

Jos Crises, Peacemaking and its Challenges during 2001-2010

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ABSTRACT--- *Over a decade, the violent conflicts in Jos have remained recurrent and have defied all peacemaking mechanisms put in place. This research assesses the conflicts from 2001 to 2010, and the challenges militating against durable peace in Jos. The study employed the use of primary and secondary data. The study found that conflicts in Jos are caused by numerous factors, amongst which are struggle over political power, resources, incompatible cultures and values. The challenges militating against durable peace include, but are not limited to proliferation of arms, inadequacies of the judicial system, lack of functional rehabilitation of victims and polarization. These conflicts have been intense with far reaching effects on the people, economy and integration of the state and country at large.*

Keywords--- Crises, Conflicts, Peacemaking, Jos, Challenges

1. INTRODUCTION

Jos is the capital of Plateau State which lies in the Middle Belt of Nigeria. Just like the Middle East, Jos and its environs have witnessed numerous conflicts notably since 2001. These high intensity conflicts have caused the death of thousands; while also, several thousands have been displaced with farmlands and properties destroyed. Jos has witnessed protracted conflicts across ethnic lines and recorded casualties among the groups involved. While large scale violence has occurred periodically since 2001, Jos, once Nigeria's most serene city is currently synonymous with pointless brutality arising from armed confrontations, reprisal attacks and terrorist activities. The various peace mechanisms introduced to restore peace to the state in general; and Jos in particular, have failed in this regard as residents live, clustered by ethnicity and religion to aid defence and attack as may be deemed necessary. The city that used to hold a lot of attraction for tourists presently finds it difficult to maintain love for the residents as fear rules both day and night.

Human interactions have characterised human existence from time immemorial (Okpeh, 2008:19). Man has interacted with fellow men prior to the formation of societies in different era. Ehiabhi (Personal Communication, 2008) was able to confirm that diplomacy in human relations remains as old as mankind. Interactions among individuals, groups and political entities have not always been smooth and peaceful despite various diplomatic means such as trading, inter-marriage and exchange of envoys which have survived till present time. Struggle over values and resources between or among social and political entities has dominated human history (Okpeh, 2008:25, Coser, 1956). This struggle that has constantly featured in human interactions in its various dimensions has been termed conflict.

2. CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Conflict

The word conflict emanates from the Latin word “conflictus” which translates to “struck together.” Nwoli (as cited in Joshua, 2013:33) stated that conflict means clash, contention, confrontation, battle or struggle, controversy or quarrel. Coser (as cited in Joshua, 2013:33) stated that conflict is a struggle over values and claims over status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Conflict is a reality of social life and exists at all levels of society. Actually conflicts are as old as the world itself. We learn from history about individuals being in conflict with each other for various reasons. The trend has not changed today. Individuals, villages, tribes, political parties, nations and other forms of groupings engage in conflicts. Practically each of us has in one way or the other been involved in conflict either at the individual level, family level, community level and some other places.

Conflicts have been found at every stage of life in one way or another. They are features of life and have been since the beginning (Alabi, 2010:311). Conflict is mostly expressed in incompatibility and non-conformity. Basics such as ideas, opinions and interests are said to be in conflict when they are inharmonious. Thus, for conflict to take place between or among entities, a relationship must exist. Conflict seems impossible between isolated and non-related entities. Conflict has manifested in violent armed confrontations involving social and political entities, and has been characterised by high casualties (Bujra, 2002:1). Intractable conflicts in Africa are gradually evolving from political conflicts to what Bujra (2002:9) termed “urban violence”. Inter-state conflicts are giving way to intra-state conflicts that are neither civil wars

nor rebellions. States no longer wage war either with states or with non-state belligerents as much as groups within states rise against themselves. This “urban violence” manifests in ethnic conflict, economic conflict, religious conflict or class-based conflict. It is important to say that while intra-ethnic conflict and intra-religious conflict exist in urban settlements, inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts have occurred more.

This is largely due to the heterogeneity of individuals in urban settlements – people who converge in urban areas have different ethnicity, culture, history, religion as well as different social, economic and political traditions (Albert, 2001:1). This does not mean that conflict is absent in homogeneously constituted settlements as cattle rustling, land encroachment and chieftaincy tussle exist among people of the same occupation, ethnicity and ancestry respectively. Also, class-based conflict which often involves the poor attacking the lives and properties of the rich is not limited to heterogeneous societies. The seemingly notable factor for “urban violence” is the varied composition of urban areas which more often than not, are neither compatible nor harmonious.

