

Managing Fault Lines in Nigeria's Protracted Conflicts: The Inevitability of Multi-Track Diplomacy in the Jos Crises

ANIMASAWUN Gbemisola

Centre for Peace & Strategic Studies, University of Ilorin, IFRA Senior Research Fellow

The protracted crisis in Plateau State keeps worsening in terms of casualties and tenor. This is despite the continued intervention of the Nigerian State through measures such as military deployment and constitution of commissions of inquiry; which constitute Track-One approaches. Although, not without a history, recent manifestations of the conflict since 1999 when the fourth-republic commenced have been characterised by the use of more lethal weapons, poisoning of wells in the rural areas, mob attacks, reprisal attacks in and around Jos, bombings of religious gatherings and centres, house-to-house attacks, ambush laying for vehicles during which commuters are ordered down for identification as indigenes and settlers before getting mauled; demarcation of areas along ethno-religious lines; all of these point to erupting contours of fault lines while portending a rehash of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. These happenings indicate a worsening of the conflict which calls to question the efficacy of the approaches so far adopted by both the federal and state governments in effectively managing the crisis thereby necessitating an urgent change in approaches. In particular, the continued presence of the military seems not to be yielding the desired effects. Sequel to this, this paper proposes the combination of Tracks 1 (state) and Track 2 (NGOs and Professionals) of the Multi-Track-Diplomacy concept as a step forward. Based on secondary data, this article envisages that the provision of militaristic and non-militaristic infrastructure for peace by a combination of Track 1 and Track 2 in the conflict-ridden has potentials for sustainable peace and security.

Introduction

One of the most challenging tasks confronting the Nigerian state since independence has been the functional management of plurality. Rather than cooperating, the over 300 ethnic-nationalities in Nigeria have found themselves in unhealthy competition and rivalry for most of the country's post-independence life. This brings to fore the explanation of rivalry and competitors by Barash and Webel (2002:25). Rivalry is a Latin word (*rivus*) meaning river or stream. Literally, rivals were those who relied on a common stream; inversely, competitors depict those who attempt to obtain something

that is limited in supply such as water, food, mates or status (Barash and Webel 2002:26). Albert (2001) puts it more succinctly by averring that once people are not cooperating, it follows that they are in conflict which may be latent or manifest. Historically, the relationship amongst the ethnic nationalities that constitute Nigeria has weighed more on competition than cooperation in the bid by each ethnic-nationality to have the most of the resources and the highest of the status. This has produced a high degree of animosity amongst the ethnic nationalities which often calls to test the ability of the leadership of the country at any point in time to

constructively and positively manage fault lines especially in the context of ethnicity and religion.

Adebanwi and Obadare (2010:2) lament the negative effects of the actualities summed up in the ethos and praxis that govern state behaviour of Africa's biggest and most populous democracy since independence on its potentialities which are immense in terms of natural and human resources which if well harnessed can make her the true giant of Africa it pretentiously aspires to be. The negation of these potentialities by actualities or realities must have informed Eghosa Osaghae's description of Nigeria as a crippled giant after decades of independence. One in the array of subversive actualities that inhibit the realisation of the potentialities of Nigeria is the frequent violent confrontations amongst the ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria. Adebanwi and Obadare (2010:4) based on John Paden's classic work reveal that since independence, Nigerians and the leaders of the fractious groups and emergent political parties have been in constant struggle to gain leverage over and above one another. The extant inchoate nature of the Nigerian project could be traced back to the pessimism expressed around the period of independence by some of its prominent nationalists. Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo foremost Yoruba and respectable Premier of Nigeria's defunct Western region leaders depicted Nigeria as *a mere geographical expression* while the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of Nigeria's Northern region described Nigeria as *the mistake of 1914*. Adebanwi (2010: 101) quotes Nigeria's first Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as having observed on the floor of the colonial Legislative House in Lagos that: "Since 1914, the British government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite. . .Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country.ò Perhaps, the aggregate of these views informs

the description of Nigerians as *ñnmatesò* instead of being citizens (Soyinka 1996:109) perhaps because they are being forcefully held together in a union that they do not freely and consciously subscribe to.

