Human Security and Global Warming: Challenges Before Christianity and Islam in Nigeria

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1. Introduction

A discourse on the concept of global warming in this paper needs to be contextually placed within the ecological systems of the planet earth and human security. The planet earth is made up of ecological systems that manifest in the variety of biodiversity with its added values of goods and services they provide which are usually referred to as 'gifts of nature'. For instance, four major areas of these values may be identified. The first is the provision of services by which the harvestable products of foods, medicines, fresh water, wood and fibres, fuel wood and other non-wood products, including the genetic resources for improving these products, flow from ecosystems to support humans. In addition, biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species no matter how small, all have an important role to play. The second is in its regulating services for local and global climate, including carbon sequestration, regulation of water quality, diseases, pollution and flood. For example, a large number of plant species means a greater variety of crops, greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms; and healthy ecosystems can better withstand and recover from a variety of disasters. Provision of cultural services is the third. This includes the aesthetic, spiritual, educational, scientific and recreational values. The last is in its supporting services it provides through its role in making the above three functions to happen. For instance, it mediates nutrient cycling, soil formation, pollination and primary production.

The ecosystem services are intrinsically linked to the constituents of human well-being of security, availability and access to the basic needs of livelihood of food, shelter and other materials. Other areas are those of health, recreation, eco-tourism, spiritual well-being and culture. Maintenance of biodiversity unites human generations of the past, present and future. It is therefore mandatory that natural resources which are an intrinsic part of biodiversity be protected. The major classes of these natural resources consist of agricultural land, forest land and its multiple products and services, natural land areas preserved for aesthetic, recreational and scientific purposes, fresh and salt water fisheries, mineral resources that include the mineral fuels and non-fuels, the renewable non-mineral energy sources of solar, tidal, wind and geothermal systems, water resources, the waste-assimilative capacities of all parts of the environment. Some natural resource stock is renewable by natural or artificial processes while others are non-renewable. Those that are

renewable often depend on appropriate non-destructive methods of management as with farmlands, fisheries and waste disposal since some changes in natural resource systems are irreversible. In the assessment of natural resource stocks, it is important that interactions with other systems and potentially irreversible changes be taken into account.

Primarily, as a result of human activities the ecological make-up and harmonious relationships among the environmental constituent beings have been degraded and altered leading to global warming and human insecurity. Global warming leading to climate change lends to extreme climate events which implies an immense social cost (Oyeshola, 1995; 1998; Adinna, 2001). For instance, Hurricane Gilbert in 1988 caused damage estimated at over US$870 million in Jamaica (Foley, 1991: 47). Similarly, the memory is still fresh of recent hurricanes, landslides, tsunami, floods, earthquakes and fires. It is this dynamic, overwhelming, destructive capacity associated with climate change that makes it a different global, socio-economic, developmental and security problem. Unlike other problems like nuclear warfare, refuges and poverty which may be localized and whose solutions may be delayed, global warming is a problem that involves every nation and the solution to it cannot be delayed. Any delay in addressing the problem promptly and radically too may mean that the entire humanity may perish sooner than later! This is a deadly serious implication and Nigeria with its great population and abundant resources is a part of the planet earth which is being threatened by global warming.

Nigeria with a population of over 140 million is home to approximately 250 different ethnic groups, each with its language. The three largest, the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and Igbo, together are less than two-thirds of all Nigerians. The country is almost evenly divided between Christianity predominantly in the South and Islam in the North. There are traditionalists in the land. The North is among the poorest predominantly Muslim regions in the world. In terms of income, most Nigerians are very poor, with oil wealth concentrated in the hands of a few elite. Militancy in the Niger Delta must be reckoned with if there will be peace in the land. Religious crisis is equally seriously at home in the country.

In addition to this landscape, water and electricity supply are notoriously erratic, if not non-existent in many places. Many of the country's roads and highways are in deplorable condition, many public buildings and facilities are decrepit and the inability of the Administration to tackle key infrastructural challenges continued to make the cost of production in Nigeria one of the highest in the world and by so doing putting operators in the sector at a disadvantage compared to their counterparts in other countries. In the face of this some corporations moved their headquarters away from Nigeria.

Corruption and glaring ineptitude of both the leadership and ranks and file of the Nigerian Police Force have seen crime rate spiralling to unprecedented levels. Armed robberies, political assassinations, kidnapping and brazen thudgery are of common occurrence. Specifically, the problem of poverty which is the bane of development in Nigeria, has not been adequately addressed in spite of National Policy on Poverty Eradication (2000) Programme.

In the context of environmental degradation, soil erosion is a serious problem in Nigeria. About three years ago, it led to gullies that threatened communities. For instance, deep gullies in Kebbi threatened communities in Jeda, Zuru, Shanga, Yahuri, Argungu, Arewa, Aleiro, Bagudo and Birnin Kebbi. In Awka over time, more than 1,000 persons and over 4,000 families have lost their ancestral lands to the menace of gully erosion in the three towns of Nanka, Ekwulobia and Nnewi. Flooding, another environmental problem occurs throughout the country in three main forms. The first is the urban flooding which mainly

affects human livelihood and it occurs in towns located on flat or low lying terrain usually with poor drainage systems. Such towns include Lagos, Maiduguri, Aba, Warri, Benin and Ibadan. Deforestation has become a major environmental problem in Nigeria. This is due to hardwood logging and tremendous population growth being experienced in the country. Construction of developmental projects, their implementation and related activities leading to industries, airports, recreational places, park, mechanized farming, housing estates and so on also contribute to deforestation because they take space.

The problem of industrial pollution is enormous; it is a serious problem in Nigeria. For instance, Nigeria has about 5,000 registered industrial facilities and 10,000 small scale industries operating illegally within residential premises. Disposal of domestic and industrial wastes is a problem in Nigeria. Disposing of industrial waste is leading, in some cases, to nightmare menacing the physical environment. Some of the industrial wastes are often dumped on the ground, thrown into the stream/lakes or disposed of in a deep hole in the ground. The ultimate sufferer of these methods of disposal is the physical environment. It takes a healthy planet, to sustain healthy people. All the problems enumerated above constitute the problem of human security in Nigeria which the two dominant religions of Christianity and Islam must address.

In the face of the crises enumerated above, both late Yar 'Adua and Goodluck Jonathan Administrations expect something radical from both Christianity and Islam. They expected from the two statistically dominant religions that they make their contributions in helping to investigate problems related to the organization of community life (ethnicity, family life, youth restlessness and joblessness, corruption, justice, violence, development, traditional values, etc) which is at the heart of human security and to seek out solutions and perhaps most importantly of all, to initiate the process of reorganizing already fractured relations among human groups in the country. At various times, the government has called on religious leaders to team-up for the progress and peace of the nation not only by asking for prayers but also by inviting them to conscientise their constituencies in order to promote indigenous values of love, community relationship and profound spirituality. Vices of intolerance, hatred, cutthroat competition, disharmony, pride, arrogance, theft, covetousness and cheating arguably introduced to the land by default through western civilisation (Omolewa in the *Nation*, August 8, 2007: 41) must be confronted. By its tenets, Christianity is expected to take an active part in reducing inequality, poverty and injustice (Is. 11: 1-9; Acts 2: 40-47, Mt.5: 1-8; 2 Cor.4: 16-18) and in exploring steps toward a more satisfactory organization of societal life. Islam up-holds similar orientation. Poverty is real in Nigeria and it is one of the major concerns of the government as expressed in its Poverty Alleviation Programme and religions are to lend their helping hands. Furthermore, Christianity and Islam in Nigeria are expected to make clear what exactly is at stake as the world confronts itself in need of transformation if global warming and climate change for instance, will not put an end to the existence of humanity and the earth planet as a living planet (Simonis, 2007: 8 ff).

