. 11, No. 2(2016):537.

⁷⁵ Kengah Geraldine "Experts Bent on Curbing Destruction of Bakassi Mangroves". Green Vision News, October 10, 2014. <https://www.greenvision.news/experts-bent-on-curbing-destruction-of-Bakassi-mangroves/>

⁷⁶ Elias Ntungwe Ngalame, "Floods disrupt development Cameroon's Bakassi Peninsula". The Prevention Web, August 4, 2014. <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/floods-disrupt-development-Cameroots-Bakassi-Peninsula>

⁷⁷ Individual interviews with CA, SE, DN, IO, between March-May 2019 and February- April 2021.

corporations through their oil exploitation activities pollute the area making fishing difficult and the impossibility to get drinking water. This can lead to water borne diseases, and with the understaffed medical facilities, an epidemic might be difficult to control.⁷⁸ For the third view, the indiscriminate cutting down of mangrove trees makes the area more and more susceptible to floods. The inhabitants use these mangroves as fuel wood since they can be used even when they are wet. Government efforts to stop this proves to be abortive.⁷⁹ For the last view, inhabitants especially fishermen decry the bad practices of other fishermen. They opined that some fishermen use chemicals to catch fish, and some even catch premature fish. These chemicals make the water polluted and other maritime wildlife to run to other non-contaminated waters.⁸⁰ From observations, it was noticed that when rainfalls are high, there is rampant surface runoff in these villages.

Conclusion

This paper so far, has showed case the perception or views of the Bakassi Inhabitants towards Cameroon's implementation of the GTA. This paper hinged on Article 5, Annex II, of the GTA which states that, "At the end of the special transitional regime, Cameroon shall fully exercise its rights of sovereignty over the Zone (Bakassi). The throwbacks of colonialism and the discovery of abundant natural resources and maritime wildlife in the area forced Cameroon to fight over the area. The problem was finally resolved by the ICJ ruling of October 10, 2002. There was a need for both countries to agree on common grounds to end these hostilities. Thus, on June 12, 2006, the GTA was signed between Cameroon and Nigeria, confirming the end of hostilities. It was then vested in Cameroon to take full control of the area. It was from this perspective that this paper examined the views of the inhabitants in Cameroon's implementation of the agreement- showing prove of taking full ownership of the zone. Through interviews, and confirmed by

⁷⁸ Individual interviews with NH, EH, MP, EE, between March-May 2019 and February- April 2021.

⁷⁹ Individual interviews with BJ, CE, and MM between March-May 2019 and February- April 2021.

⁸⁰ Individual interviews with EH and SL between March-May 2019 and February- April 2021.

observations, it was difficult that the issue of development, security, interaction with Cameroon officials, and environmental problems were the main stay of these inhabitants. To them, these are the four areas in which they could ascertain how far Cameroon has implemented the agreement.

This paper met some limitations, especially during interviews, in terms of language barriers. Most of the inhabitants speak a type of Creole English. This researcher understands this, and the interviews were recorded and then translated word for word as not to omit any vital information. Also, the willy-nilly nature of most inhabitants to engage into conversations concerning Cameroon's implementation of the agreement made the sample type to be very small. The researcher then used the observation technique to be able to understand common trends, views, and interactions. The implication of this paper is that it sets a dashboard for other scholars and researchers who want to carry out research like this. They will know where to start and might to just expand the sample type and case study areas. However, tension appears to be increasing in the peninsula, with residents questioning why, despite their wealth, they continue to live in poverty and underdevelopment. The findings so far revealed that in terms of development and environmental protection, there is little, or nothing being done by the Cameroon government. In terms of security and interaction with officials, the government of Cameroon has done a lot. It is against these backdrops that this paper proffers that the government should introduce rigorous developmental projects and embark on tackling environmental problems in the Bakassi. This will go a long way to prevent future irredentist tendencies, leading to peace and tranquillity.