The above statements made since independence have become prophetic as the disparate ethnic nationalities have been in constant struggle to dominate one another especially at the intra and inter-ethnic levels. Therefore, given the threat posed to the continued existence of the Nigerian state by worsening manifestations of fault line conflicts and their attendant poignant effect national peace and security; exploring options outside the state may not be waved aside with a sleight of hand. This constitutes the overriding motivation for exploration of the potentials and possibilities of Multi-Track-Diplomacy (MTD) in positively managing the Jos crisis which is (in)disputably one of the destructive fault line conflicts in Nigeria's recent history. It is envisaged that MTD has the potentials of transforming inter-group relations from one of perpetually *becoming* Nigerian to that of *being* Nigerian.

Erupting Fault Lines in Africa: Destiny or Testimony of Conflict Mismanagement?

One of the pillars of thought in Peace Studies as enunciated by Rogers (2011:2) is the rejection of determinism; therefore, the fact that Nigeria houses disparate ethnic and religious groups is rejected as basis of strife in the country. This connects with the view in most academic literature as summed up by Posner (2004:259) that: "The mere presence of cultural differences cannot possibly be a sufficient condition for the emergence of political and social strife for there are far more cleavages in the world than there are conflicts.ò This stands diametrically contrary to the views of diversity-breeds conflict school Wimmer and Cederman (2009) pointed out. Therefore, in seeking the factors responsible for the rupturing of fault lines, we must transcend deterministic assumptions such as one that concludes that plurality predisposes communities to strife. A starting point in addressing this will be the

words of Herbst and Mills (2012:3) that: "No country is destined to suffer conflict because of its societal divisions and no nation is guaranteed to be at peace."

In a retrospective analysis, Herbst and Mills (2012) draw attention to the descent to war by countries like Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Liberia and Somalia that were hitherto celebrated as exemplars of nation-building and the United States of America which fought a civil war forty-five years after independence. From the array of countries in the list, it is clear that whether the fault lines in a country will erupt or not depends on conscious and analytical efforts by its leadership. The world can therefore be divided into countries where fault lines have been well-managed and those ones where these fault lines have been mismanaged. Based on the fact that out of the 180 countries of the world, only 9 to 10% are homogenous and out of the rest, majority of them are no more grappling with fault line crises it behoves us to search for the cause of these crises that has bedevilled the continent since independence beyond being heterogeneous and stop excusing their occurrences on fatalistic grounds. Henry Kissinger a Nobel Peace Laureate in his reflections on African fault lines puts it more instructively that: "Many countries, large or small, experience divisive societal fault lines. While some states fail and descend into anarchy and violence, others have overcome clear tensions" (Herbst et al 2012). However, Africa presents a peculiar case given the history and impact of colonialism and the preference for seeking political offices through appeals to ethnic and religious identities rather than any civic argument.

In a focal study of selected countries that have been brought to ruins at one time and those still threatened by tensions arising from fault line incompatibilities like (Iraq, Indonesia, Ireland, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan and Somalia and Somaliland, Iran and Nigeria, Iran) Herbst et al (2012) teased out certain factors as responsible for the eruption of fault lines in the countries studied. These are issues governance;

democratic context; globalization and external intervention and ended by advocating for the need for flexibility of response. However, for these to be present, the character of state is very essential and poignantly, the chances or possibilities of these occurring on the continent is blighted given the legitimacy crisis of most regimes and the character of the state-society relationships which is not rooted in a civic social contract but on ethnic and religious loyalties (Kew 2010). The culmination of these can be seen in the emergence and floundering of many states on the continent that can be put into the category of old descriptions such as *soft, failed, fragile and collapsed and weak states* (Costello 1994 and Gorman 2011). In such states, the sense of belonging and actual belonging have been defined by kinship and reciprocity which often define some as strangers or settlers and others as indigenes or hosts (Chabal 2009). Therefore, while it is observable that the number of democratising states continues to increase on the continent accompanied by democratic structures of governance, their girding ethos and motif have been obtusely subversive of their real essence thereby torpedoing the possibilities of development and stability in a lot of the continent's states.