In Nigeria religion pervades all aspects of life of human persons to the point that the dividing line between sanity and madness in the behaviour and activities among some practitioners of religions is often blurred. In other words, in the experience of Nigeria religion has created religious crisis and promoted socio-economic development at the same time. Since the influence of religion is so powerful in Nigeria, it can then be taken that it is a commanding force that can bring about a desirable effect if properly utilised.

In the light of the above contextual background, the aim of this chapter therefore is to challenge the two dominant religions in Nigeria in the face of human insecurity which has

become the national project especially from the point of view of the 7 point agenda of the ruling government. This will take place in the context of global warming. This is necessary because the devastating consequences of global warming will negate all efforts at securing and promoting human security, and this will be discussed not only as a religionist and practitioner and a Nigerian but also as an academic. The former categories may often be sentimental and apologetic as has been demonstrated in the context of Nigeria commissions set up at various times to find solutions to Nigerian religious crisis. A truly academic wants to be as objective as possible within the limit his value system imposes. In this way, radical but beneficial conclusions will be achieved.

The first part of this chapter takes up the two major concepts of human security and global warming. The second part begins with a discourse on some underling Christian and Islam theological principles in order to situate some of the assumptions. The second section of the second part takes up the explication of some internal sources of religious conflict like dogmatism in the interpretation of the sacred scriptures, passive acceptance of faith, gospel of prosperity and so on because the orientations they lead to influence adherents' actions and pronouncements while the third part discusses challenges before Christianity and Islam in relation to human security and global warming in Nigeria.

2. Human security and global warming: An understanding

2.1 Human security

After the end of World War 11, proponents of the classical tradition of international relations saw security narrowly as national security ('the protection or preservation of the state's territorial integrity and external sovereignty'). For them security denotes the absence of a military threat which generally means the protection of a state from external military attack (Makinda, 1996: 152). Willy Brandt understood security more broadly as he stated that:

> An important task of constructive international policy will have to consist in providing a new, more comprehensive understanding of 'security' which would be less restricted to the purely military aspects. In the global context true security cannot be achieved by a mounting up of weapons-defence in the narrow sense – but only by providing basic conditions for peaceful relations between nations, and solving not only the military but also the non-military problems which threaten them (Brandt, 1980: 214).

Similarly, the Palme Commission and its subsequent reports of 1982 and 1989 argued that the abolition or large reduction in weapons of mass destruction and conventional disarmament are prerequisites to providing momentum for progress on economic and social development and environmental conservation (The Palme Commission, 1989).

Furthermore, Gro Harlem Brundtland in *Our Common Future*, was more explicit about the inadequacy of security defined primarily in military terms. She demonstrated the tension between security understood primarily in military terms and environmental security. She equally criticized global militarism and the vested interests that profited from it and called on nations to 'turn away from the destructive logic of an 'arms culture' (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987: 297-304).

All the above definitions and descriptions are security of nations and their relationships centred. And so if one thinks of security only in terms of nation-states only, one risks confining analysis of security to a threat to the survival of the state of which war and conquest are the most extreme but not the sole threats. Therefore the concept of security can

be expanded to include natural forces that threaten security. Some of these are earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanoes, floods, mud slides or forest fires. Human agencies that can threaten security include criminals, lunatics, organised crime, civil war, revolution, local and regional wars and conflict of authority.

From the perspective of feminists, security must be defined in multidimensional terms which include freedom from both physical and structure violence. This perspective is further reflected in the National Organisation for Women which in its 1990 resolution on Women in Combat affirmed that:

> 80-90 per cent of casualties due to conflict since the Second World War have been civilians, the majority of them women and children. The strategy of rape in the war in Bosnia has alerted the world to an atrocity that has always existed in war time, although it is usually unreported. Women and children constitute 80 per cent of the global refugee population, a phenomenon usually attributed to military conflict: women are also the most frequent victims of domestic violence in all societies, a crime which is always under-reported, but one which ranges across regions, cultures and classes (United Nations, 1991). Violence against women is higher in militarized societies and in military families. Evidence such as this suggests that women are particularly vulnerable to militarism and war (Booth and Smith, 1995: 191).

Extending the definition of security to economic and environmental dimensions also highlights vulnerabilities of women as a 1981 Report on the UN Committee on the States of Women claimed:

> While women represent half the global population and one-third of the paid labour force and are responsible for two-thirds of all working hours, they receive only a tenth of world income and own less than 1 per cent of world property (United Nations, 1991:81-114 citing Jaggar, 1983: 138).

And within the structural adjustment policies in the south, women have been impacted heavily upon. They have to:

> Assume additional care-giving tasks when states are forced to cut back on social spending. Women are also particularly vulnerable to environmental degradation: in areas of Africa and Asia they are walking up to 10 kilometres a day to search for shrinking supplies of fuel-wood and water. Women's reproductive systems are particularly susceptible to the hazards of toxic wastes and industrial pollution and accidents (Oyeshola, 1995: 211; Booth and Smith, 1995:192).

In the postcolony era of many African countries particularly Nigeria, the term security, carries with it, in addition to what has been stated above a nuance which is worth noting. This can be described as security not only as control over territories and subjugated peoples, but also as a particular mode of masculinity. In patriarchal societies, masculine conceptions of security require control over women. In military states this translates into command over women which involves the formal or informal appointment of a 'commander of women' who is recognized by the military hierarchy, and who is arrogated the right to articulate and address the concerns of women.

It is from the above background that the Earth Summit of Rio in 1992 was coming. At the Earth Summit, one of the fundamental emerging principles in its declarations was that of principle 1 which stipulated that human person is at the heart of socio-political activities and that it is no longer economic growth per se as was the situation before. This new orientation has necessitated a paradigm shift in respect of the concept of security. Flowing from this the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) 1994 *Human Development*

Report argued that security should be expanded to include threats in seven areas namely, economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political. This it refers to as human security.

Economic security requires an assured basic income for individuals, usually from productive and remunerative work or, as a last resort, from a publicly financed safety net. In this sense, only about a quarter of the world's people are presently economically secure. Food security which is closely related to economic security requires that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food. According to the United Nations, the overall availability of food is not a problem, rather the problem often is the poor distribution of food and a lack of purchasing power. In the past, food security problems have been dealt with at both national and global levels. However, their impacts are limited. According to UN, the key is to tackle the problems that are related to access to assets, work and assured income.

Health Security aims to guarantee a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. In developing countries, the major causes of death traditionally were infectious and parasitic diseases, whereas in industrialized countries, the major killers were diseases of the circulatory system. Today, lifestyle-related chronic diseases are leading killers worldwide, with 80 percent of deaths from chronic diseases occurring in low- and middle-income countries. According to the United Nations, in both developing and industrial countries, threats to health security are usually greater for poor people in rural areas, particularly children. This is due to malnutrition and insufficient access to health services, clean water and other basic necessities.

Environmental security aims to protect people from the short- and long-term ravages of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment. In developing countries, lack of access to clean water resources is one of the greatest environmental threats. In industrial countries, one of the major threats is air pollution. Global warming, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, is another environmental security issue.

Personal security aims to protect people from physical violence, whether from the state or external states, from violent individuals and sub-state actors, from domestic abuse, or from predatory adults. For many people, the greatest source of anxiety is crime, particularly violent crime. Community security aims to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships and values and from sectarian and ethnic violence. Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups are often threatened. About half of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic strife. The United Nations declared 1993 the Year of Indigenous People to highlight the continuing vulnerability of the 300 million aboriginal people in 70 countries as they face a widening spiral of violence.

Political security is concerned with whether people live in a society that honours their basic human rights. According to a survey conducted by Amnesty International, political repression, systematic torture, ill treatment or disappearance was still practised in 110 countries. Human rights violations are most frequent during periods of political unrest. Along with repressing individuals and groups, governments may try to exercise control over ideas and information.

