

# Outbreak of one of the conflicts in africa history essay



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Africa from time immemorial has experienced numerous forms of conflicts ranging from ethnic confrontations to interstate wars. The idea of war still plays a veritable role in the post colonial Africa as well as in the international politics. An understanding of the situation in Africa has proved that most of these wars have been fought on the African soils and have had devastating effects on the continent and the world at large. Examples of these wars include Rwanda, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast and just to name a few. These wars have greatly affected the African continent especially the countries involved as it has reduced the economies of these countries to nothing but a shadow on their own. It is obvious that most of these wars are taken place but in the developing countries and therefore leaves one with the question, whether the wars can be seen as a consequence of poverty or is poverty the consequence of war? To my opinion, war is not a solution to conflict looking at the aftermath of the war, the vulnerabilities of the women and children, the political and economic imbalance of the states. In this light, the international community should seek ways of avoiding the outbreak of such wars especially in the developing countries.

In this paper, I will analyzed the outbreak of one of the conflict in Africa which could have escalated to a full scale military conflict between two countries, had it not been settled in a unique showcase of conflict management by the UN. The conflict in question is the Cameroon vs. Nigeria claim of sovereignty over the potentially oil rich Bakassi peninsula, which almost trigger to an interstates war and sends fear and uncertainty across the two nations. B. G. Ramcharan describes the role played by the former UN

Secretary General, Kofi Annan in maintaining peace between the Republic of Cameroon and the Federal Republic of Nigeria and in settling the dispute over the Bakassi peninsula," another fascinating story of conflict prevention at work in practice". The signing of the Green Tree Agreement by both countries enabled both countries to adhere to the ruling passed by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), officially put to an end to the Nigeria occupation of the peninsula and finally led to the peaceful handover of the occupied areas by the Nigeria military to Cameroon. President Obasanjo Olusegun of Nigeria clearly described the way the conflict was handled in the following words:

Our agreement today is a great achievement of conflict prevention, which practically reflects its cost-effectiveness when compared to the alternative of conflict resolution... its significance, therefore, goes much beyond Nigeria and Cameroon. It should represent a model for the resolution of similar conflicts in Africa, and I dare say, to the world at large.

For most conflicts especially in Africa, has been as a result of natural resources and the politics play by the international community for their own interest which more often has fuel the violent conflicts. I will seek to analyze in this paper the historical background of the contested area leading to the outbreak of hostilities. It will be follow suit with the underlying causes of the conflicts in part 4 and part five will shed more lights on how the conflict was resolved at the level of the ICJ and managed at the UN following the implementation of the famous Green-Tree Accord signed by both countries. While part six will emphasize on the conclusion with the way forward of

ensuring that both countries respect the terms of the green-Tree Agreement and the unique showcase of conflict management and resolution achieved.

## **2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Bakassi peninsula is an island located along the eastern end of the Gulf of Guinea between latitudes 8°20' and 9°08'E. The area is greatly made up of a low-lying, mangrove and swampy area with a population of approximately 150, 000 to 300, 000 inhabitants, as of 2005. The island is highly inhabited with the indigenous people of the Efik tribe, which they claimed to belong to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The peninsula is a veritable ground for fishing activities and other maritime wildlife activities, for the simple fact that two great ocean currents meet here that is the cold Benguela Current and the warm Guinea Current, has really made it possible for fishing activities to be the livelihood of the inhabitants.

The historical background of the peninsula goes back to the colonial period after the arrival of the European colonial master to Nigeria in the middle of the 19th Century, the King of the Old Calabar kingdom entered into a treaty of Protection with the Queen of England on September 10, 1884. The territory covering this region was at this time under the control of the King of the Old Calabar Kingdom. So in signing this treaty, it means he has officially ceded the territory to the British as a protectorate. In this respect, Britain was free to carry out any activity and equally exercised whatever she deems fit in the territory.

The claim of sovereignty of the Bakassi peninsula is one of the numerous conflicts in Africa concerning border disputes. This however, should be in

some extent put on the shoulders of the former colonial masters who partitioned Africa without taking into considerations of the ethnic groupings, geography and demography of the area, history, language and socio-cultural affiliations of the people. This has really hampered the integrity and sovereignty of most countries in Africa, as most often people from the same ethnic grouping happen to found themselves on two different colonial territories and governed by different colonial powers.