History of earliest times to the present has it that much of conflict is attributed to disputes over territory (Huggett, 1973:463). Afe (Personal Communication, 2010) was able to confirm that the entity which is today known as Nigeria has witnessed conflict before formation and is still experiencing conflict as a state. Nigeria, since independence has been confronted with conflicts in three various dimensions. They are political, economic and sociocultural/religious dimensions (Afe, 2010:12). The noticeable conflicts in Jos occurred in post-independent Nigeria. These conflicts usually pit one group against another. The most noticeable groups in these conflicts remain the occupational, ethnic and religious groups. The conflicts have taken mainly religious dimension between Muslims and Christians, but ethnicity has played a central role. This is because the adherents of the two dominant religions are also divided along ethnic and cultural lines. The Muslims are predominantly Hausa/Fulani migrants while the Christians are the indigenous peoples such as the Berom, Afizere and Anaguta and other Christian migrants.

These recurrent conflicts in Jos have heightened insecurity and have featured wanton killing and destruction (Higazi, 2011:2). The varied conflicts have occurred for various reasons and at numerous times. Jos, a plural society has witnessed a number of conflicts which has threatened and continue to threaten the security of lives and properties in it. The lifespan of each of these conflicts is short since numerous conflicts have occurred since the outbreak, usually with one conflict ebbing before the other starts. As such, it is important to note the various peacemaking efforts that have restored peace or the semblance of peace to Jos in the intervals between experiential conflicts.

Peacemaking

Peacemaking is a diplomatic mediation and or negotiation undertaken to avoid conflict or bring combatants to peaceful agreement (Dawson, 2004:2). Peacemaking is practical conflict transformation focused upon establishing equitable power relationships which is adequate to prevent reoccurrence of conflict. Oftentimes, it encompasses procedures or agreements on ethical issues between or among parties that have previously engaged in destructive conflict. Peacemaking in its own right seeks to achieve full reconciliation among adversaries and new mutual understanding among parties and stakeholders. It concerns a deeper way of looking at conflicts than just winning or losing. It looks at conflicts as opportunities for people to grow, to accept responsibility for the relationships they are in, and for the potential apology and forgiveness. Also, Peacemaking is the creative process of engaging with others to make positive and lasting change to a conflict situation. It is a universal and age-old approach to conflict at all levels among any and all parties, and its principles may be generalized and used in different kinds of conflicts.

Peacemaking requires courage and collaborative effort to put in place justice, which is a vital ingredient for peace. It is most useful and effective when it enjoys the consent of the combatants. The consent of combatants in peacemaking signifies their willingness to end hostilities and embrace peace. Conflict diagnosis is a crucial element in conflict management, conflict resolution and ultimately, conflict prevention (Adekanye, 2007:171). The timely diagnosis of conflict will make room for efficient peacemaking. Adequate attention is needed on the causes of conflict in order to derive sustainable peace from peacemaking. With the outbreak of conflict in Jos as with other places, efforts are made or intensified to nurture, promote and build peace in order to tilt the scale in favour of peace. The inability of government to provide security for lives and properties is often augmented with the initiative of panel of inquiry with the duty of inquiry and recommendations to prevent future occurrence. In the course of these conflicts, interventions have failed to put an end to them or reduce their intensity. The re-occurrence of conflict in Jos has belittled previous peacemaking efforts made to create room for peace.

3. SUMMARY OF THE CONFLICTS AND PEACEMAKING EFFORTS IN JOS FROM 2001-2010

Conflict is an inevitable element of the society, that when properly managed could create peace. The mode of managing conflict is the major determinant in the process of creating peace or escalating the conflict. An assessment of the conflict

may not be possible without understanding the underlying factors of the conflict and its dimensions. In the last two decades, there has been no durable peace in Jos metropolis. The ethnic groups in Jos have fought each other for decades for control of land, economic resources, and lucrative political positions. The most important reason for many of these disputes is the notion of indigeneship, which has pitted indigenes against settlers (Human Rights Watch, 2005:35).