Reflecting on the title of John Campbell's seminal work that Nigeria is dancing on the brink, available statistics on the number of deaths arising from communal, religious and ethnic conflicts and the current on-going war between the Nigerian state and the Boko Haram radical Islamist sect allude to the description of Campbell (2010). Lewis (2012:32) reveals that no less than 700 incidences of communal conflicts, over 15,000 deaths and tens of thousands displacement have occurred since 1999 when the current democratisation process began. These casualties arise from rabid expressions and assertions of ethnic and religious agenda that also find expressions in religionisation and ethnicisation of civic activities such as election. For instance, voting pattern during the 2011

presidential election reflected a skewed pattern that brought the North-South and Muslim-Christian fault lines into bolder demonstration in addition to the persistence of the age-old indigene-settler tension.

In responding, the Nigerian state has come up with formal institutions within its peculiar federal framework. These include; state creation; revenue allocation; electoral rules and party systems and the federal character (Lewis 2012). Informally, there have also been attempts by the elites to manage these fault lines but its results have not been encouraging. This is because the core issues in contention have remained. Lewis (2012:29) divides this into three namely: ñthe balance of authority among civilian and military groups; the distribution of power among ethnic, regional and religious segments and the allocation of state-mediated rents.ò Responses during (in)formal discussions with key informants in the course of this research revealed perceptive but palpable tensions between the retired military men especially the Nigerian Army and the political class. A closer analysis revealed that this tension permeates ethnic and religious divide of notable elites in the state because the retired military men are from a particular ethnic-group in the state that feels short-changed in the allocation of state resources and appointments. Therefore, while it will be uncharitable to dismiss the State (Track-One) as not having done or doing anything because it is on record that many Panels of Inquiry have been set up and the presence of the military on streets across the city is a common feature. However, it is important to point out that its efforts have not been enough in resolving the crises which necessitates the need to look beyond the state in ensuring that these fault lines are properly managed and possibly utilised as basis of development.

Track-One Approaches and Management of Ethnic Plurality in the Fourth Republic

Cognisant of the deep-seated animosity amongst the ethnic nationalities as a result of long years of military tyranny and injustice to groups and individuals, the administration of

former president Chief Olusegun Obasanjo at the inception of the fourth-republic thought it wise to set up a national reconciliation commission. According to Obasanjo quoted in Albert (2004:349):

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

The above quotation must have informed the description by Albert (2004:349) of Nigeria as a post-traumatic state. A post-traumatic state is characterized by shocking memories of past cases of gross human rights violation and ethnic insecurity defined as the unjust domination and oppression of one or some ethnic nationalities by one or some other ethnic nationalities in a plural state like Nigeria (Albert 2004:9 and Kew 2010:9). However, noble as the setting up of the Human Rights Investigation Commission chaired by respected Justice Chukwudili Oputa was, it came across like putting the cart before the horse when viewed against the background of age-long agitations of fiscal and true federalism that touch on the national question which have generated persistent threats to the peace and unity of the country.

The preceding leads to a characterization of the Nigerian state in order to comprehend its management of plurality. This is done according to the pluralist notion of the state that considers the state as statutorily saddled with conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building. This is because it has to ensure that the process of resource struggle and allocation do not degenerate into basis of anarchy (Smith 2003:109). The similitude of this is that of an unbiased referee or umpire. Also, the pluralists, according to Smith (2003:110) see the state through the prism

of a modern society divided into opposing elements which nevertheless find a point of equilibrium. Smith, (2003: 110) argues that the regulatory role of the state demands it must ensure that:

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

Based on the above, the thrust of the pluralist conception of the state is that no one group will dominate or cheat others in the process or quest of seeking fulfillment of its aspirations. In line with this, the Nigerian state at the inception of the fourth republic and as a democracy portrayed the posture of a pluralist state, i.e., a state that attempted to play the role of an unbiased umpire in the dialectics of power amongst disparate groups and interests by retaining existing structures of managing plurality within its federal structure. It also tried to heal wounds by setting up the Oputa Commission to buttress its impartial status. Therefore, in theory, the contemporary Nigerian state shares the basic features of a pluralist state. However, an empirical observation of the manner of managing plurality gives the verdict of a seeming inability or failure of the Nigerian state to adequately and impartially live up to such billing.

