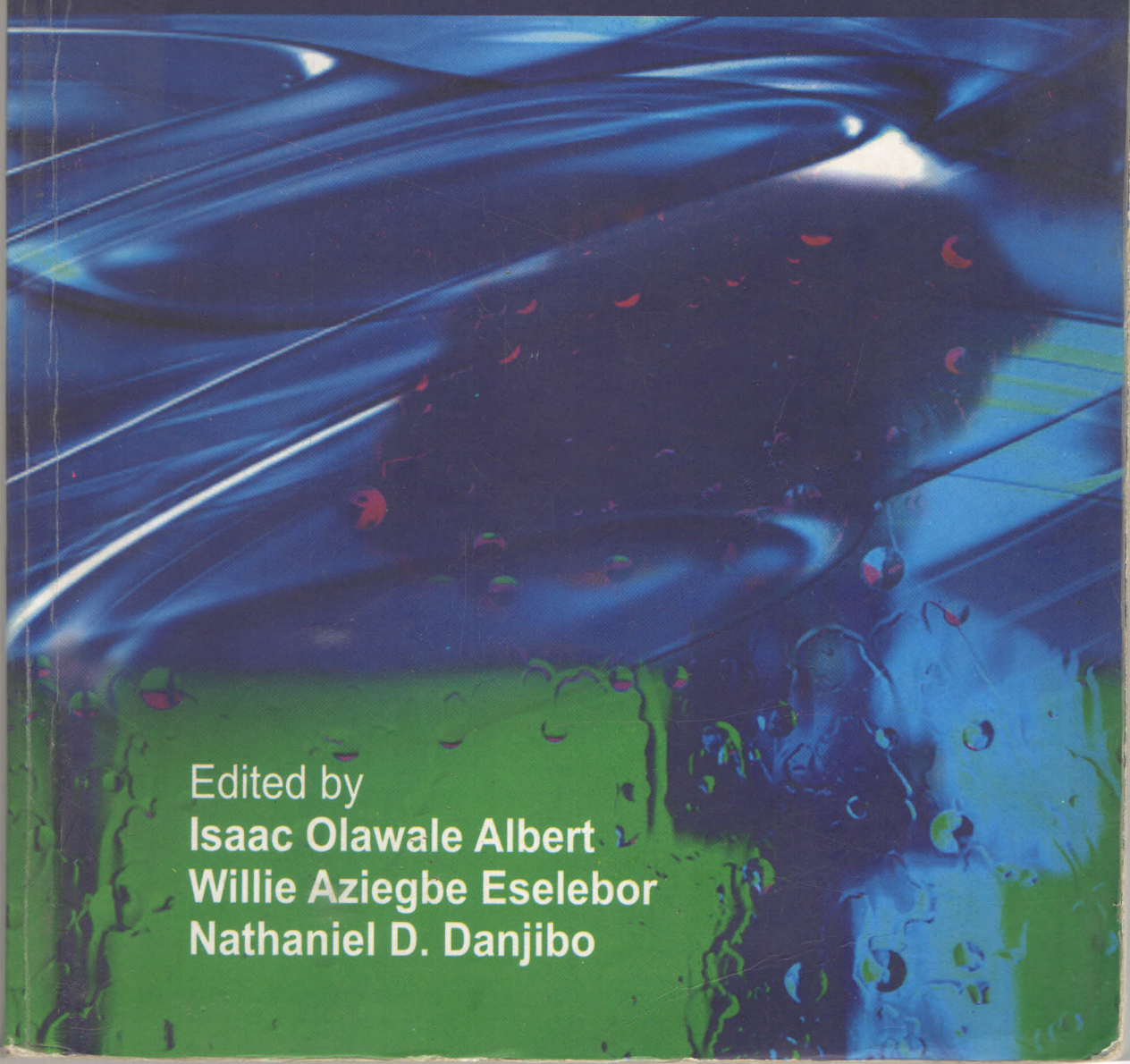


Peace, Security and Development in Nigeria



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The State and the Management of Jos Crisis