Since all these facets surround the human person therefore human security must necessarily embrace them and much more. For instance and in addition human security must embrace religion, human rights and all aspects of human well-being. It is within the context of the above that the two dominant religions in Nigeria are challenged to protect and promote human security and find solution to global warming which is a serious threat to humanity.

2.2 Global warming

Global warming may be referred to as the gradual increase of the temperature of the planet thus leading to its climate change. This accentuates the rise in sea level which culminates in flooding and melt of ice caps from polar and mountain glaciers. The impacts of rising sea level include loss of coastal ecosystems, flooding of cities, displacement of coastal inhabitants, and increased vulnerability to storm surges. Bangladesh, one of the poorest nations in the world is projected to lose 17.5 percent of its land if sea level rises about 40 inches (I metre). Tens of thousands of people are likely to be displaced, and the country's agricultural system will be adversely affected. Coastal flooding will threaten animals, plants, and fresh water supplies. The current danger posed by storm surges when cyclones hit Bangladesh is likely to increase .The Majuro Atoll in the Pacific Marshall Islands is projected to lose 80% of its land with a 20-inch (0.5m) rise in sea level. Many of the islands will simply disappear under the rising seas. A similar fate awaits other islands throughout the South Pacific and Indian Oceans, including many in the Maldives and French Polynesia. Coral reefs, which protect many of these islands, will be submerged, subjecting the local peoples to heightened storm surges and disrupted coastal ecosystems. Tourism and local agriculture will be severely challenged (Wiki Encyclopedia, 2010).

With sea level changes (Rodda, 1991: 13) due to global warming many of the world's richest and most heavily populated agricultural zones in low-lying lands will be flooded. Many beaches will be eroded and fresh water reserves can be in danger of pollution with salt water. The low-lying lands and heavily populated agricultural zones like the deltas of great rivers like the Ganges (Bangladesh), Nile (Egypt), the Mekong (Indo-China), the Indus (Pakistan), Limpopo river basin (Mozambique) (Houghton, 1994:93-96) and the Niger delta (Nigeria) are vulnerable. Other low-lying areas include Guyana, Papua New Guinea, India and Indonesia. Much of the Netherlands is 5 metres below sea level while Lagos is only 3 metres above sea level and many of the world's largest cities including Calcutta, Shanghai, Bangkok, Jarkata, Tokyo, London, new York, Miami and Venice (Foley, 1991:41).

Other impacts will include incidence of the outbreak of diseases such as yellow fever, dengue malaria and natural disasters. Cold winter weather reduces the spread of infectious diseases by killing infectious organisms and carrier species, such as mosquitoes. Warmer, wetter weather, on the other hand could increase the spread of malaria, dengue fever, and yellow fever. The possible increase in flooding and damage to water and sewage infrastructure can further encourage the spread of disease. Rising sea level requires many different local responses. For instance, urban areas on the U.S. coastline could be surrounded by rising sea water. Cities may require extensive infrastructure development to assure fresh water supplies, secure transportation, and protect people from flooding and storm surge. Sea walls can be built to protect cities and roads from rising seas. More robust building construction may also be required to withstand the increasingly intense storms that are likely to result from global warming. Fresh water supply is a concern as sea water penetrates ground water aquifers, which become brackish and less usable further inland.

At the end of the day, the cost of 'fight' back of sea level rise due to global warming will be usually huge as the experience of Nigeria in respect of the bar beach, in Lagos demonstrated. The low-lying lands and heavily populated agricultural zones are vulnerable to rising sea levels. Lagos is only three metres above sea level and shares the fate of similar cities like Calcutta, Shanghai, Bangkok, Jakarta, Tokyo, London, New York, Miami and Venice.

Nigeria cannot be indifferent to the effect of global warming as especially and effectively predicted by the 1988 Toronto Conference. Succinctly, these possible effects of global warming are:

i.   Imperial human health and welfare;
ii.   Diminish global food security, through increased soil erosion and greater shifts and uncertainties in agricultural production, particularly for many vulnerable regions;
iii. Change the distribution and seasonal availability of fresh water resources;
iv.   Increased political instability and the potential for international conflict;
v.   Jeopardise prospects for sustainable development and reduction of poverty;
vi.   Accelerate extinction of animal and plant species upon which human survival depends and
vii. Alter yield, productivity and biological diversity of natural and managed ecosystems, particularly forests.

Already, Nigeria is experiencing coastal land sea water rise leading to serious fight of Fashola Administration of Lagos state to keep the sea in check by variety of strategies like sand filling and making concrete barriers across the beaches among others. Weather is becoming unpredictable making farming problematic. Already farming produce is not as buoyant as one would have wished to see. Lake Chad is typical of water masses that are drying up as a result of global warming and fresh water is not easily available as was the case some decades ago due to the drying up of sources of springs in some high lands. Besides, heat has become a common source of complaint by many citizens even if the country is situated in the tropics because the weather is becoming unusually hotter. Consequently, Nigeria cannot but team-up with international community to seek for solutions for global warming. Anything less than that threatens the very existence of the country and its people.

3. Some underling Christian and Islam theological principles

Here, it is necessary to establish some of the principles underlying Christian and Islamic theologies. Basic principles underlying these theologies consist of many elements. Some of these are first, that theology is the systematic study of God in himself and his relationships with all he has created both the living and non-living beings, and human response to the relationship is part of theology. Second, the tenets of faith affirm among other things that the entire universe including humanity is under the dominant domain of God, the creator of heaven and earth in spite of the seemingly powerful manifestation of the devil who will be humiliated ultimately at the end of time; truth and goodness that are attributes of God will finally triumph over evil. Third, and for Christianity human beings have distorted the pristine harmonious and beautiful state of affairs at creation (Gn. 1). By their actions violence, destruction and taking of life have become the hallmark of the landscape of human relations and environmental degradation as part of the consequences of human actions and activities that now endanger the very essence that sustains the ecosystem. In other words, human beings have introduced 'sin' into the world and by so doing damaged the natural delicate but harmonious relationships among all that inhabit it.

Fourth, Christian theology affirms that salvation of every person will primarily depend on his/her positive participation in the affairs of the world. But for both religions, there is reward and punishment after death for every person depending on how he or she lived his/her life. Lastly, Christian theology does not make appeal to a utopia government, not

even a messianic one but only to a practice to be taken up over and over again; the practice being the only criterion of what is unacceptable namely that someone lacks something necessary (Matt. 25). In order that there will be no system that allows someone to lack basic necessities of life, the political restructuring of society becomes a task in which good theology must make an impact. In the final analysis, underdevelopment, violence, corruption and bad governance belong to the culture of death whereas God raises people to life. And in spite of the 'sins' of the world God is still at work in his world. Therefore, it is all those who undertake to create the conditions needed so that all may have life, life in abundance (Jn. l0: 10) that are the true sons and daughters of God. It is they that are proclaiming a living faith that builds peace and good governance, and promote and protect human security, and fight against global warming.

The basic assumption within Christian theologies is that the entire universe including humanity is under the domain of God, 'the creator of heaven and earth' and theology being the systematic and scientific study of God in himself and His relationship with all He has created. Good theology in this context means the authentic understanding of God and His relationship with His creation. Nigeria is a populous and religious country and its socio-political dominance in the continent is in no doubt. It enjoys natural resources, human and social capital. In spite of that, religious violence, ethnic clashes, corruption and almost collapse extended family and community values are a part of the national landscape. Religious fundamentalism of many practitioners of religion is primarily responsible for this state of affairs in the country, proliferation of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements notwithstanding. It is on this premise that implication of fundamentalism is based with a view to moving Nigeria forward. There cannot be peace, good governance, progress, human security and wholesome environment without good theology.

