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Oil and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: A Case of Study the Niger Delta

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ABSTRACT The centrality of oil in the Nigerian political economy is well established. The paper examines the implications of oil 'exploitation' for the possibility of sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper also explicates the contradictory tendencies of wealth and poverty in Nigeria despite her massive oil resources. It further conceptualizes the class contradictions of the Nigerian state, with particular emphasis on the commonalities of interest between the domestic ruling class and foreign capital. It posits that the political economy engendered by oil is such that renders the nation's rural majority population irrelevant to the task of capitalist accumulation by the ruling class, hence their continuous neglect and suppression. The lack of concern for the development of the instruments of labour by the ruling class is equally problematized against the non-entrepreneurial basis of capital accumulation in the country. The issue of development may its sustainability the paper argues is essentially the issue of power. Given a social relation of production at the apex of which the international imperialist capital and their local collaborators preside, the disempowerment, alienation, impoverishment of the ordinary people across spatial boundaries is an expected outcome. To this end, the paper calls for a multinational class action amongst all the oppressed people of Nigeria irrespective of ethnic affinities. The paper did not have any illusion that this would be an easy task. The first assignment is to provoke the consciousness of uniform social action amongst the people of Nigeria in general and Niger Delta in particular.