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20

INTRODUCTION

One of the most challenging tasks confronting the Nigerian state since independence has been the functional management of plurality. Rather than cooperating, the over 300 ethnic-nationalities in Nigeria have found themselves in unhealthy competition and rivalry for most of the country's post-independence life. The relationship of the disparate ethnic nationalities with the state and amongst themselves brings to fore the explanation of rivalry and competitors by Barash and Webel (2002). Rivalry is a Latin word (*rivus*) meaning river or stream. Literally, "rivals were those who relied on a common stream; inversely, competitors describe those who attempt to obtain something that is limited in supply such as water, food, mates or status" (Barash and Webel 2002:26). In the context of Nigeria, it is evident that the diverse ethnic nationalities rely on the state and hence have continually competed to outdo themselves in laying claims to the state and its resources. Albert (2001) puts it more succinctly by averring that once people are not cooperating, it follows that they are in conflict which may be latent or manifest.

Empirically, the relationship amongst the ethnic nationalities that constitute Nigeria has weighed more on competition than cooperation

in the bid by each ethnic-nationality to have the most of the resources and the highest of the status. This has produced a high degree of animosity amongst the ethnic nationalities which often calls to test the ability of the leadership of the country at any point in time to constructively and positively manage plurality especially in the context of ethnicity and religion.

Adebanwi and Obadare (2010) lament the negative effects of the actualities of Africa's biggest and most populous democracy since independence on its potentialities of being the true giant of Africa it pretends to be. These actualities or realities must have informed Eghosa Osaghae's description of Nigeria as a crippled giant decades after independence. One in the array of subversive actualities that inhibit the realisation of the potentialities of Nigeria is the frequent violent confrontations amongst the ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria. Adebanwi and Obadare (2010:4) based on John Paden's classic work reveal that since independence, Nigerians and the leaders of the fractious groups and emergent political parties have been in constant struggle to gain leverage over and above one another. The inchoate nature of the Nigerian project could be located in the pessimism expressed around the period of independence by some of its prominent nationalists. Obafemi Awolowo, foremost Yoruba and Premier of Nigeria's defunct Western region depicted Nigeria as *a mere geographical expression* while the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of Nigeria's Northern region described Nigeria as *the Mistake of 1914*. Adebanwi (2010: 101) quotes Nigeria's first Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as having observed on the floor of the colonial Legislative House in Lagos that:

Since 1914, the British government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite. Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country.

Perhaps, the aggregate of these views informs the description of Nigerians as "inmates" instead of being citizens (Soyinka 1996:109).

Nevertheless, Nigeria remains the "giant of the West" and how it falls or stands have far-reaching implications for the world (Jimenez and Laremont 2010:91). In falling or standing, this article identifies

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violent intra-state conflicts and how they are managed as central to the success or failure of the Nigerian project. After surviving a civil war that lasted over three years (St. Jorre 1971 and Banjo 2008), events since 1999 when the fourth republic commenced have resonated the failure of the Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconciliation or post-war peacebuilding efforts embarked upon after the civil war. Perhaps this informed the conceptualisation of Nigeria as a textbook case of a traumatised state based on unhealed wounds of the past amongst other issues (Albert 2004). Hence, Nigeria since 1999 when democratisation started typifies one of the places where democratisation and conflicts have seemingly developed a Siamese relationship. In many democratising African countries including Nigeria, indigene-settler conflicts that speak to the issue of citizenship remain a source of national, sub and regional insecurity. Mehler (2009) argues that this is so because democracy has the elites as its focus in many African countries thereby disconnecting vast majority of the citizens from the state. Brown (2003) observes that peacebuilding and democratisation have become imperative despite the seemingly torpedoing effects of democratisation on peacebuilding.