Some religionists believe that religion is above criticism. Two myths seem to support this and keep faith beyond the fray of rational criticism. Ironically these myths seem to foster religious extremism and religious intolerance. The first one is that most religionists believe that there are good things that people get from religious faith for example, strong communities, ethical behaviour, spiritual experience that cannot be had elsewhere. The second is that many also believe that the terrible things that are sometimes done in the name of religion are the products not of faith per se but of human 'unredeemed' nature (base nature) forces like greed, hatred and fear for which religious beliefs are themselves the best (or even the only) remedy. The conflicts in Palestine (Jews v. Muslims), the Balkans (Orthodox Serbians v. Catholic Croatians; Orthodox Serbians v. Bosnia and Albanian Muslims), Northern Ireland (Protestants v. Catholics), Kashmir (Muslims v. Hindus), Sudan (Muslims v. Christians and Traditionalists), Nigeria (Muslims v. Christians), Sri Lanka (Sinhalese Buddhists v. Tamil Hindus), Indonesia (Muslims v. Timorese Christians) etc. arguably, are religious in character. Taken together, these myths seem to have granted perfect immunity to outbreaks of reasonableness in public religious discourse in Nigeria.

Many religious moderates have taken the apparent high road of pluralism, asserting the equally validity of all faiths, but in doing so they neglect to notice the unreconciliable sectarian truth claims of each. For instance, Mathews Ojo points this out among Christian Pentecostals and Charismatics when he stated that Each (Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements) has its uniqueness and often appeals to different classes of people. In fact, it is rather strange to group William Kumuyi' s strict holiness ethos with David Oyedepo's this-worldly concern, or associate Daniel Olukoya's MFM (Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries) steeped in the African cosmology of evil with the politically conscious Tunde Bakare's Latter Rain Assembly (Ojo, 2010: 25)

As long as many Christians believe that only their baptized will be saved on the Day of Judgement, they cannot possibly 'respect' the beliefs of others. Many Muslims and Jews generally take the same arrogant view of their own enterprises and have spent millennia passionately reiterating the errors of other faiths. In a place like Nigeria, a secular state where citizens could be stoned or beheaded for doubting the veracity of the Koran may never know peace and progress. There is clearly a sacred dimension to human existence and coming to terms with it could be the highest purpose of human life. However, the way the divine and secular is understood and lived makes the deference between 'hell' and 'heaven' (corruption, violence, assassination etc and human security and sane planet) in Nigerian context.

4. Some internal sources of religious conflict that threaten human security

4.1 Christianity
In the Christian context there are some inherent sources of conflict. One of them has to do with Dogmatism in the interpretation of the Christian Scriptures

4.1.1 Dogmatism in the interpretation of the Christian scriptures
One of the basic principles in the interpretation of the word of God in the contemporary world is to see every part of the sacred writings in its totality and the intention of God for all He has made. This principle is necessary because any person can interpret the tenets of Christian faith in order to produce a different picture of Christianity. There is no limit to what people can read out of the Scriptures if they are really determined. This has led to different interpretations of the Bible culminating in schisms, heresies, fundamentalism, religious ideologies, religious crises and violence. Nigeria has witnessed too many religious crises with their terrible consequences. One of the fundamental sources of religious crises in Christianity in Nigeria is 'fundamentalism' where the Scriptures could easily be manipulated to a definite purpose without a central authority to authenticate the 'right' or 'wrong' or 'bad' or 'good' of such an interpretation. Such an interpretation may lead to violence, passive acceptance of the faith (do not get involved in socio-political and economic life of the society i.e. governance), the gospel of prosperity that is, Christianity without the carrying of the Cross and health gospel (a Christian does not need a doctor since Christ has redeemed his followers from sin, poverty and sickness. What a Christian needs to do is to believe and claim his/her health by expressing that belief). This type of fundamentalism creates crisis for the society. For instance and as Matthews Ojo observes and he can be quoted extensively.

> Charismatic movements emerged in Nigeria on a reformist agenda in the early 1970s, to champion a new spirituality that is redemptive, prophetic, hopeful, and progressive, and which is anchored on the premise that a vibrant religion which was originally the capacity of re-ordering the society on a pietistic orientation. However by the late 1990s, this religion which was originally sectarian, promoting a strict holiness ethos, and on the fringe of the society, with membership numbering a few thousands, had moved to the centre stage, increased its membership to several millions, and had consequently dissipated its pietistic energy. Moreover, it has now accepted the values of larger society as it shifted to prosperity: mechanism for upward social mobility and materials aggrandizement. Hence, it is not strange to find the 'SU' of the 1970s who were then derided, becoming the founders of prosperity- type churches, riding the SUV vehicles,

and being portrayed as celebrities. Besides, men and women shifted their membership from Deeper Life Bible Church with its asceticism to Winners' Chapel with its theology that supports accumulation of wealth. In fact, many evangelists prefer to be known and addressed as bishops and archbishops with all the paraphernalia of power.

It is a paradox of religiosity and corruption in the society, of religious fundamentalism within a context of moral latitude and of inept governance, of a religion piety that revolves around self, while the collective is ignored, and of high religiosity within a failed state that is in constant motion but transition to nowhere in particular. William Kumuyi, Enock Adeboye, Mathew Ashimoliwo, Sunday Adelaja, Chris Oyakhilome and Daniel Odukoya - all Pentecostal pastors - could be exporting the Nigerian brand of Pentecostalism around the world, while their own country still needs the same panacea being offered freely to others. Indeed, both the Pentecostal religion and the personality steering it are important in any critical review of the dynamism of Pentecostalism in Africa. Whereas fourth century monastic movements in the Egyptian desert produced a crop of mystics and saints that distanced themselves from the larger society, and consequently kept to their saintliness, contemporary Pentecostalism reflects every kind of ambiguity that has characterized a nation in need of a saviour (Ojo, 2010: 5 and 6).

The following anomalies may now be treated to explicate some of the points raised above.

4.1.2 Passive acceptance of the faith

Some Christian denominations place great stretch on the end of the world (end-time). These proponents are keen to see 'biblical prophecies' being fulfilled everywhere. They dwell extensively on the apocalyptic (from the Greek word for 'vision') parts of the Bible namely the books of Daniel, Revelation, Ezekiel, Joel and Zephaniah. They give prominence to the appearance of plagues, famines and disasters of every kind. For them, all kinds of hardship and deprivation as foretold are ordained by God; they are by definition unavoidable.

This way of thinking encourages passivity and resignation especially among the poor and marginalised. Because the end is supposedly near, nothing else matters except preaching the Gospel, or fulfilling the great Commission (Go out to the whole world to proclaim the Good News (Mt. 28: 19)). Evangelism and winning souls for the Lord are all that matters; anything else is a distraction. The implication of this orientation is that it diverts attention from the socio-economic and political realities of the country by teaching that there is not time to do anything about them. They forget that Saint Paul 'changed' his mind when he said to his audience that any person who does not work must not eat. This was in the context of the early Christians waiting for the second coming of Christ which did not come. They were doing nothing while waiting for the second coming of Christ.

4.1.3 The gospel of prosperity

According to the adherents of this orientation, God has met all the needs of human beings in the suffering and death of Christ, and every Christian should now share the victory of Christ over sin, sickness and poverty. Therefore a believer has a right to the blessings of health and wealth won by Christ. And s/he can obtain these blessings merely by a positive confession of faith. S/he can 'claim' the benefits. The prosperity gospel phenomenon, in general, is arising in situations where the majority of people experience acute-poverty and even desperation while a minority enjoy the benefits of the consumer society. Some other characterises are well put by Shorter and Njiru:

- There is also a widely felt need for a cathartic experience, enabling individuals to rid themselves of guilt-feelings and other moral burdens, often related to the experience of poverty. It is a desire for social healing, as much as for inner healing. Salvation is basically a subjective assurance of deliverance. God is a 'problem-solving God', offering immediate relief from present affliction.
- Paradoxically, members of new religious movements are ready to surrender material possessions. This is a calculated sacrifice which sows the seed of future prosperity. It is a 'cargo-cult' faith.
- Often there is an Adventist or millenarian orientation in the new religious movements .. There is also a literal expectation of miracles, cures and other marvels. Finally, and most dangerous of all, there is a mystique of leadership, of accepting the unquestioned authority of an evangelist/prophet, who possesses special gifts and who is the vehicle for a divine message. Many leaders of new religious movements also seem to regard their operation as a business, as much as a religious avocation (Shorter and Njiru, 2001: 13).