The violence in Jos seems to have assumed a natural phenomenon due to its frequent recurrence. For some time now, the indigenes and the settlers in Jos, specifically the Hausa/Fulani, have running competition for prominence in Jos. Jos has been the centre of insecurities in Plateau State and the site of the worst violence. Although there has been many conflicts spanning from 2001 to 2010, the common denominator has been the high level of carnage left in its wake. Therefore, there is a need to take a cursory look at the episodic conflicts and the various corresponding peacemaking efforts.

2001 Episode

There has been fundamental animosity between the various groupings in Jos before the 2001 violence, which includes the appointment of a settler, Mukhtar Usman Mohammed, by President Obasanjo to the office of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) coordinator and as chairman of the Local Government Monitoring Committee (LGMC) for the council. The cause of the 2001 conflict was the Congo-Russia disturbance which was as a result of an altercation that ensued when a female Christian pedestrian tried to pass through the congregation of Muslim male worshippers where a guard at the mosque allegedly rough handled her (Alkali, 2001, Best & Rakodi, 2011:58). This gave vent to the tensions that have been holding up over the blockade of the street during Friday prayers which had existed for several years. Armed confrontation erupted between the non-Muslim residents of Congo-Russia and the Muslim worshippers at the mosque. And within days of the conflict, thousands of people have been killed, with victims from various groups along ethnic and religious divides. International Crisis Group (2012:11) noted that the confrontation extended as far as Bukuru and the extensive damage to private and public properties and religious monuments led to high rate of human displacement. The 2001 conflict was so intense that it became the determining factor in the fragmentation of the settlement pattern in Jos North and extended to its environs. This would latter create more problems to the resolutions of conflict in Jos (Lamle, 2013:85).

There were several efforts put in place to broker peace following the 2001 conflict. The military intervened in containing the conflict from degenerating (Okpeh, 2008:65). The Civil Societies, Traditional and Religious bodies all played pivotal roles in the Peacebuilding process that followed the resettling of people who fled their home in the wake of the conflict. The three tiers of government also played vital roles in the peacemaking process, notable among which are establishment of judicial commission, information and community relations committee, peace and reconciliation committee and commission of enquiry. Best (2007:88) noted that the Justice Niki Tobi commission of enquiry constituted by the Plateau State Government was a 10-man commission of enquiry instituted to:

- i. Investigate the causes of the conflict.
- ii. Identify persons or groups responsible for the conflict.
- iii. Establish the extent of damage to property and loss of lives.
- iv. Suggest and recommend ways to prevent future occurrence.

The commission embarked on its duties, placed adverts in electronic and print media about submission of memoranda to be presented in person and be examined. The commission in the bid to investigate visited the affected communities. While the commission was able to investigate the cause, it could not prevent future occurrence as almost five instances of violence erupted during its sitting in Vom, Turu and Vwang area of Jos (Animasawun, 2013:266). The commission declared that the cause of the conflict was the need for political supremacy and identity in Jos North and that the conflict was similar to the 1994 conflict. Despite their similarities, the nature of the 2001 conflict differs. The 2001 conflict had religious colouration, death toll and destruction was high and it extended out of Jos metropolis (International Crisis Group, 2012:11).

2002 Episode

Another crisis blew up in May 2002. What initially seemed like an insignificant political event turned in to a massacre in Jos (Best, 2007:76). The ward congress was to be held at the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Ward Headquarters at Eto Baba in Angwan Rukuba, an Anaguta stronghold and a Christian dominated area as the street is named after a Church founder. The purpose of the congress was to conduct primary elections. The congress opened up ferocious contest for leadership position by the two groups (Samuel, 2013:151). Determined to influence and win positions, the Hausa and the Fulani brought large number of their supporters; the indigenes interpreted the move as an attempt to stampede, intimidate and attack them. This massive influx of people created panic and triggered violence which led to death and damage of properties especially vehicles. The conflict soon spread into the city area, and with the destruction of Jos main market in February of the same year which has left suspicion, anger and resentment in the town as the Hausa/Fulani and the

indigenes have traded blames, the conflict became full blown (Best and Rakodi, 2011:58). International Crisis Group Report (2012:11) noted that the conflict also degenerated because of the killing of indigenes by Hausa/Fulani gangs in other parts of the state. Between 2001 and 2002, identity politics was clearly summed up into ethnic affiliation and religious confession; it reached an extent where people claimed opposing religions just to save their lives.