This brings to the fore, the convergence and divergence in the literature on democratisation and peacebuilding (Call and Cook 2003). In contrast to the position of the proponents of democratisation, peacebuilders are tolerant of the long stay and active involvement of international actors in the postconflict or post-military phase while the democratisers prefer a limited role for the international actors borne out of scepticism and suspicion of the intents of the international agencies (Rueschemeyer et al 1992). Also, in allocating power to tiers of government in postconflict state, the two schools defer. According to the democratisers, opine that implementing postconflict peace agreements requires a strong central government while the peacebuilders argue for decentralisation in order to prevent the abuse of power by strong central governments. In the context of convergence, both share a liberal assumption and equally suffer from the flaws of the modernisation theory based on the generalised assumption that make use of the West's expectation as the yardstick for measuring compliance (Carothers 2002). Also, both peacebuilding and democratisation literature agrees that peace and security are preconditions for

democratisation and that wars must be over before democratisation commences.

However, events in Nigeria since 1999 reveal the (im)plausibility of certain assumptions on the (in)compatibility of democratisation with violent conflicts going by the spate and (un)recorded deaths resulting from mostly ethno-religious and indigene-settler conflicts. Particularly, the tenor of indigene-settler conflicts in Nigeria has informed the description of Nigeria's Middle-Belt region as replica of the Middle-East sequel to the bestiality of conflicts in the region (Je'adeyibe 2008). This description is informed by the frequency and violent nature of indigene-settler conflicts in states in the region including Jos the capital of Plateau State.

Although, there have been series of military and judicial attempts by the State in the Jos crises, the enormous cost, dangerous course, blurred cause and salience of identity in the context of the crisis invite the need for a re-examination of the efficacy of these approaches and the need to explore broader avenues for the attainment of peace in the community. The preceding provide the reasons for this article which is hinged on the rationale of constructive peace studies by transcending what is revealed empirically and putting forward constructive proposals (Galtung 1996).

The Jos crises is approached in this way because of the number of lives it has claimed and incalculable value of properties so far destroyed since the crises took a turn for the worse. After an analysis of the State-led approaches to the Jos crises, the article analyses the cost, cause, course and context of the crises before prescribing the use of Multi-Track-Diplomacy (MTD) as a framework of action for postconflict peacebuilding in the community that will produce sustainable peace. Although, not without a history, the unprecedented descent to anarchy and hither manifestations of the conflict since 1999 when the fourth-republic commenced have been characterised by the use of more lethal weapons, poisoning of wells in the rural areas, mob attacks, reprisal attacks in and around Jos, bombings of religious gatherings and centres, house-to-house attacks, ambush laying for vehicles during which commuters are ordered down for identification as indigenes and settlers before getting mauled, demarcation of areas along ethno-religious lines;

all of these portend a rehash of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. These happenings indicate a worsening of the conflict which calls to question the efficacy of the approaches so far adopted by both the federal and state governments in effectively managing the crisis thereby necessitating an urgent change in approaches.

STUDY AREA

The city of Jos is the capital of Plateau state which was first created in 1976 out of the Benue-Plateau while the current Plateau state was created in 1996. The appellation *Jos* emerged as a mispronunciation of the *Guash* of Hausa traders by the Europeans (Simbine 2004:72). Jos was established as a tin city by the European patrons of the Royal Niger Company (RNC) between 1902 and 1913 but became a township in 1915 (Simbine 2004:74). Simbine (2004:76) describes Jos as a mini-Nigeria because virtually all ethnic-nationalities are fairly represented. However, the indigenous groups are the Berom, Angas, Geomai, Afizere and Rukuba, (Simbine 2004:77 and Suleiman 2010:30).

CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE: THE NIGERIAN STATE, CONFLICTS AND THE JOS CRISES

Cognisant of the deep-seated animosity amongst the ethnic nationalities that constitute Nigeria, as a result of long years of military tyranny and injustice to groups and individuals, the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo at the inception of the fourth republic thought it wise to set up a national reconciliation commission. According to Obasanjo, quoted in Albert (2004:349):

... my first duty is to reconcile the people of this country and heal their wounds. I have no doubt in my mind that everyone in our ethnically diverse society has suffered in many ways from the unacceptable and undemocratic manner in which we have been governed for so long.