This phenomenon makes wealth or prosperity a simple matter of faith and generous giving to a preacher. The more you give to God the better your benefit is the axiom. The orientation preaches personal salvation, a deliverance from ill health and poverty. The rich are not blamed for oppressing the poor. On the contrary they are evidence of God's blessing and are to be emulated. Poverty is said to be due to sin and lack of faith. It can be overcome by prayer, fasting and generous donations to the evangelist. Prosperity Gospel simply ignores the political and economic reasons for so much poverty that is around in the country. Dependent economics, fluctuating prices, overgrazing, global warming, environmental degradation, overpopulation, corruption, mismanagement, destabilisation and mistaken priorities and so on are empty phrases without relevance. Prosperity gospel like the passive acceptance of faith diverts attention from political and economic issues and working for peace and reconciliation. It leads to no social activity whatsoever. According to this gospel, only Christians matter. It is the Christian that will have job, food, education and good life. Only Christians are to be successful. So the plight of other members of the nation or the state or society or the situation of the general population is of no consequence to Christians. The charitable thing the Christian can do to the deprived unbelievers is merely to convert them so that they can prosper as well.

The gospel of prosperity tells people that material prosperity will be provided by a 'miracle-working God' or through the' law of sowing' - the more you give to the preacher the more God will give you. Thus the gospel of prosperity functions by diverting all attention from the economic and social situation. As far as the adherents of this gospel are concerned daily critiquing the reasons for why they are poor is not a virtue. The key biblical texts they often quote are:

- Mark 11: 23-24 'Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will"
- Deuteronomy 5: 28-30 'All these blessings shall come upon you ... if you obey the voice of the Lord your God'.
- Malachi 3: 8-11 'Bring the full tithes into the storehouse ... and thereby put me to the test if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing'.
- Mark 10: 19-30 'There is no one. who will not receive a hundredfold here in this life'.
- Philippians 4: 19 'My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus'.

4.1.4 Health gospel

A corollary to the prosperity gospel is the health gospel. The basic principle of the health gospel is that Jesus redeemed us from sin, poverty and sickness. He bore our sickness (Isaiah 53: 4-5). All a Christian has to do is to believe, and claim his or her health by expressing that belief. For the proponent of this gospel, all sickness comes from Satan and that no Christian should be sick - to be sick is to lack faith or to have sinned. For them a Christian has no need of doctors. The difficulty about this orientation is its exclusive dependence on God's miraculous intervention at healing people. Yes, God is able to effect any healing but sometimes He does not heal for whatever reason.

The implication of this gospel on socio-political life is profound. It does not promote the necessary commitment to the eradication of diseases, child immortality and increase life expectancy of citizens of any nations. It is not its concern that any community is mobilised for child inoculation and provision of clean water. As far as the gospel is concerned it claims that it is faith that will turn around the state of crisis that our health institutions are experiencing. This type of Christianity leaves everything up to God and focuses only on the health of an individual. It is not capable of analysing the socio-political causes of deteriorating health services due to economic mismanagement, corruption, diverting available resources to military spending or to prestige projects. The gospel does not challenge oppressive and dehumanising structures that promote culture of death. Their followers are told that they are in the world but not of the world (Jn 15: 19). That may be true but this passage of the bible has been misinterpreted. Our world is God's world. All God created was good (Genesis 1) and so Christians must so believe. Arguably, the manifestation of evil forces is visible in the world but still it is God's world. Therefore forces of evil (sickness and diseases) must be radically confronted.

Thank goodness, in recent years many Christians have come to understand how 'the world' or 'human society' operates particularly through the influence of Social Sciences. Authentic Christians have come to realise that a lot of human suffering is caused by political, cultural and economic systems. These systems are not created by God, nor are they part of the nature of things even though they may appear that way. Political and economic systems are created by human beings or rather by particular group of human beings largely for their own benefits. Consequently, Christians realise that their duty to help the suffering extends beyond offering relief to suffering individuals; it extends to improving the system that inflicts so much hurt and damage in the first instance. To love one's neighbour means more than providing relief to those who are suffering, although this is important; it means confronting dehumanizing systems and working towards changing them. This implies entering 'the world' and using one's influence positively in society generally. Commerce, politics, religion, education, entertainment industry, technology, computer are not 'Satan's world' or systems or creation as some Christians would want people to believe. They are 'instruments' in our hands to be used in order to improve the world. A part of a Christian's task is to be at whatever human needs are to be met (Matthew 25: 31-36) and to cooperate readily with all those who are already meeting these needs. Establishing Churches or sects or fellowships or ministries as alternative society of human beings is misleading and unchristian. Rather Churches and sects or fellowships are expected to be the leaven of the society (You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth Mathew 5:13-16). It is the Lord who created the world and what God created is good!

4.1.5 Preaching 'bad theology' (fundamentalism)

Unfortunately, the former President Olusegun Obasanjo in the Nigerian context saw his presidency as God ordained and his battle of administration and policies as God's. The Nigerian Tribune of 11/1/2004, on the starting of a four-day warning strike called by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to protest increase of prices of petroleum products beautifully captured the divine mission syndrome when it stated of the president as:

- My presidency, God-ordained - Obasanjo (caption)
- President Olusegun Obasanjo has described his presidency as God-ordained and divinely directed, affirming that his regular prayer request is that 'Nigeria should be great.'
- The President said he had faith in the corporate survival and greatness of Nigeria, stating that of the two prayer requests he made to God when a pastor called him on his mobile phone, 'God has answered my prayer that Nigeria should be great. The second one is that I asked God to make me handsome, but God immediately answered no,' the President said while thanking God for making his son very handsome.
- President Obasanjo was speaking at the Aso Rock chapel after he was given an award of a great leader by the Lagos State chapter of the Pentecostal Association of Nigeria. The President, who was presented a plaque and two giant paintings, said he was touched that at a time like this in the life of Nigeria, he was recognised by men of God for his activities as a leader.
- 'I am greatly touched by this honour and by the timing. Actions like this encourage me. I thank you for recognising our good intention as a leader,' the President said.
- Presenting the award, a representative of Lagos PAN, Pastor Okonkwo and two of his other colleagues described the President as a tool of God for the reformation of Nigeria. Lauding the President for not bending in the face of crisis, Pastor Okonkwo said 'God sent the President to reform Nigeria and right the wrong of the past, stating that the President's reforms have divine inspiration' (The *Nigerian Tribune*, 11/10/04: 3)

President Olusegun Obasanjo is not alone. His counterpart, the formal President George W. Bush was equally fundamentalistly disposed as shown in the following passage.

> Many prominent Republicans belong to the Council for National Policy, a secretive Christian pressure group founded by the fundamentalist Tim LaHaye (co-author of the apocalyptic "Left Behind" series of novels). This organisation meets quarterly to discuss who knows what. George W. Bush gave a closed-door speech to the council in 1999, after which the Christian Right endorsed his candidacy. Indeed, 40 percent of those who eventually voted for Bush were white evangelicals. Beginning with his appointment of John Ashcroft as his attorney general, President Bush found no lack of occasions on which to return the favour. The departments of justice, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services and Education now regularly issue directives that blur the separation between church and state. In his "faith-based initiative" Bush has managed to funnel tens of millions of taxpayer dollars directly to church groups, to be used more or less however they see fit (Harris, 2006: 155).