The Plateau State government instituted a Peace Summit Committee which consisted of some stakeholders with the duty of assessing the conflict and making recommendations that will promote peaceful coexistence. The communiqué issued at the end of the first summit held on August 10, 2002 stressed the need for justice and peace. It recommended among other things the prosecution of perpetrators of violence, politics of inclusion, early detection and prevention of conflict and enforcement of laws (Best, 2007:89).

The 2008 Episode

In November 2008, local government elections were conducted across Plateau State. However, the conduct of the election in Jos North and the dispute over the results gave vigour to a renewed mass violence in Jos, leading to the death of over 700 people within two days (Higazi, 2011:19). Unlike in 2001, the conflict was limited to Jos North. Churches and mosques strongly called on their congregations to vote only for a Christian or a Muslim candidate, respectively. Members of the Hausa/Fulani community were instructed to vigorously resist any attempt of manipulation by the ruling party in the state (Ostien, 2009:30). Even though the election process itself went smoothly and peacefully, the two parties had youth groups following the stages of vote gathering and the transportation of ballot boxes to the collation centres in order to ‘protect’ their votes. To worsen the situation, the Jos North collation centre was relocated and neither side had been appropriately informed about it. This fuelled uncertainties among the Hausa/Fulani that their votes would be lost and also what seemed to some Hausa/Fulani as an attempt by the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) to alter the votes in favour of the States ruling party Peoples Democratic Party sparked violence (International Crisis Group, 2012:12).

The new collation centre was situated at a primary school in Kabong, a Christian and Berom dominated area of Jos. When the results started coming in from various wards, the All Nigerians Peoples Party was ahead in the chairmanship election. In the view of the party supporters, the total possible votes from the remaining five wards could not have made up the difference. Thus, the Hausa/Fulani thought they had won. As the results from the remaining wards were announced, the situation became tense. People were mobilised when the votes for the Peoples Democratic Party became higher than the votes for the All Nigerians Peoples Party. Shortly after, looting, burning and killing began. The conflict had spread to other parts of the city by the following morning (Ostein, 2009:32). This conflict birthed two commissions of inquiry. The Federal Government set up a commission headed by General Emmanuel Abisoye while the Plateau State government set up a commission chaired by Justice Bola Ajibola (Edirin, 2010). From reports collected Hausa/Fulani community claimed to have suffered the most casualties. Members of this community were convinced that the crisis was part of a deliberate ethnic cleansing agenda by the state government to annihilate specific tribes and creeds (Hausa Muslims) in Jos, using politics as an apparatus (Ostien, 2009:33). Each party blamed the other of having premeditated the conflict, bringing in reinforcements, arranging fake army or police uniforms for their members and using the security forces, all allegedly instigated and funded by sponsors behind the scenes, for evil reasons variously assumed.

At least 700 people were reportedly killed. The Muslim community reported 632 deaths, over 5000 injured, 20 destroyed Islamic schools, 22 burnt mosques and 891 destroyed residential buildings (Krause, 2011:1). The Catholic community reported 23 deaths and at least 600 burnt or destroyed houses and shops. Christian communities reported over 103 death and 330 burnt houses in Jos North to the Plateau State Commission of Inquiry of Justice Ajibola. The Plateau State Judicial Commission of Inquiry, 2010 also reported in addition to the aforementioned statistics that 118 Christian Igbo and 31 Yoruba were killed. According to Christian Association of Nigeria, at least 10,000 people were displaced. The detailed memorandum by the Jos North Muslim Ummah lists how each victim was killed.

Higazi (2011:23) notes that the “number of gunshot fatalities is striking and suggests that guns were much more widely used than in the previous 2001 riot”. Records showing the causes of death states that almost 90 per cent of Muslim victims died of gunshots (Krause, 2011:1). The commission reported that the 2008 election was an excuse by the Hausa/Fulani to foment trouble. The Council of the Ulama and Jamaatu Nasril Islam (JNI) of Jos North were also accused of provocative preaching. As such, the commission indicted the Hausa/Fulani community. The commission advised the state government to acquire some Hausa/Fulani settlements and create a modern city out of them (Adinoyi, 2010). Some previously indicted people were also mentioned in the report as taking part in the 2010 conflict. This underlines the significance of impunity in the perpetration of the violence. The commission recommended punishment and appropriate sanctions for individuals who played prominent roles in the conflict. As with previous cases, no one was held to account.