The above quotation must have informed the description by Albert (2004:349) of Nigeria as a post-traumatic state. A post-traumatic state is characterised by shocking memories of past cases of gross human

The State and the Management of Jos Crisis

rights violation and ethnic insecurity defined as the unjust domination and oppression of one or some ethnic nationalities by one or some other ethnic nationalities in a plural state like Nigeria (Albert 2004:9 and Kew 2010:9). However, noble as the setting up of the Human Rights Investigation Commission chaired by respected Justice Chukwudi Oputa was, it came across like putting the cart before the horse when viewed against the background of age-long agitations of fiscal and true federalism that touch on the national question which have generated persistent threats to the peace and unity of the country.

The preceding warrants a conceptual characterisation of the Nigerian state in order to comprehend its management of plurality. This is done according to the pluralist notion of the state that considers the state as statutorily saddled with conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This is because it has to ensure that the process of resource struggle and allocation do not degenerate into basis of anarchy (Smith 2003). The similitude of this is that of an unbiased referee or umpire. Also, the pluralists, according to Smith (2003:110) see the state through the prism of a modern society divided into opposing elements which nevertheless find a point of equilibrium. Smith, (2003: 110) argues that the regulatory role of the state demands it must ensure that:

None gets its way to the exclusion of others to a disproportionate extent. In this respect pluralists are building upon traditional ideas of liberal democracy and the role of the state, though rather than focus on the individual as the unit of analysis they are focusing on groups. They see society as consisting not of atomised individuals – the egotistical rational person seeking their own interests in a society which the state has the duty to preserve – but of groups and associations. Only by co-operating with similarly placed and like-minded people can individual interests be protected.

Based on the above, the thrust of the pluralist conception of the state is that no one group will dominate or cheat others in the process or quest of seeking fulfillment of its aspirations. In line with this, the Nigerian state at the inception of the fourth republic and as a democracy portrayed the posture of a pluralist state, i.e. a state that attempted to play the role of an unbiased umpire in the dialectics of power amongst

disparate groups and interests by retaining existing structures of managing plurality within its federal structure. It also tried to heal wounds by setting up the Oputa Commission to buttress its impartial status. Therefore, in theory, post-military Nigeria shares the basic features of a pluralist state. However, an empirical observation of the manner of managing contrasting demands from the disparate ethnic nationalities gives the verdict of a seeming inability or failure of the Nigerian state to adequately and impartially live up to such billing.

However, the structure and agency of the post-colonial states continue to manifest in contradistinction its pluralist pretensions. Adebani and Obadare (2009: 508) argues that the post-colonial state in Africa will continue to pose a problem because: "whilst African have arguably ended up with the type of state they did not bargain for, it is one whose transformation appears to continually elude them". Amuwo (2010) presents two perspectives in explaining why this has been so. The first perspective is the structuralist perspective which posits that the post-colonial African state is a product of Western colonialism and identifies its penchant for harsh, arbitrary and predatory behaviour to its colonial origin. The second perspective is agential which opines that African political elite and administrations have been: "adapting, indigenising, tropicalising, appropriating and reinventing the post-colonial state and are, to that extent partly responsible for the state's pathologies and malfeasance" (Amuwo 2010: 430).

One of the most horrendous conflicts that easily reveal that the national question is still on unresolved is identity conflicts which could be religious or ethnic as observed in Nigeria. More than anything else, these conflicts reveal the fault lines in inter-ethnic relations in the country. According to Ukeje and Adebani (2008), only ethnic identification is real in Nigeria while national identification at best remains a struggle.