In Christian theology, it is not nation-states that get rid the world of evil- they are too often caught up in complicated webs of political power, economic interests, cultural clashes and nationalist dreams. The confrontation with evil is a role reserved for God and for the people of God when they faithfully exercise moral conscience. But God has not given the responsibility for overcoming evil to any nation-state. To confuse the role of God with that of President Obasanjo as a politician is a serious theological error that some might say borders on idolatry or blasphemy (*South Letter*, Issue 39: 51).

4.2 Islam

There is a problem of fundamentalism with Islam precisely because of the vision of life that it prescribes to all Muslims in the Quran and further elaborated in the literature of the hadith which recounts the sayings and actions of the Prophet.

In an examination of Islam and its relations with non-Muslims, Quixotic Media, the producers of the documentary film of Islam: What the West Needs to Know (2007), the following issues in six parts based on the canonical texts of Islam, its primary resource material are paramount and revealing.

1. **There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet**: In the first part, it is argued by various commentators that Islamic violence stems from the teachings and examples of Muhammad and that the Qur'an prescribes and sanctions violence against non-Muslims.

2. **The Struggle**: In the second part, Walid Shoebat defines the word "Jihad" to mean the struggle to impose Allah's will over the earth, resulting in holy war against the non-Muslim world to bring it under the rule of Islam.

3. **Expansion:** In the third part, Bat Ye'or describes the expansion of Islam through conquest and presents historical evidence of enslavement and massacres of Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Hindus by Muslim invaders.

4. **War is Deceit**: In the fourth part, Robert Spencer and Serge Trifkovic discuss the Islamic principle of Taqiyya, Islamic dissimulation, which, the lecturers argue, enjoins Muslims to deceive non-Muslims to advance the cause of Islam.

5. **More than a Religion**: In the fifth part, the documentary asserts that "Islamic law governs every aspect of religious, political, and personal action, which amounts to a form of totalitarianism that is divinely enjoined to dominate the world, analogous in many ways to Communism".

6. **The House of War**: The final part covers the division of the world into Dar al-Islam ("the house of Islam" or "the house of peace"), the land governed by the Islamic law, and Dar al-Harb ("the house of war"), the land of non-Muslims. According to the film, Muslims are enjoined to bring the Dar al-Harb under the control of Islam. The film argues, "Muslims in Western nations are called to subvert the secular regimes in which they now live in accordance with Allah's command." (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia)

In the Quran, the following are equally revealing.

1. "They wished that you reject Faith, as they have rejected (Faith), and thus that you all become equal (like one another). So take not Auliya (protectors or friends) of them, till they emigrate in the way of Allah (to Muhammad). But if they turn back (from Islam), take (hold of) them and kill them wherever you find them, and take neither Auliya (protectors or friends) nor helpers from them."(Surah 4:89)

2. "(Remember) when your Lord revealed to the angels, "Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed, I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over their fingers and toes. "(Surah 8: 12).

3. "Jihad is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing whicgood for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you know not AI-jihad (holy fighting) in Allah's cause (with full force of numbers and weaponry) is given utmost importance in Islam and is one of its pillars which it stands. By jihad, Islam is established, Allah's word is made superior, (His word being La ilaha which means none has the right to be worshipped but Allah), and His

Religion (Islam) is propagated. By abandoning Jihad (may Allah protect us from that) Islam is destroyed and Muslims fall into an inferior position; their honour is lost; their lands are stolen, their rule and authority vanish. Jihad is an obligatory duty in Islam on every Muslim, and he who tries to escape from this duty, or does not in his innermost heart wish to fulfil this duty, dies with one of the qualities of a hypocrite."(Surah 2: 216)

4. Fight against those who believe not in Allah, nor the last day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah and his messenger (Muhammad) and those who acknowledge not the religion of the scripture (Jews and Christians) , until they pay the Jizyah [a tax levied from the people of the scripture (Jews and Christians who are under the protection of Muslim government) with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued."(Surah 9: 29) "0 you believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you, and let them find harshness in you; and know that Allah is with those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious- see V 2:2) believers of Islamic monotheism who fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which he has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which he has ordained)" (9: 123) those who believe, fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of Taghut (Satan). So fight you against the friends of Shaitan (Satan). Ever feeble indeed is the plot of Shaitan (Satan)."(Surah 4: 76).

5. "Let those (believers) who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, we shall bestow on him a great reward" Surah 4: 74). "That you believe in Allah and his Messenger (Muhammad) and that you strive hard and fight in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives; that will be better for you, if you but know!" (if you do so) He will forgive you your sins and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in And (Eden) paradise; that is indeed the great success"(Surah 61 : 1112). "Have you seen those who were told to hold back their hands (from fighting) and perform As-Salat (lqamat-as-Salat), and give Zakat, but when the fighting was ordained for them, behold! A section of them fear men as they fear Allah or even more. They say: "Our Lord! Why have you ordained for us fighting? Would you have granted us respite for a short period? Say: "short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to scalish thread in the long slit of a date-stone." (Surah 4: 77).

6. "So, when you meet (in fight-jihad in Allah's cause) those who disbelieve, smite (their) necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, i.e. take them as captives). Thereafter (is the time) either for generosity (i.e. free them without ransom), or ransom (according to what benefits Islam), until the war lays down its burden. Thus (you are ordered by Allah to continue in carrying out jihad against the disbelievers till they embrace Islam and are saved from the punishment in the hell-fire or at least come under your protection), but ifit had been Allah's will, He will never let their deeds be 10st."(Surah 47: 4) "Then when the sacred Months (the 1st, i\ 11 the and lih months of the Islamic calendar) have passed, then kill the Mushrikun (see V2: 1 05 neither those who disbelieve among the people of the scripture (Jews and Christians) nor Al-Mushrikun (the idolaters, polytheist, disbelievers in the oneness of Allah, Pagans, etc'). whenever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent and perform As-Salat (lqamat-as-Salat, and give Zakat, then leave their way free. Verily, Allah is oft-forgiving, most Merciful." (Surah 9: 5)

The roots of Islamic fundamentalism go back to the first centuries of Islam. But Islamic fundamentalism in its current context, theory, and power emerged after Ruhollah Khomeini came to power in Iran in 1979. The Khomeini regime transformed the idea of creating a global Islamic rule from an unachievable ideal to an achievable goal by many fundamentalist groups, and it also gave these groups global backing. For instance, the foreword of the regime's constitution reads, in part:

> Given the context of Iran's Islamic Revolution, which was a movement for the victory of all the oppressed over the oppressors, it provides the ground for continuation of the revolution inside and outside the country, specifically in spreading international links to other Islamic and people's movements, tries to pave the way for the creation of unique global ummah so the continuation of the struggle for the salvation of deprived and suffering nations can be settled.

Another part of the foreword, under the headline "Ideological Army," reads:

> The Army of the Islamic Republic and the Revolutionary Guards Corps carry not only the duty of protecting the borders but also ideological duty, i.e., Jihad for God and struggle to spread the rule of God's law in the world.

The Eleventh Act of the constitution reads:

> The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is obligated to base its general policy on the coalition and unity of the Islamic nations and to try to fulfil the political, economic, and cultural unity of the Islamic world.

From the point of view of Islam, the world is divided into the 'House of Islam' and the 'House of War', and the latter designation indicates how many Muslims believe their differences with those who do not share their faith will be ultimately resolved. This implies that the only future devout Muslims can envisage is one in which all infidels have been converted to Islam, subjugated or killed. The tenets of Islam simply do not admit of anything but a temporary sharing of power with the 'enemies of God'.