The historical background of the Bakassi peninsula can be traced back during the era of colonialism. The Germans were the first colonial master to colonized Cameroon not until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, which saw the defeat of the Germans by the French and English in Cameroon. Before the outbreak of the First World War, the European powers having colonial territories were largely interested in securing their interests instead of the colonial people they claimed they were civilizing. A country like Germany were only interested in securing for itself the vast territorial waters in order to keep the huge amount of shrimps and other maritime wildlife found in this water for herself. In order to avoid conflict of interest amongst the colonial powers, Germany enter into an agreement with the British who were at this time the colonial master of Nigeria, limiting Britain's expansion to the east, while Britain on the other hand required an undisturbed and free sea passage to Calabar, which was an important commercial seaport in eastern Nigeria. This agreement was later code name the Anglo - German Agreement of 1913, which clearly defined the exact demarcation of the borders between Cameroon and Nigeria. The first part of the treaty entitled: " The Settlement of the Frontier between Cameroon and

Nigeria, from Yola to the Sea," clearly situate the territory of Bakassi under the jurisdiction of the Germans. The second part entitled: " The Regulation of Navigation on the Cross River," placed the " navigable portion" of the offshore border of the Bakassi peninsula to Britain. Article 21 of the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913, which stipulates the exact position of the border:

From the centre of the navigable channel on a line joining Bakassi Point and King Point, the boundary shall follow the centre of the navigable channel of the Akwayafe River as far as the 3-mile limit of territorial jurisdiction. For the purpose of defining this boundary, the navigable channel of the Akwayafe River shall be considered to lie wholly to the east of the navigable channel of the Cross and Calabar Rivers.

This however, proves that from 1913, after the signing of the Anglo-German Treaty and onwards, British and German maps clearly show the Bakassi peninsula in Cameroon.

Following the dramatic twist of event which saw the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the French and the English decided to extend the war in German colonial territories in Africa, aimed at fighting the Germans in their African colonial territories. At the end of the war, Germany lost all her colonies in Africa including Cameroon to the allied powers. Cameroon was ruled as a mandated territory under the League of Nations and later partitioned in 1919, into two territories among the British and French. The French took 4/5 of the territory called French Cameroons and the British get 1/5 of the territory called British Cameroons. The Franco-British Agreement of July 1919, placed the territory of Bakassi and the rest of " British

Cameroons" under the mandate of Britain. The British introduced the system of indirect rule in their territory of British Cameroons as an integral part of Nigeria with respect to the borders agreements laid down in 1913. In 1931, a further agreement between both powers was signed to further codify the treaty of 1919.

The two Cameroons that is French and English Cameroons were ruled as a mandated territory by France and Britain till the outbreak of the Second World War. With the collapse of the League of Nations and the subsequent end of the Second World War, the mandated territories of the British Cameroons and French Cameroons were placed under the United Nations Organization which succeeded the League of Nations as Trust Territories. Worthy of note here is that the agreement creating these Trusteeship territories re-ratified the Anglo-German treaties of 1913 demarcating the borders between Cameroon and Nigeria. Again maps produced during this period placed Bakassi under the sovereignty of Cameroon.

It should be noted here, that the British Cameroons was divided into two parts namely British Northern and British Southern Cameroons respectively, with Bakassi falling under the competence of British Southern Cameroons. In the advent for the fight for independence in the late 1950s across Africa, tensions have grown in the territory of British Cameroons. In the light of this growing tensions for independence, the United Nations requested Britain to carry out a plebiscite in the territories under her jurisdiction. British Northern Cameroon and British Southern Cameroon were to exercise their rights and willingness as to which country they would like to join and become

independent. A plebiscite was held in British Northern Cameroons as " Do <https://assignbuster.com/outbreak-of-one-of-the-conflicts-in-africa-history-essay/>

you wish to attained independence by joining the Federal Republic of Nigeria or by joining the Republic of Cameroon". The outcome of the result of the plebiscite was that British Northern Cameroons voted to achieve independence by joining the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The events of the political parties and their divided opinions made the plebiscite to be postponed in British Southern Cameroons. It was only on February 11th, 1961, that British Southern Cameroons voted to join the already independent Republic of Cameroon (former French Cameroons). It should also be noted here that at the point of independence, Bakassi was a territory under the jurisdiction of Cameroon. This can be seen from the fact that Bakassi itself has 21 polling stations and 73% of the population voted to become independent by joining the Republic of Cameroon. So there is no gainsaying that Bakassi was and remain a territory in Cameroon.