Plurality in the context of this paper is defined as holding multiple identities. According to Collier (2010:51), everyone has some subnational identity and usually several of them. For example, in addition to being a Nigerian, one may be a Yoruba, an Egba man and more particularly a Gbagura man. Similarly, the British general elections of 2001 pitched a Yorkshire man against a Scot. Collier (2010:50) argues

that these multiple identities pose genuinely tough but not insurmountable challenges to many Third World states. These multiple identities and strong allegiance to them sometimes turn issues that could have otherwise been resolved amicably into causes of violent conflicts amongst ethnic nationalities. Such situations have made the constructive and positive management of plurality a difficult task for many post-colonial states; a situation that has informed the description of Nigeria as a country still standing still at fifty (Kogbara 2010:10).

In most of contemporary African states like Nigeria, managing identity conflicts poses a serious challenge to many African countries because they are very difficult to negotiate because they often defy clarification of goals. This is because they thrive on intricate logics of self-esteem, dignity, recognition and sense of belonging (Schaffer 2004). Options adopted by the actors range from negotiation to suicide bombing. These make identity conflicts very horrendous.

At the horizontal and vertical levels of interactions, multiple identities and the determination to protect them through its instrumentalisation to advance selfish personal and group objectives have conflated to make ethnicity a social challenge to the Nigerian state. Despite the avalanche of literature on ethnicity, ethnic conflicts, its correlate of indigene-settler conflicts and the national question (Usman 2003; Babawale et al 2003; Imobighe et al 2003, Adebani 2004; Osaghae 2006; Oshita 2006 and Osaghae and Onwudiwe 2007), ethnicity remains problematic which makes further studies inevitable and relevant especially in the context of extant realities confronting the country which have made plurality a source of tension and hostility instead of strength to the country. The trajectory of conflict in this context flows from the description of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria since independence by Oloruntimehin and Ayoade (2002:4-5) as additive, cumulative and consecutive.

A conflict is additive when statements of actors are unrelated to the triggers of conflict. Conflict is cumulative when victims react after enduring for a while. The consecutive causation of conflicts explains a situation where parties have become short-tempered over time and take to arms over every disagreement. The micro-macro explanation of conflicts is a situation in which the animosity between two major ethnic

groups is rehearsed at the micro level amongst individuals over negligible. For example, individual disagreements over stalls in markets easily degenerate into horrendous inter-ethnic confrontations due to existing animosity between the groups belonged to by the individuals. The four causations of conflicts described above characterise the trajectory of the Jos crises.

However, the trajectory of the Jos crises will not be complete without a corresponding conceptualisation. This article conceptualises the Jos crises as a deep-rooted and protracted conflict. Deep-rooted conflicts are caused by non-negotiable human needs such as identity, recognition, participation, and security according to John Burton (Miall 2001). Miall (2001:5) explains that protracted social conflicts:

arise from historical and from the denial of basic human needs of access, identity and security as well as through the roles played by the state international political and economic linkages and the military in politics. If the state and communal group chose suppression and violent rebellion as their strategies, a conflict may then become destructive.

Based on the observed pattern of engagement and narratives fuelling the Jos crises, this article conceptualises it as a deep-rooted and protracted social conflict.

STATE RESPONSES TO CONFLICTS

Despite the deep-rooted and protracted nature of the Jos crises, the Nigerian State has responded to protect the lives and property of its citizens in Jos. This has resulted in the deployment of the military to the city and its environs. Maina (2010) describes this in operational terms as Military Aid to Civil Power (MACP). This is in conformity with their constitutionally stipulated role in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria s. 217 ss. 2c: "suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authority to restore order when called upon to do so by the President, but subject to such conditions as may be prescribe by an Act of the National Assembly". However, to have peace in Jos transcends the deployment of the military alone based on the continuation of hostilities since the presence of the military.

The State and the Management of Jos Crisis

Also, at the state level, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) in the office of the president through the series of intensive activities undertaken through collaboration with international donors (DFID, UNDP, USAID and World Bank) between July and October 2002 came out with a comprehensive report on the strategic assessment of conflicts in Nigeria. The assessment contains a detailed analysis of issues that have engendered violent conflicts in Nigeria. The report also points out the inadequacy of state-led approaches viewing them as escalating rather than mitigating the conflicts.