2010 Episodes

Another conflict broke out in January 2010. While it was thought to be a reprisal attack for the 2008 conflict, some believed it was caused by intensifying distrust and lack of meaningful communication between the indigenes and the Hausa/Fulani (International Crisis Group, 2012:13). However, it may have been drawn from existing schismogenesis and earlier violence. The immediate cause of the conflict was connected to an attack which took place when a Muslim man, Mohammed Kabir Umar was reconstructing his house, which had been destroyed during the 2008 crisis in Dutse Uku. Mohammed Kabir Umar in order to make the repairs brought with him a large number of male workers, about 70 in number to help him.

The conflict started when Christian youths, mainly Afizere, in Dutse Uku tried to stop them from finishing the house claiming the area belong to the Christians and that Umar had encroached on another person's land (Edirin, 2010). The Christian youths mobilised its members for the conflict. The Christian believed that the large convergence of Hausa Muslims at Kabir's house raised suspicions and fears. Umar was reported to have gone to bring about six soldiers. Efforts were made to resolve the disagreement through the village head but this was futile as there was a large group of Christian youths who had begun burning Muslim houses (Higazi, 2011:25). They added that the Muslim workers had blocked the road and were abusing passers-by on their way to church since it was a Sunday, calling them infidels.

Christians stated it was the Muslims who instigated the fight and that several Christians were shot dead. Christians accused soldiers deployed that day and General Officer in Command of the Third Armoured Division, Major-General Saleh Maina of taking sides with the Muslims (Higazi, 2011:25). Neighbourhoods that had stayed peaceful until 2008, such as Anglo Jos, became sites of violent battles, looting, and destruction. Similarly Bukuru to the south of Jos city was heavily affected by violence and destruction. In the course of the following days and weeks, genocides took place on the outskirts of the city. Mass killings occurred in Jos South, starting in Bukuru then spreading to the old mining settlements and to rural areas where there were clashes between the Berom and Fulani. It remains difficult to calculate with accuracy the number of lives lost. At minimum 400 people were estimated to have died in January 2010 and more than 18,000 were displaced (Krause, 2011:1).

This set in motion a cycle of violence and insecurity. In an act of vengeance, on March 7, 2010 hundreds of Fulani herdsmen were said to have invaded three Christian villages of Dogo Nahawa, Ratsat and Zot at midnight. Not less than 500 people were killed in the attacks and they were mostly women, children and aged people who were not able to hide or escape (Onuoha, Gaiya and Namiji, 2010). On 17 March 2010, suspected Fulani local militia men attacked residents of Biye and Batem in Jos where many people were killed. Also on 11 April 2010, there was an attack on a Christian village of Berom, some 30 kilometres south of Jos, by Fulani herdsmen. The attackers targeted the homes of some officials in Kura Jenta, in retaliation to the killing of about 150 Fulani Muslims, who were allegedly killed in January 2010.

A Presidential Committee was set up by the federal government to look into the causes of the conflict and to proffer solutions towards averting future occurrence. The committee consisted of only Plateau State indigenes and was co-chaired by Chief Solomon Lar and Ambassador Yahya Kwande. The purpose of these indigene filled committee, it was learnt was to enable the people of the state solve the problems on their own. The committee made some findings, some of which are: the Jos conflict is majorly about indigeneship which has led to recurrent conflict. It also indicated that religion was not the main cause of January, 2010 conflict in Jos rather it was just exploited by some individuals and groups to gain political popularity. It indicated lack of neutrality and transparency on the part of Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) as another cause of the conflict (Alli, 2010).

The committee found out that previous recommendations of past committees on conflicts in the state had not been implemented. Based on these findings, the committee came up with 20-point recommendation that could help prevent future occurrence of conflict in Jos. The recommendations include the need to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that will provide an avenue to reinforce the peace process in Plateau State, to create a new local government and districts in Jos North, adoption of zoning and power rotation among ethnic groups in the local government, the need for constitutional solution to the volatile problem of indigeneship. The committee also recommend that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should be empowered to conduct all elections at Federal, State and Local Government levels. The recommendations were subsequently submitted to the Federal Government for implementation.