The Bakassi peninsula is an area that was of no interest to the two nations, as the territory has been long forgotten and was not an issue looking back at the afore-mentioned paragraphs. It became a centre point of focus after the alleged discovery of oil by some foreign experts. As a result of the suspicion that Bakassi have a huge oil reserve, Nigeria was the first to claim sovereignty of the peninsula and immediately deploy her military in the territory to mark her presence and ownership. This dramatic twist of event gave way for the look back of the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913, which clearly defines and demarcates the maritime borders of the two countries and which both countries accepted it. In the wake of this post independent period, both countries sought way of regulating the colonial agreements of 1913, signed by the colonial powers. Leaders of both countries exchanges



visits as can be seen in April 1971, the Nigeria Head of State, General Gowon accompanied with his collaborators visited Cameroon and meet with his Cameroonian counterpart Amadou Ahidjo, in the capital city Yaoundé, to discuss the issue. The outcome of this meeting was the signing of the "Coker-Ngo" Line delimiting the "navigable portion" offshore border of the two countries, thereby reaffirming the 1913 agreement.

Both Heads of States were very satisfied with the outcome of the meeting not only after General Gowon of Nigeria, hearing the advices from his advisers, reverse the decision arrived at the meeting. This trigger a second meeting as General Gowon again paid a second visit to the President Ahidjo of Cameroon at Maroua city in July 1975, in order to correct the wrongs of the Coker-Ngo Line referred in the 1913 agreement. Worthy of note here is that at this point in time, the sovereignty of Bakassi was not the issue, as the meetings were out to understand the colonial borders.

Gowon was overthrown shortly after his visit to Cameroon in a military coup in July 1975, General Murtala Muhammed was the new Head of State of Nigeria and he was very strategic. In order to have the support of the Nigeria bulk population, he convinced them to believe that General Gowon has given Bakassi to Cameroon as a compensation for the assistance Cameroon played in the Nigeria Civil War. He goes further to reject the authenticity of the 1971 and 1975 agreements between Gowon and Ahidjo that it has not be ratified by the military council. He too was killed in a military coup just a year after and was replaced by General Olusegun Obasanjo. What a coincidence here that President Obasanjo was Nigeria Head of state during this period and he still re-emerges again as president when hostilities break out between the <https://assignbuster.com/outbreak-of-one-of-the-conflicts-in-africa-history-essay/>

two countries and help to brokered peace by ensuring that Nigeria police and soldiers withdraw from the territory in accordance with the Green-Tree Agreement of 2006.

### **3. THE EMERGENCE OF HOSTILITIES**

As earlier discuss above, the obvious reasons for most violent conflict have been natural resources conflict, territorial and ethnicity, and political and economic. The case of the Bakassi conflict was as a result of the colonial legacy left behind by the colonial powers without taking consideration of the indigenous population. As also said above the Bakassi peninsula came into the lime line after the alleged discovery of huge volume of oil reserves by some Chinese experts. Cameroon and Nigeria share a 1600km long border running from Lake Chad in the north down to Bakassi in the south and a maritime boundary meandering into the Gulf of Guinea. It is worth noted here that with all the different borders that Cameroon share with Nigeria, it is only the Bakassi peninsula which has spark tension. This can be seen as a result of the oil discovery in that area and the water which was a veritable ground for fishing.

During the 70s, minor tensions have been building up in the claim of ownership of the territory. Clashes took place where some human lives were lost and on May 16, 1981, the first major form of direct violence occur when the Cameroon National Radio announced that three Nigeria patrol boats have violated and entered the Cameroon territorial waters in Bakassi up to Rio del Rey, and open fire on the Cameroon army. This act was widely condemned in Cameroon and in retaliation; five Nigerian soldiers were killed by the Cameroonian soldiers. This incident brought a lot of suspicion

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between the two countries as both countries were accusing the other for causing the incident. While Cameroon on their part accused Nigeria that they were exploiting the matter politically by blaming Cameroon for the incident, Nigeria on their part, insisted that the incident took place along the Akwayafe River. The Nigeria claimed that the incident took place at the Akwayafe River means that they have not acknowledge the maritime border set down at the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913, thus a gross violation. So Cameroon immediately apologizes for the deaths of those five soldiers and promised to pay reparations. This matter was resolved diplomatically and put to rest. But it has triggered the question of sovereignty over the territory.