The report as well categorises government responses to conflict as; *security* response; often reactive and based on force ignoring the root causes of conflict. Although, this is helpful in checkmating parallel economies on which militias usually rely on, the limitation of such security approach lies in its likelihood to make the conflict worse than it hitherto was. Wennmann (2005) observes that organised armed groups change their methods if existing strategies no longer look effective and external variables change. It is therefore illusory to think that, when one method of financing is cut, a belligerent could ask for mercy, accept a peace plan and reintegrate to civil society.

The second response is *relief* response this basically entails distribution of relief materials, which sometimes worsens the conflict because of the discriminatory or disproportionate way it is done. The *political* response is when commissions of inquiry are set up. However, their recommendations hardly get published or implemented. Another type of political response includes the creation of new administrative units which sometimes renames the conflict. For example, the buffer zone created by Colonel Peter Ogar one time military governor of Kwara State as one of the measures to address incessant border disputes between the Erin-Ile community and the Offa community in Kwara State provided the setting for a recent social conflagration in the state (Oni, 2006; Jegede, 2006). Nwolise (2006) describes a situation like that as government inconsistency which exacerbates conflicts. According to Nwolise (2006) failure to implement the first white paper from a judicial commission of inquiry headed by Justice Nweje set up by Colonel Attah paved the way for the devastating war of 1999-2000 in Aguleri and Umuleri. This shows the fragility that trails most state led approaches

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Economic response has informed the establishment of parastatals or commissions like Niger Delta Development Corporation (NDDC). In Nigeria it can also be observed that this has not fulfilled its objective in most cases. The most apparent of such places is the Niger-Delta region of the country. Since 1961 when the Niger Delta Development Board was constituted, successive economic responses have not met the needs of the people and neither has it changed the adversarial relationship between the people of the region and the federal government of Nigeria. *Social* response includes activities of organisations like the National Orientation Agency (NOA) alongside the government; however this often has minimal effect on the parties in conflict. There are also political Non-Governmental responses usually anchored by traditional rulers within the context of social response.

JOS CRISES IN THE FOURTH-REPUBLIC: CAUSE, COST, CONTEXT AND STATE RESPONSE

Cause

As the saying goes that there is no smoke without a fire, the festering crises in Jos is not without a cause(s) and actors. The two main groups in the Jos crises are the indigenes comprising the indigenous groups (Berom, Angas, Geomai, Afizere and Rukuba) and the Hausa settlers referred to as *Jasawa* in local parlance. One feature of the conflict is the use of narratives by the two groups. Adebani (2007) observes that story-telling is now recognised as a basic strategy for coming to terms with the challenges of human and community lives. The forms and functions of narratives include the discovery, revelation, and presentation of truth and the enactment of interest or the wielding of power (Lucaites and Condit, 1985: 93-94). However, narratives are not without consequences as argued by Bennet and Edelman (1985) quoted in Adebani (2007: 146) that: "in addition to suggesting an interpretation for a social happening, a well-crafted narrative can motivate belief and action of outsiders towards the actions and events caught in any particular plot".

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Central to the narratives of the protracted crises in Jos are the issues of autochthony, land and belonging. Autochthony which literarily means emerging from the soil as espoused by Boas and Dunn (2007) practically denotes localised meanings of belonging and has been the cause of heated debates especially during elections and in the context of access to land especially in the rural areas. Geschiere (2004) observes that recent obsession with autochthony and violent forms of exclusion of so-called *strangers* even when they are citizens of the same country have undermined the whole concept of national citizenship. Specifically the narratives of the conflict dwell on issues that touch on the following; ownership of Jos, indigeneship of Jos, efforts at Islamisation, delimitation of electoral wards; blockage of roads during worship, indiscriminate use of loudspeakers; Fulanis trespassing on farm lands; alleged discrimination against Muslims by government and non-implementation of previous reports (Suleiman 2011).