The feature of Islam that is most troubling to non-Muslims especially in Nigeria and which apologists for Islam do much to obfuscate is the principle of jihad. Literally, the term can be translated as 'struggle' or 'striving' but it is generally rendered in English as 'holy war' and this is no accident. While Muslims are quick to observe that there is an inner (or 'greater') jihad, which involves waging war on one's own sinfulness, no amount of casuistry can disguise the fact that the outer (or 'lesser') jihad that is war against infidels and apostates is a central feature of the faith. Armed conflict 'in defence of Islam' is a religious obligation for every Muslim man. The duty of jihad is an unambiguous call to world conquest.

The presumption is that the duty of jihad will continue, interrupted only by truces, until all the world either adopts the Muslim faith or submits to Muslim rule'. There is just no denying that Muslims expect victory in this world, as well as in the next (Harris, 2006: 111).

The same idea is witnessed to and elaborated upon by the literature of the Hadith for instance,

i.   Jihad is your duty under and ruler, be he godly or wicked.
ii. A single endeavour (of fighting) in Allah's Cause in the forenoon or in the afternoon is better than the world and whatever is in it.
iii. Nobody who dies and finds good from Allah (in the Hereafter) would wish to come back to this world even if he were given the whole world and whatever is in it, except the martyr who on seeing the superior of martyrdom, would like to come back to the world and get killed again (in Allah's Cause).

iv. He who dies without having taken part in a campaign dies in a kind of unbelief. Paradise is in the shadow of swords.

In the Muslim perception, conversion to Islam is a benefit to the convert and a merit in those who convert him. However, as Lewis rightly observed, in Islamic law, conversion from Islam is apostasy that can carry a capital offence for both the one who is misled and the one who misleads him. Furthermore, if a Muslim renounces Islam, even if a new convert reverts to his previous faith, the penalty is death (Lewis, 2003: 55). Another area of concern has to do with why should Islam cannot be critiqued or 'criticized'. Criticising Islam is currently a taboo; its religious beliefs are simply beyond the scope of rational discourse. Criticising a Muslim's ideas about God and the afterlife is thought to be impolite in a way that criticising his ideas about physics or geography is not. For instance, when a Muslim suicide bomber obliterates himself along with a score of innocents on a Jerusalem or Iraqi street, the role that faith played in his actions is invariably discounted; his motives must have been political, economic or entirely personal. Without faith, desperate people would still do terrible things but when do whatever terrible things they do in the name of faith, they are exonerated!

5. Human security and global warming: Challenges before the two religions in Nigeria

With the magnitude of poverty steering the nation in the face, the unacceptable high level of corruption, an unpardonable mismanagement in the high places and lack of commitment to sustainable development, fundamentalist interpretation of sacred scriptures ('bad' theology) has no place in a secular society like the one of Nigeria. In the Nigerian situation, what is paramount is good governance, the bed rock of progress and development. But it will not just happen; it has to be worked for, nurtured and developed. It calls for hard work, political engineering, courage and eternal vigilance. A theology that does not promote peoples active and progressive participation in socio-cultural, political and economic life of a nation is not worth the name. It is an aberration. Human person is central to good governance, sustainable development and religious fundamentalism does not seem to recognize or acknowledge this fact. Its understanding of human person in its relation to the world is superficial lacking authenticity and yet the consequences of the activities of fundamentalists on their society can be devastating. The entire nation may be engulfed by the flames of hatred, destruction of life and property and terrorism. Ultimately, religious fundamentalism, one of the major basis of religious conflict in Nigeria is a danger both to the wellbeing of people, progress and development of nations at large whereas good theology promotes life, affirms the supremacy of God in all things and establishes a harmonious and sustainable relationship among the living and non-living beings that inhabit the planet earth. Therefore, religion has a major role to play in the development and promotion of human security of the country bearing in mind that Nigeria is a 'religious' country.

Within the context of the above, the first challenge facing the two dominant religions in Nigeria in respect of human security and global warming is how to confront religious fanaticism in such a way that radical understanding of true religion will be enthroned in the praxis of all the adherents. Second, is how to support the government to pass laws and increase funding for counter religious crisis programmes. One of such legislative mechanisms will provide specific measures that certain government departments or agencies will need to take to prepare the country for the consequences of a fight against religious crisis. The purpose of this is to reduce the religious bodies' vulnerabilities to

threats, preventing and deterring them responding to them and managing the consequences of religious crisis attack

Generally good governance of any state calls for eternal vigilance of the stake holders because their existence and security which includes territorial defence of the country, the physical, social and psychological quality of the lives of the citizens and society are at stake. The citizens need the necessary social, economic and political conditions conducive to happiness and relative prosperity that ensure their tranquillity and well-being. The government in the country cannot promote good governance with all its good intension because the system that it is running is systemically corrupt. The foundation of political institutions, security instruments and the economy of the country must be strengthened and internal injustices including ethnic social inequality challenged. It is good governance that can make all these happen.

The two religions can always call attention of the government to advance effective democracies as the long-term antidote to religious fundamentalism, to prevent attacks by religious 'terrorists', to deny terrorists the support and sanctuary of rogue political and religious rogue individuals, to deny terrorists control of any nation or group or individual as a base and launching pad for terror, and to lay the foundations and build the institutions and structures needed to carry the fight forward against religious crisis (terror) and help ensure ultimate success. Also the two religions in collaboration with the government can commit its vast resources of human beings and material towards achieving the dissolution of pervasive religious fanatical support that the religious fanatics currently receive from abroad and at home, helping them to rebound rapidly and consistently from the onslaught of the military forces. This can be done by freezing the assets of fanatically-affiliated persons and organisations and denying them safe haven. Furthermore, apprehended suspects are to be tried and punished according to the law if found guilty.

What is good for the human security and growth of Nigeria is a competent president with integrity and moral standing. A leader that should have the will and moral stamina to lead with courage and right the wrong issues that are stagnating the development of the country. Nigeria has all it takes to compete favourably with any developed nation on the surface of this earth. It has human and natural resources and what remains is a group of competent and sound leaders at all levels of governance. This is where the two dominant religions in the country come in. To start with, they are to lead by the good examples of the exemplary lives of both adherents and religious leaders. They must preach both by word of mouth and by their activities. They must always challenge constructively the government at all times along the lines of positive value of hard work, sincerity of purpose, corporate responsibility for the community and the nation at large, love for peace and provision of resources for and empowerment of the 'wretched of the earth'. When necessary, the government may be made to subsidise for food of the very poor and elderly because of the effect of extreme weather conditions on agricultural products and promote transportation and housing for the same category on the account of the devastating consequences of global warming.

Furthermore, Nigeria acclaims to be a secular state and in a civil society at the minimum, ideas can be criticized without the risk of physical violence. Unfortunately in the country certain things cannot be said about a book and a religion because such utterances carry the penalty of death, torture or imprisonment. In a country where rule of law is discriminately used, there cannot be human security. The two religions have a fundamental role to play in this context. Specifically, the two religions must contribute to human security in Nigeria by undergoing a radical transformation of religious fanaticism that often manifests in acts of

terrorism. Unless the fanatical aspect of practice of religions can be reshaped to accommodate the rights of other Nigerians it will be difficult to experience human security and have time to fight meaningfully forces that are promoting global warming, the enemy of the planet entity. On the part of Christians, a Concordat with the state could be entered in by which the secular character of the country will be protected and if broken international community could intervene to restore the status quo.