Things take a dramatic turn in the advent of multi party politics in Cameroon in the 1990s. Anglophone Cameroonians started feeling of been marginalized and under-developed. They started asking for their own autonomy and possible Bakassi been a territory under the English speaking part of Cameroon was a big concern to the government of Cameroon. So there was need to consolidate the entire sovereignty of the territory under Cameroon administration.

In order to fight this Anglophone antagonism in Cameroon, the government became so hard on the Anglophones especially the Nigerians who have been living in the Anglophone communities for decades doing businesses. Through intimidation and high taxes, many Nigeria traders were forced to leave Cameroon. But the most deliberate incident that fully lead to the occupation of the territory and sends fear of an impending military conflict between the two countries occur in February 1994. At this point in time, Nigeria had deployed 1000 soldiers to Bakassi on the pretext that they were out to <https://assignbuster.com/outbreak-of-one-of-the-conflicts-in-africa-history-essay/>

protect the Nigerian Traders and fishermen against the continuous Cameroonian Gendarmerie harassment. The deployment of Nigerian troops was not welcome by Cameroon and it eventually break out to an open fire from both sides. It led to many casualties and deaths on civilian population and soldiers from both countries. Cameroon has lost closed to 40 soldiers and many of its soldiers have been taken as prisoners of war by Nigeria. It was this bloody incident that prompted Cameroon to seize the ICJ for adjudication. A complaint was filed on March 29, 1994 to the ICJ. Whether due to a sense of premonition of defeat or due to the fact that many Nigerians were aware of the Bakassi lie, the Nigeria government criticizes the government of Cameroon for taking the matter to the UN. The pointed out that they would have prefer the matter be settled through a bilateral negotiations. They go as far as challenging the competence of the ICJ for lack of jurisdiction in handling the matter.

While the matter was pending at the ICJ, fighting was still going on between the two countries. The Nigerian government again deploys another 1000 troops in February 1996. This last deployment of soldiers was the last major incident that shows sign of an impending full scale military war. The Nigerian soldiers invaded and occupied the territory of Bakassi despite the fact that the case was pending at the ICJ. Record holds it that by May 1996, more than 50 Nigerian soldiers had lost their lives and several others taken as prisoners of war according to diplomatic sources. One of the most leading African magazines, " The Jeune Afrique has analyzed the situation by saying that the prerequisite for a major military conflict were all present in the case of Bakassi. It went further to analyze the strategic economic importance of the

territory to both countries and as a pivotal factor for the cause of the conflict. As tensions continued to grow on the ground with the military presence of both countries in the territory, the government of Cameroon called on the ICJ to institute measures to halt down the fighting. The ICJ immediately asked both countries to stop the fighting while waiting for the final ruling on the matter. But that notwithstanding, both countries still maintain the presence of their military believing that it might work in their favor for the rightful owner of the territory.

## **4. THE CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT**

The claim of sovereignty over the peninsula between the Republic of Cameroon and the Federal Republic of Nigeria is one the several violent conflicts that have plagued Africa for a very longtime as I mentioned in the preceding chapters. It was one of an interstate state war that could have escalated to a full blown war if not of the high sense of responsibilities on the parts of the UN on one hand and the countries concern on the other hand. The causes of the conflict are discussed below.

### **4. 1. Economic factors**

It is evident that economic factors might have stemmed up the conflict over the ownership of the territory. If we go back to the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913, we can see that both countries were more or less not interested in the area. Nigeria under British rule have surrender the area to the Germans who were at that time ruling Cameroon. British Nigeria ceded this territory to the German in 1913, and even after independence, Nigeria still did not made any claim to the territory. Cameroon on her part, knew and sees the peninsula as its territory but failed to carry out any development in the area. The <https://assignbuster.com/outbreak-of-one-of-the-conflicts-in-africa-history-essay/>

government of Cameroon did not put up any administrative structure in the area to indicate that they ruled the place. They equally left the place at the mercy of the dominant Nigerian indigenous population to carry out their trading and fishing activities along the peninsula with little or no control except the arbitrary tax collection from the people by the authorities of Cameroon.