4. CAUSES OF CONFLICTS IN JOS

The causes of a conflict are very important ingredients needed for proper and balanced diagnosis. The remote and immediate causes may vary and alternate in their significance to the conflict. The Jos conflicts, like most conflicts have a number of causes which are remote and immediate. Though religious and ethnic violence are said to be inevitable in a plural society like Jos, they usually have political, social and economic undertones and their prerequisite include injustice, inequality, bad governance and discriminations (Alkali, 2001). The immediate causes are usually visible and

pronounced, getting support from the remote root causes. The importance of any of the causes, usually the immediate cause to the outbreak of the conflict is a determinant in naming the conflict. The Jos conflicts took place at different times and had numerous causes. The remote causes may not be so different but the immediate causes kept changing at each instance of conflict.

In daily encounters, ethnic and religious identities are the bases of contestations for inclusions in opportunities and rights that are available to others. Many of these contestations result in violence. In such conflicts, holders of particular identities as defined by the attackers are singled out for liquidation, forced to relocate and their properties torched. The collective nature of violence is perhaps serving to strengthen geo-political solidarity (Alubo, 2009:6). The remote and immediate causes of the conflicts were identified in this study from the data gathered. Respondent 'A' stated that "the conflicts resulted as the need for sense of belonging and determination arose among the Hausa after suffering undue marginalisation". He explained further that "the Hausa people have not been treated well and their contribution to the society is not appreciated". Similarly, respondent 'I' agrees that the conflicts radiate around the Hausa and their intentions:

Jos has always been peaceful and a place to be proud of until these Hausa people, all of a sudden decided to control everything and everyone in this city. How long they have nursed the idea and planned it, no one knows but apparently, they have it planned because since they started, they have gone on and on about it.

Source: Author's compilations from fieldwork, 2016.

From another perspective, respondent 'G', a member of a panel of inquiry into the Jos conflicts stated that:

You have the issue of ethnicity; there are those who feel they are indigenes of this place, and then they see the other ones as settlers, those who came later on. And so, they should not enjoy equal opportunities and rights with those who are indigenous to the town...other indigenes from neighbouring local government share the same sentiments with these people, so you have these ones who call themselves indigenes fighting against the Hausa/Fulani who are seen as settlers.

Source: Author's compilations from fieldwork, 2016.

Also, respondent 'F' stated that:

The causes of the conflicts are deep-rooted in the rivalry between the Hausa and the indigenes, they remain unknown to most outsiders but religious discolouration got introduced into the conflicts such that in the course of the conflicts, religion was employed as a tool for it. Terming the conflicts as religious is deceitful on the part of anyone. Religion only became the excuse for the conflicts.

Source: Author's compilations from fieldwork, 2016.

The remote causes of the Jos conflicts hinge on the controversy over which social and political rights should be enjoyed by the settlers – Hausa/Fulani, cultural intolerance which stems from the seemingly incompatible cultures of the settlers and the indigenes and the belief of the indigenes that the Hausa/Fulani people have an agenda to dominate them and rule over them. Kaplan (as cited in, Oberschall 2009:180) stated that ancient hatreds theory presupposes primordial and long-standing ethnic group membership, boundaries and identities which resist assimilation and erosion. Thus, it can be said that inter-ethnic relations in Jos is burdened with culturally transmitted memory of past violent conflicts, fears and hostile emotions (Oberschall, 2009:180). According to respondent 'I', "violence started in Jos when the Hausa/Fulani settlers began making moves to take over all aspects of the city, which the indigenes resisted".

Given the prevalent suspicion, every action of one group is viewed by the other group to be in accordance with an agenda which is believed to be unfavourable to them. With the remote causes in place, any misunderstanding between individuals or groups of individuals across the divide is further fuelled by the animosity in place. This, according to respondent 'C' is why "immediate causes and dimensions of conflicts in Jos are usually mundane and unreasonable" respectively. According to him, "it explains how a confrontation which claimed hundreds of lives and properties worth millions of Naira should break out as a result of 'mere' usage of abusive words on any value attributable to the ethnicity, religion and political affiliation.