In a baseline survey report of five states including Plateau, Albert (2006) presents views of residents living in Jos wherein majority of them described the Jos crises as ethno-religious. In the context of peace studies, the conflict can be described as value and resource-based because of the intrinsic link of land to survival and autochthony to identity and belonging. This affirms the finding of Albert (2006) that a major reason for the violent conflict between the Hausa and the host community is the control of land resources and market places. Within the context of the Jos crises, the aforementioned issues are taken as the intervening variables between plurality and conflict in the city. The inability to creatively and positively manage these intervening variables underscores the weakness of the Nigerian state as a pluralist and impartial entity.

Cost

Barely had the fourth-republic taken off when the city went up in flames and since then, the city has been tottering on the brinks of collapse. The worsening bestiality of violence in the Jos crises reflects the four categories of conflict mutation in the contexts of additive, cumulative, consecutive and micro-macro causation. Campbell (2010: xv) reveals two sources on the statistics of deaths resulting from the Jos crises. First, the international Society for Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law

gave the number 34,000 out of a total of 100,000 in the intercommunal period of 1999-2001. Those affiliated to the Nigerian official were based between the 12, 2001; January 2002; February 17 2010 and 1 statistics are from Irabor (2011) from South-East perennial conflict N970 billion. the declaration

Context

With the casualties in Jos, it is clear the cost in human involvement of managers. Ex the crises per for managing Laremont 20 mockery of Jimenez and federalism to plurality of the weak state. C prevent the means (Dars

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gave the number of Nigerians killed outside the law since 1999 as 34,000 out of which 13,500 resulted from ethno-religious conflicts and intercommunal violence. Human Rights Watch gave 11,000 for the period of 1999 to 2006 but as at 2010 Campbell reveals that an NGO-affiliated to the Jos crises told him to multiply the figures by five because Nigerian officials often understate statistics of mortalities. These figures were based on mortalities recorded in major violent confrontations between the indigenes and the settlers on September 7, 2001; September 12, 2001; January 1, 2002; February 12, 2002; May 2, 2002; July 1 2002; February 12, 2004; May 2, 2004; November 28, 2008; January 17 2010 and March 7, 2010 (Suleiman 2011:30). However, reliable statistics are hazy for confrontations in the year 2011. In another report, Irabor (2011) reveals that over 1664 non-indigenes comprising Nigerians from South-East, South-West and South-South have been killed in the perennial conflicts since 1994 besides suffering material losses of over N970 billion. The conflict became so horrendous in 2006 that it led to the declaration of a State of Emergency in the state.

Context

With the casualties so far recorded and the fragility of existing peace in Jos, it is clear that it has become a national emergency with a very high cost in human lives and property. This makes it deserving of the involvement of all stakeholders especially peaceworkers and conflict managers. Extant realities from Jos signify amongst other things, that the crises persist in a context of the failure of federalism as a strategy for managing identity conflicts in Nigeria as observed by (Jimenez and Laremont 2009:91). The maddening trend of the Jos crises makes a mockery of federalism as a strategy of managing plurality in Nigeria. Jimenez and Laremont (2009:92) identify the flaws in Nigeria's federalism to be its non-contextualised nature to address the peculiar plurality of the country. The conflict also occurs in the context of a weak state. One of the characteristics of a weak state is its inability to prevent the use of violence by non-state actors and by unauthorised means (Darschivili 2002).

Also, this paper posits that the inability of a state to creatively manage plurality can as well be taken as form of weakness. This is

The State and the Management of Jos Crisis

because while some countries such as Belgium, Malaysia and Switzerland have managed plurality positively, Suberu and Osaghae (2006) identifies the inability of countries such as Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi and Sri Lanka to manage the intervening variables between plurality and conflicts as the bane of peace in countries where plurality has become synonymous with crises. So, the Jos crises can be broadly assessed in the context of the the non-contextualisation of Nigeria's federalism and the weakness of the Nigerian state.