Plurality in the context of this paper is defined as holding multiple identities. According to Collier (2010:51), everyone has some subnational identity and usually several of them. For example, in addition to being a Nigerian, one may be a Yoruba, an Egba man and more particularly a Gbagura man. Similarly, the British general elections of 2001 pitched a Yorkshire man against a Scot. Collier (2010:50) argues that these multiple identities pose genuinely tough but not insurmountable challenges to many Third World states. These multiple identities and strong allegiance to them sometimes turn issues that could have otherwise been resolved amicably into causes of violent conflicts amongst ethnic nationalities. Such situations have made the constructive and positive management of plurality a difficult task for the evolution of a nation-state; a situation that has informed the description of Nigeria as a country still standing still at fifty-three (Kogbara 2010:10).

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

causation of conflicts explains a situation where parties have become short-tempered over time and take to arms over every disagreement. The micro-macro explanation of conflicts which has become relevant to the situation of Jos is a situation in which the animosity between two major ethnic groups is rehashed at the micro level amongst individuals over negligible. For example, individual disagreements over stalls in markets easily degenerate into horrendous inter-ethnic confrontations due to existing animosity between the groups belonged to by the individuals. The four causations of conflicts described above characterize the trajectory of the Jos crises.

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

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

The second response is *relief* response this basically entails distribution of relief materials, which sometimes worsens the conflict because of the discriminatory or disproportionate way it is done. The *political* response is when commissions of inquiry are set up. However, their recommendations hardly get published or implemented. Another type of political response includes the creation of new administrative units which sometimes renames the conflict. For example, the buffer zone created by Colonel Peter Ogar one time military governor of Kwara State as one of the measures to address incessant border disputes between the Erin-Ile community and the Offa community in Kwara State provided the setting for a recent social conflagration in the state (Oni, 2006; Jegede, 2006). Nwolise (2006) describes a situation like that as government inconsistency which exacerbates conflicts. According to Nwolise (2006) failure to implement the first white paper from a judicial commission of inquiry headed by Justice Nweje set up by Colonel Attah paved the way for the devastating war of 1999-2000 in Aguleri and Umuleri. This shows the fragility that trails most state led approaches without the complementary support of other stakeholders especially NGOs.

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

anchored by traditional rulers within the context of social response.

Jos Crises in the Fourth-Republic: Cause, Cost, Context and State Response

Cause

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

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

Central to the narratives of the protracted crises in Jos are the issues of

autochthony, land and belonging. Autochthony which literally means emerging from the soil as espoused by Boas and Dunn (2007:31) practically denotes localised meanings of belonging and has been the cause of heated debates especially during elections and in the context of access to land especially in the rural areas. Geschiere (2004:237) observes that recent obsession with autochthony and violent forms of exclusion of so-called *strangers* even when they are citizens of the same country have undermined the whole concept of national citizenship. Specifically the narratives of the conflict dwell on issues that touch on the following; ownership of Jos, indigeneship of Jos, efforts at Islamisation, delimitation of electoral wards; blockage of roads during worship, indiscriminate use of loud speakers; Fulanis trespassing on farm lands with their cattles; alleged discrimination against Muslims by government and non-implementation of previous reports (Suleiman 2011:30).

In a baseline survey report of five states including Plateau, Albert (2006:4) presents views of residents living in Jos wherein majority of them described the Jos crises as ethno-religious. In the context of peace studies, the conflict can be described as value and resource-based because of the intrinsic link of land to survival and autochthony to identity and belonging. This affirms the finding of Albert (2006:14) that a major reason for the violent conflict between the Hausa and the host community is the control of land resources and market places. Within the context of the Jos crises, the aforementioned issues are taken as the intervening variables between plurality and conflict in the city. The inability to creatively and positively manage these intervening variables underscores the weakness of the Nigerian state as a pluralist and impartial entity.

Cost

Barely had the fourth-republic taken off when the city went up in flames and since then, it has been tottering on the brinks of collapse. The worsening bestiality of violence in the Jos crises

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

Context

With the casualties so far recorded and the fragility of existing peace in Jos, it is clear that it has become a national emergency with a very high cost in human lives and property. This makes it deserving of the involvement of all stake-holders especially peace workers and conflict managers. Extant realities from Jos signify amongst other things, that the crises persist in a context of the failure of federalism as a strategy for managing identity conflicts in Nigeria as observed by (Jimenez and Laremont 2009:91). The maddening trend of the Jos crises makes a mockery of federalism as a strategy of

managing plurality in Nigeria. Jimenez and Laremont (2009:92) identify the flaws in Nigeria's federalism to be its non-contextualised nature to address the peculiar plurality of the country. The conflict also occurs in the context of a weak state. One of the characteristics of a weak state is its inability to prevent the use of violence by non-state actors and by unauthorised means (Darschivili 2002:4).