Education prepares an individual to make a contribution to society (Bozimo, 2000; Idowu, 2001; Esere, 2004). Also, as Robert Bogan rightly stated, education is for defence of rights (Pontifical Commission Justitia et Pax, 1975: 38). Education may have forms namely formal, informal and non-formal (Fafunwa, 1974) but its primary aim is not just only to prepare a person for a particular kind of job or profession as important as that may be, but also the development of personality which involves the development of both the intellect and the will. In other words, education is the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained, will empowered and skills developed. Schooling is only one form in which education is provided. In the context of human security and global warming, the two religions have a role to play. By taking advantage of their sermons, public declarations, social ministries of schools, publications, hospitals, agriculture, banking and election monitoring, the two religions can exercise tremendous influence on the citizenry. Workshops on themes like 'One Planet one future' and 'Contextual Theology', if properly undertaken can change peoples' perspectives of their reality. In addition, the country has endorsed many international environmental treaties and protocols and has also established National Environmental Policy which has human security at its core. The goal of the policy is to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria and in particular to:

a. Secure for all Nigerians a quality of environment adequate for their health and well-being;
b. Conserve and use the environment and natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations;
c. Restore, maintain and enhance the ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere to preserve biological diversity and the principle of optimum sustainable yield in the use of living natural resources and ecosystems;
d. Raise public awareness and promote understanding of essential linkages between environmental and development and to encourage individual and community participation in environmental improvement efforts; and
e. Cooperate in good faith with other countries, international organisations/agencies to achieve optimal use of transboundary natural resources and effective prevention or abatement of transboundary environmental pollution.

The strategies for implementation are human population; land use and soil conservation; water resources management; forestry, wildlife and protected natural areas; marine and coastal area resources; sanitation and waste management; toxic and hazardous substances, mining and mineral resources; agricultural chemicals; energy production; air pollution; noise; working environment; settlements, recreational space, greenbelts, monument and cultural property. These strategies are to lead to:

a. The establishment of adequate environmental standards as well as the monitoring and evaluation of changes in the environment;
b. The publication and dissemination of relevant environmental data;
c. Prior environmental assessment of proposed activities which may affect the environment or the use of a natural resource (*National Policy on the Environment*, 1989: 3-6).

In the context of environment and global warming the two dominant religions through their adherents and leaders could collaborate with the government and internationalise and practise the environmental policy of the federation. By so doing they will be equally be fighting the scourge of global warming and promoting human security. In order that this may take place all Nigerians are called to conversion so that truncated religious attitude of many citizens could be more embracing. All Nigerian religious people must care for creation because it is good, because its goodness is embedded in its wholeness and because humankind can only live well and meaningfully within this wholeness. They are dependent on the rest of nature and of the interdependencies which exist among different forms of life, between systems and the physical and chemical environment which encircles life on the Earth and between themselves and the rest of the universe.

The expression of God's love and beauty is meant to be shared by all life, human and non-human. Religious Nigerians must cherish the whole of creation, not for their sake alone, but for its sake and for God's sake, for God made and loves it all. Christians share in the cross of Jesus, dying to old and self-centred selves. They rise with him to newness of life. The whole creation will share in "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8: 21)

From the experience of Japan, Nigeria can learn. Japan experienced an extreme scarcity of the commodities for daily life especially during and immediately after the Second World War. There were hardly any noticeable deeds of 'kindness' seen among the people and blatant egoism was rampant everywhere. It was this reality that gave birth to Small Kindness Movement in the Japanese society. The objectives of the movement include:

a.   Let people never fail to greet each other in the morning and in the evening.
b.   When spoken to, people are to give a reply with a clear voice.
c.   People are to accept kind deeds of others with gratitude from the bottom of their hearts and say 'Thank you'.
d.   When someone says 'Thank you', the reply should be 'You are welcome'.
e.   People should try not to throw away litter in the streets.
f.   In trams and buses, people are to give seats to old people and mothers holding babies.
g.   When noticing someone in trouble, people are to try to help.
h.   People are to refrain from causing nuisance to others.

The contribution of the movement was invaluable. Among others, it transformed the relationship between individual identity and social harmony giving way to the expression 'You go your way, I go mine, but let's keep friendly' (Seiji Kaya, 1986: 387-390).

In Nigerian situation, social movements could do similar things to bring about the development and stability of the country, help Nigeria fight insecurity and global warming. But then the challenges must be adequately articulated and addressed with sincerity, passion and vigour within the context of the national history. The two religions may be instrumental.

6. Conclusion

At independence in 1960, Nigeria was enthusiastic to join the civilized world where democratic principles are the order of the day. It needed the necessary social, economic and political conditions conducive to promote human security of its citizens and wholeness of the planet. However, today at fifty, the journey to the promise land is still very far. Apart from poor governance, religious violence, academic and non academic workers' strikes, professional workers' strikes, unemployment, militancy, environmental degradation and corruption dominate the Nigerian landscape.

For the two religions of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria the planet earth is God's creation and a gift to humanity and must be related to accordingly. Therefore artificial distinction between the world of religion and the secular world must not exist. Affirmation of faith in the life after affirms this since what is done here on earth will determine the type of reward (heaven of hell) that will be meted to every individual. In this wise, working for human security and fighting global warming is mandatory on every adherent of the two religions. Failure to comply implies not giving glory to God the author of all. Unfortunately, religious fanaticism (fundamentalism) for instance has derailed the purposeful road to the promotion of human security and the fight against global warming giving way to hate, discrimination, destruction of life and property and environmental degradation culminating in global warming, a serious threat to the very existence of all lives and the planet.

The challenges before the two religions must include among others repositioning the radical tenets of the religions that will overcome their fanaticism that leads to destruction of life and property and endangers human security. Others will include insistence on the secular character of the Nigerian state, rediscovering the potent of radical education as opposed to 'banking system of education' (Freire, 1970, 1970b) in order to empower its adherents and promotion of good governance of the country. In relation to environmental degradation, the Ministry of Environment is established to protect and nurture the environment by upholding the precautionary principles of Rio Conference of 1992 for instance, the mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment report before the execution of any major developmental project, last Saturday environmental day of some States and ban on forest fire burning especially in preparation for land farming. Nigeria still has a long way to go in this respect and it is in this context that good leadership becomes paramount.

Good governance/leadership, the bed rock of progress and development will not just happen; it has to be worked for, nurtured and developed. It calls for hard work, political engineering, courage and eternal vigilance of the stake holders because their existence and security which includes territorial defence of the country, the physical, social and psychological quality of the lives of the citizens and society are at stake. The two religions and their leaders must collaborate with the government in addressing them seriously.

Finally, it may be affirmed that unless the government does remedy most if not all the anomalies (inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, violation of human rights, unemployment of the youth and so on) of the land on the one hand, and establish an enabling environment where conversion of heart of every citizen takes place on the other hand, and encourage collaboration of the two dominant religions, it is difficult to see how Nigeria can promote human security and effectively fight global warming locally and internationally.

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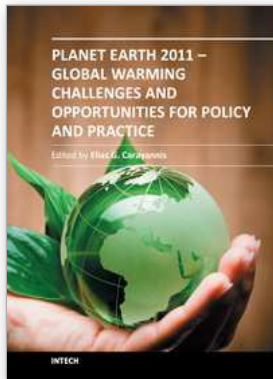
Planet Earth 2011 - Global Warming Challenges and Opportunities for Policy and Practice

Edited by Prof. Elias Carayannis

The failure of the UN climate change summit in Copenhagen in December 2009 to effectively reach a global agreement on emission reduction targets, led many within the developing world to view this as a reversal of the Kyoto Protocol and an attempt by the developed nations to shirk out of their responsibility for climate change. The issue of global warming has been at the top of the political agenda for a number of years and has become even more pressing with the rapid industrialization taking place in China and India. This book looks at the effects of climate change throughout different regions of the world and discusses to what extent cleantech and environmental initiatives such as the destruction of fluorinated greenhouse gases, biofuels, and the role of plant breeding and biotechnology. The book concludes with an insight into the socio-religious impact that global warming has, citing Christianity and Islam.

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