5. CHALLENGES TO PEACEMAKING IN JOS

The efforts invested in the Jos conflicts which include peacekeeping, peacemaking and Peacebuilding initiatives were targeted at desirable results which supersede the subsequent results achieved. Instead of achieving peace after the 2001 conflict, what was witnessed were series of conflicts spreading through Jos and its environs. These incidents of conflicts have rendered the previous peacemaking efforts ineffective and inadequate. It is therefore important to identify the impediments to peacemaking and make provisions to guard against them when fashioning mechanisms aimed at achieving durable peace in Jos.

The identified challenges to peacemaking in Jos include but are not limited to the following grey areas.

1. The inability of peacemaking stakeholders especially government to resolve the underlying causes of the conflicts. The causes often addressed are usually the trigger causes and they are mostly dealt with on the periphery to bring hostilities to an end. This, more often than not paints a seemingly peaceful scenario. The underlying causes remain, to be stroked by yet another misunderstanding.
2. Lack of functional rehabilitation and compensation for victims of the conflicts. The peacemaking efforts of government have rarely put into consideration the need to rehabilitate the victims and perpetrators of violence in the conflicts. Also, compensation and relief materials in the instances when they have been given out to victims have been meagre and insignificant compared to the magnitude of loss experienced during the conflicts.
3. Perceived prejudice and partiality of individuals initiating the peacemaking processes. The inability of people to rise above their biases and sentiments for or against any of the conflicting parties is a serious challenge as it does not enable all parties concerned to trust the process. This can result in lack of cooperation or total boycott of the peacemaking initiative by an aggrieved party. This has rendered some initiatives unpopular, one-sided and has made the work of peacemakers cumbersome and difficult. The task of convincing the conflicting parties about the neutrality of peacemakers has not been entirely successful for both government and corporate initiated peacemaking mechanisms.
4. The inadequacies of the justice system to bring conflict perpetrators to book. The state's inability to bring the prosecution of accused persons in relation to the Jos conflicts to a logical conclusion has denied victims the access to justice. Few prosecutions were made in relation to the intensity of the conflicts under study, fewer convictions obtained while many accused persons were acquitted. This has emboldened the perpetrators to continue and angered the victims to seek revenge thereby fuelling and prolonging the conflicts.
5. Small arms proliferation. The proliferation and increased usage of small arms and other weapons have greatly shaped the course of the conflicts and the rate of havoc wrecked during these conflicts. The inability of government to disarm and prevent the local production of these weapons has aided the rapid increase in the number of arms in circulation. They have become instruments and have been instrumental to the prolonged and recurrent conflicts.

6. CONCLUSION

The conflicts in Jos have occurred severally. Though usually with the same parties, the conflicts have been dynamic in causes and intensity. At each instance of conflict, the trigger cause remains flimsy and insufficient to spark up a conflict or a conflict of that magnitude. It suffices to say that as with other conflicts, and since there is no mono-causal argument in history, conflicts in Jos have many causes. While the causes of the conflicts may vary in hierarchy, the conflicts are not mono-causal. With the effects of the conflicts clearly felt in the city and beyond, the Jos conflicts have generated varied reactions from numerous quarters from far and near. Based on available and consulted primary and secondary data, the controversy over indigene/settler rights is the foundation of the conflict on which societal cleavages such as ethnicity, religion, politics and resource control are erected. The major cause of the Jos conflict is the struggle between the Hausa/Fulani and the indigenous Berom, Anaguta and Afizere over the status of each other and what rights can and should be enjoyed based on such status.

Since the outbreak of conflict in 2001, many peacemaking processes have been initiated to facilitate reconciliation between the conflicting groups in Jos. Despite these efforts put in place by the government, civil societies, religious bodies, academia, international non-Governmental Organisations, inter alia. The conflicts persisted and frustrated the reconciliation processes. The conflicts persisted as a result of many factors which include arms proliferation, bad governance, polarization, prejudice, injustice and failure to address the causes of the conflicts. These factors have promoted subsequent conflicts and militated against reconciliation. The Jos conflicts have continued for far too long and both parties remain obstinate about their stand. The conflicts have ravaged nearly every part of the city and have kept spreading outwards. The attendant effects are felt in the destruction of lives and properties both private and public for which the government has not been able to curb. The reckless killing and maiming during the conflicts have persisted because perpetrators are never brought to book. The conflicts in Jos have continued to defy all peacemaking attempts as parties to the conflict are unwilling to make concession and government have failed again to address and lay to rest the underlying cause of the conflicts.

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