This point is to bring out the picture of the peninsula at that time, but things take a dramatic turn when during the late 70s and 80s, there was an alleged discovery of huge volume of oil reserves around the Rio del Rey area of the peninsula. A good number of foreign multi-national companies have carried out surveys in the peninsula and came out with the reports that the territory may indeed be a treasure of immeasurable economic value.

The discovery of oil reserves was not the only determinant economic factor that almost plunged both countries to a war. The fact that Bakassi peninsula is situated between two great oceans i. e. the cold Benguela current and the warm Guinea current, makes it a veritable ground for fishing. It also harbors a wide variety of fishes and other maritime wildlife creatures. According to the internet encyclopedia, the Wikipedia, the fertility of the Bakassi peninsula as a fishing ground is "comparable only to Newfoundland in North America and Scandinavia in Western Europe. It was as a result of these economic benefits i. e. the prospect of potential oil reserves and securing the fishing rights, that the Germans were so desperate on keeping the peninsula to themselves during the 1913 agreement.

It would not be a gainsaying that economic factors attracted the attention of both countries to claim sovereignty of the peninsula, judging from the discovery of oil reserves and the sale of fishing rights.

## **4. 2. Political reasons**

The Cameroon and Nigeria claim of sovereignty over Bakassi also has a political manoeuvres, i. e. political reasons also contributed to the conflict. It is believed that the political leaders of both countries wanted to use Bakassi as a means to divert public opinion from their respective home countries. This is evident of the fact that there was growing unpopularity of the leaders of both countries. They wanted to shift the public attention to Bakassi so that their citizens will forget about their worries at home when engaged in a full scale war. Both governments have failed to address the economic problems, unemployment, bad governance, bribery and corruption, lack of social services and the bad Human Rights records they hold.

Cameroon under President Amadou Ahidjo's human rights records was not a good one as he was notorious for the violation of human rights during his time as president. Examples of his bad Human Rights violation is the killing of more than 25, 000 people during the UPC revolt in the 1960s as reported by Albert Mukong and Mongo Beti. Then came President Paul Biya who succeeded Ahidjo in 1982 and is still on seat. Under Biya, the economy has faced a severe economic crisis in the mid 80s that saw the currency been devalued. The salaries of normal civil servants was reduced to about 70% while those of the army was increase, and that is why the army is so loyal to the president and do not plan to overthrow him in a coup.

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On the part of Nigeria, the situation was not too different from Cameroon, but the prominent problem that Nigeria was undergoing before the return to civilian rule was the successive military coups that has seen their governments from time to time been toppled. In fact, Nigeria holds world's record for the highest number of military coups and counter coup attempts. These coups have led to the deaths of thousands of civilians and soldiers. Looking at her human rights records, nearly all the successive governments have had a very bad human rights record. They are noted for killing their political opponents, an example is the assassination of the minority leader Ken Saro Wiwa and nine others in November 1995. The unreasonable imprisonment of acclaimed winner of the presidential election of 1992 Moshood Abiola and the events leading to his death while in prison still remain a fact to be told. Even the brutal murder of Abiola's wife made the government unpopular.

It very evident from the above mentioned paragraphs that both Cameroon and Nigeria had nothing to ride home with because the governments of both countries were facing internal and severe ethnic nationalism and economic fallout. They believe that diverting the people's mind into an external crisis will work in their favors. They made their citizens to believe that Bakassi was worth fighting for i. e. to defend their fatherland.

### **4. 3. National and human securities**

Security issues have been very vital and play an important role in the peninsula, as such were one of the causes of the claim of sovereignty over Bakassi. This is true to the fact that during 1884, the Chief of Old Calabar signed a " Treaty of Protection" ceding the territory (Bakassi) to the Britain. <https://assignbuster.com/outbreak-of-one-of-the-conflicts-in-africa-history-essay/>



Britain thereafter ceded the territory during the 1913 Treaty to German Kamerun in order to secure a safe passage to the port of Calabar and also reassuring the Germans that she will not made any further advancements to the east.