In the same vein, Suberu (2010) identifies the peculiarly skewed practice of federalism in Nigeria as the cause of the country's multifaceted crises of poor governance, ethno-political conflict and socio-economic underdevelopment. Much as scholars have severally highlighted the positive side of Nigeria's federalism in the containment of ethnic conflicts (Suberu 2010; Horowitz 2007; Hale 2004 and Suberu 2004) the contradictions in its practice and the crises generated by these contradictions constitute serious threats to peace and security in the most populous black nation on earth. The International Crisis Group (2006) observes that Nigeria's federal system and politics are deeply flawed, contributing to rising violence that threatens to destabilise one of Africa's leading countries. This can as well pass for an early warning signal which should not be ignored with a sleight of hand.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN JOS: THE INEVITABILITY OF MULTI-TRACK-DIPLOMACY

Extant realities and an ethno-graphic survey of many communities and neighbourhoods around Jos reveal the palpable tension that still pervades the air in the city as a result of the protracted indigene-settler conflict. The allegation of partiality levelled against the military Special Task Force by a party in the conflict indicates an indirect indictment and loss of confidence in the ability of the Nigerian state to be impartial in matters of identity conflict. Also, the setting up of a parallel panel of inquiry into the conflict by the federal and Plateau State government point to the inability of the two tiers to combine efforts towards finding sustainable solution to the crises. This is a stark manifestation of the impression held by residents of Jos and such communities in Nigeria

that government activities have strong correlation with the upward spiral of violent conflicts in Nigeria (Albert 2006:14). This brings to fore, the need for exploration of other means of pursuing a sustainable solution to the problem.

As described by its prominent proponents McDonald and Diamond (1996) Multi-Track Diplomacy is a conceptual framework of nine tracks designed to encompass the various activities that contribute to international peace-making and peacebuilding. The tracks are:

- (1) Government
- (2) NGOs and professionals
- (3) Business through commerce
- (4) Private citizens through personal involvement
- (5) Research, training and education through learning
- (6) Activism through advocacy
- (7) Religion
- (8) Funding
- (9) Media.

A French diplomat Joseph Montville describes the second track as peace-promoting activities and methods by non-state actors including private citizens or individuals (McDonald and Diamond, 1996). The essence of either multi-track diplomacy or track-two diplomacy thrives on the fact that the expertise for dealing with conflict is not a sole preserve of state personnel. A critical look at all the tracks shows that each can contribute to the postconflict peacebuilding process in varying degrees. Havermans (1999), describes track-two-diplomacy succinctly as peace efforts embarked upon by unofficial, NGOs and individuals with expertise in conflict management. However, a look at all the nine tracks vis-à-vis the claims and allegations of the parties in conflict shows that the MTD can address all the issues intervening between plurality and conflict in the Jos crises which is a metaphor for many plural communities in Nigeria.

Recent global realities underscore the imperative of enhancing cooperation between state and non-state actors in the pursuit of peace and security. This has become imperative in the context of the Jos crises because of the need to erect militaristic and non-militaristic

structures for sustainable peace. In order to achieve this, the professional NGOs with expertise and commitment like the Society for Peace Studies and Peace Practice (SPSP) located in the second track of MTD can initiate postconflict peacebuilding programmes in concert with other stakeholders and relevant agencies of the state as a step forward in the positive management of the Jos crises.

CONCLUSION

The paper identifies the reality of the challenge constituted by plurality to the federal system in Nigeria. Referring to the fears expressed by some of the patriarchs of the Nigerian state at the early days of Nigeria's independence, this paper analyses the state responses to conflicts in Nigeria and observes that despite the bright side of Nigeria's federalism, its other side of the coin has (in)advertently made the Nigerian project inchoate as it trots on the precipice. In order to rescue this dream and based on the apparent failure of state-led approaches in enhancing peaceful co-existence in many of its plural communities especially Jos, this paper argues for paradigm shift in conflict management that will encourage closer working relationship between Track 1 and Track 2 within the concept of MTD.

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