Also, this paper posits that the inability of a state to creatively manage plurality can as well be taken as form of weakness. This is because while some countries such as Belgium, Malaysia and Switzerland have managed plurality positively, Suberu and Osaghae (2006:5-6) identifies the inability of countries such as Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi and Sri Lanka to manage the intervening variables between plurality and conflicts as the bane of peace in countries where plurality has become synonymous with crises. So, the Jos crises can be broadly assessed in the context of the non-contextualisation of Nigeria's federalism and the weakness of the Nigerian state. In the same vein, Suberu (2010:2) identifies the peculiarly skewed practice of federalism in Nigeria as the cause of the country's multifaceted crises of poor governance, ethno-political conflict and socio-economic underdevelopment.

Track-One Approaches

Nevertheless, the Nigerian State has responded to protect the lives and property of its citizens in Jos. This has resulted in the deployment of the military to the city and its environs. Maina (2010) describes this in operational terms as Military Aid to Civil Power (MACP). This is in conformity with their constitutionally stipulated role in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Section 217 Subsection 2c: 'suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authority to restore order when called upon to do so by the President, but subject to such conditions as may be prescribe by an Act of the National Assembly'. However, to have peace in Jos transcends the deployment of the military

alone based on the continuation of hostilities since the presence of the military.

Towards Sustainable Peace in Jos: The Inevitability of Multi-Track-Diplomacy

Extant realities and an ethno-graphic survey of many communities and neighbourhoods around Jos reveal the palpable tension that still pervades the air in the city as a result of the protracted indigene-settler conflict. The allegation of partiality levelled against the military Special Task Force by a party in the conflict indicates an indirect indictment and loss of confidence in the ability of the Nigerian state to be impartial in matters of identity conflict. Also, the setting up of a parallel panel of inquiry into the conflict by the federal and Plateau State government point to the inability of the two tiers to combine efforts towards finding sustainable solution to the crises. This is a stark manifestation of the impression held by residents of Jos and such communities in Nigeria that government activities have strong correlation with the upward spiral of violent conflicts in Nigeria (Albert 2006:14). This brings to fore, the need for exploration of other means of pursuing a sustainable solution to the problem.

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

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

A French diplomat Joseph Montville describes the second track as peace-promoting

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

Much as scholars have severally highlighted the positive side of Nigeria's federalism in the containment of ethnic conflicts (Suberu 2010; Horowitz 2007; Hale 2004 and Suberu 2004) the contradictions in its practice and the crises generated by these contradictions constitute serious threats to peace and security in the most populous black nation on earth. The International Crisis Group (2006:2) observes that Nigeria's federal system and politics are deeply flawed, contributing to rising violence that threatens to destabilize one of Africa's leading countries. This can as well pass for an early warning signal which should not be ignored with a sleight of hand.

Recent global realities underscore the imperative of enhancing cooperation between state and non-state actors in the pursuit of peace and security. This has become imperative in the context of the Jos crises because of the need to erect militaristic and non-militaristic structures for sustainable peace. In order to achieve this, the professional NGOs with expertise and commitment like the Society for Peace Studies and Peace Practice (SPSP) located in the second track of MTD can initiate post-conflict peace-building programmes in concert with other

stake-holders and relevant agencies of the state as a step forward in the positive management of

Conclusion

The paper identifies the reality of the challenge constituted by the fault lines arising from the country's plurality to peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. Referring to the fears expressed by some of the patriarchs of the Nigerian state at the early days of Nigeria's independence, this paper analyses the state (Track-One) responses to conflicts in Nigeria and observes that despite the bright side of Nigeria's federalism, its other side of the coin has (in)advertently made the

the Jos crises.

Nigerian project inchoate as it trots on the precipice. In order to rescue this dream and based on the apparent failure of state-led (Track-One) approaches in enhancing peaceful co-existence in many of its plural communities especially Jos, this paper argues for paradigm shift in conflict management that will encourage closer working relationship between Track 1 and Track 2 within the concept of Multi-Track-Diplomacy (MTD).

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