Security in the wider sense could so also be seen in the domain of national security and human security. The former been the security of the state's sovereignty and the latter been the security of the citizens. So in this light, both countries were fast to advance security reasons for the military occupation of the peninsula. Nigeria lay claims that she invaded Bakassi to protect her citizens who were doing business and carry out fishing activities in the area against the continuous harassment from the Cameroonian forces, while Cameroon on her part, claimed that the obvious reason was to protect the territorial integrity of the state as she claims Nigeria has violated its sovereignty and posed a threat to her national security.

#### **4. 4. Natural resources**

Natural resources have been the cause of several violent conflicts in the developing countries. The question is can " natural resources be seen as a curse or a blessing". This is a territory which was out of the discussion tables of both country, but soon became a bone of contention to the countries immediately after the discovery of oil reserves or " black gold" as is commonly refer to in Africa. Many oppressive regimes will want to be in full control of the natural resources. For the fact that another border region which is the Lake Chad between Cameroon and Nigeria is gradually disappearing because of over used by the neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Nigeria, DR Congo, Tchad and Equatorial Guinea. With the <https://assignbuster.com/outbreak-of-one-of-the-conflicts-in-africa-history-essay/>

assurance that the Bakassi peninsula is blessed with natural resources such as oil and fishes, both countries divert their attention there claiming sovereignty.

#### 4. 5. Territorial integrity

The territorial integrity of the peninsula also plays a very important role for both countries as they believed it was the responsibility of the state to protect the sovereignty of its territory against any form of external threat from its neighbors. So we can see here that the Bakassi conflict was an interstates military conflict aim at protecting the sovereignty of the territory as both countries claimed. The government of Cameroon was more than ever ready to defend and protect the sovereignty of the Bakassi people against an impending military occupation from Nigeria. None of the two countries was ready to let go off the territory, as Nigeria on her part, was sending a warning threat that they are very much ready to protect Nigeria citizens leaving in the area from arbitrarily harassment from the Cameroon Gendarmes and as such protecting the sovereignty of the territory.

#### **4. 6. Socio-cultural aspects**

The territory under question was largely inhabited by the Efik indigenous people who see themselves as belonging to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. They made up about 90% of the population and would not understand why they should be forced to be governed by Cameroon in case the ruling of the Hague was in favor of Cameroon. This is a territory that has been long forgotten by the government of Cameroon with no social structure put in place to make it look like a Cameroon territory. Nigeria on their part has built

some few schools in the area and putting up some structures to give life to her citizens leaving in the area. Nigeria used her large population advantage to claim sovereignty of the territory, though the government of Cameroon accuses the Nigeria government that they took advantage of their large home population and thereby transfer so many Nigerians to live in the Bakassi peninsula, so that it will give them an upper hand in claiming sovereignty of the territory.

It can also be justified here that the bulk of the Bakassi population who claimed to be of Nigeria origin, were not willing to lose their territory to Cameroon and so urges the Nigeria government to go to war if it needs arise. Culturally speaking, we can also see that the colonial demarcations of the borders done a great deal to the people, as we can find the Efik people on the side of Nigeria speaking the same language with the Akwaya people in Cameroon. These two tribes have the same cultures, traditional rites and traditional attires during festivities. It cannot be deny here that peoples of the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon have similar cultures with the peoples of Benue, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Taraba states of Nigeria. So it is obvious that Nigeria based her claim of sovereignty over the territory was as a result of their large population in the area.

## **5. HOW THE CONFLICT WAS RESOLVED AND MANAGED**

When Nigerian troops violated the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913, by invading the territory of Rio del Rey in May 16, 1961, they claimed five of their soldiers were killed by the Cameroon soldiers. So in respond, the Shehu Shagari the president of Nigeria made it clear that the Nigerian soldiers were

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not on the Rio del Rey territory but on the Akwayafe territory and as such demanded an apology from Cameroon for the death soldiers. It can be seen here that both countries resorted to diplomatic means to queue down the growing tensions and somehow the conflict was managed. The government of Cameroon made an official apology on July 1981, and promised to pay reparations to Nigeria. This brought the misunderstanding to an end. But worth noting here, is the fact that Nigeria claimed their soldiers were on the Akwayafe river but not on the Rio del Rey river, meaning they indirectly acknowledged and accept the colonial maritime borders delineated by the 1913 Treaty.

This sought of management and resolution of