رهبری و درگیری های خشونت آمیز در قرن بیست و یکم آفریقا

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چکیده

این مقاله به بررسی تأثیرات رهبری بر درگیری‌های خشونت‌آمیز در آفریقا می‌پردازد. در طول سال‌ها آفریقا تحت تأثیر درگیری‌های خشونت‌آمیز قرار گرفته است، این تا حدی توضیح می‌دهد که چرا آفریقا هنوز به عنوان یک قاره در حال توسعه در نظر گرفته می‌شود. درگیری های خشونت آمیز منجر به تخریب جان ها و اموال در بسیاری از مناطق آفریقا شده است. بسیاری از اردوگاه‌های آوارگان داخلی در کشورهای مختلف که به دلیل درگیری‌های خشونت‌آمیز به وجود آمده‌اند، بدون شک بر زندگی اجتماعی-اقتصادی و سیاسی کشورهای آسیب‌دیده تأثیر منفی گذاشته‌اند. دولت‌های این کشورها میلیاردها ارز کشورهای مختلف خود را که قرار است برای پروژه‌ها و برنامه‌های توسعه‌ای در تلاش برای مبارزه با درگیری‌های خشونت‌آمیز و همچنین مراقبت از آوارگان داخلی استفاده شود، هدر داده‌اند. این مقاله ماهیت کیفی دارد زیرا داده های آن از منابع ثانویه مانند کتاب های درسی، مجلات، مجلات و روزنامه ها استخراج شده است. روش های تحلیل داده ها در این مقاله توصیفی و تاریخی است. چارچوب نظری این مقاله نظریه سرخوردگی- پرخاشگری است. این مقاله در میان دیگران توصیه می‌کند که باید حکومت‌داری خوب در آفریقا تشویق شود زیرا می‌تواند راه طولانی در کاهش درگیری‌های خشونت‌آمیز داشته باشد و همچنین توسعه آن را ارتقا دهد.

کلیدواژه ها: تعارض، حکمرانی، توسعه، خشونت، پروژه ها و برنامه ها

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Leadership And Violent Conflicts in the 21st Century Africa

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Abstract

This paper examined the effects of leadership on violent conflicts in Africa. Over the years Africa has been affected negatively by violent conflicts, this partly explains why Africa is still regarded as a developing continent. Violent conflicts have led to the destruction of lives and properties in many parts of Africa. Many internally displaced camps in various countries occasioned by violent conflicts no doubt have affected negatively the socio-economic and political life of the affected countries. Governments of such countries have wasted billions of their various countries' currencies which are supposed to be used for development projects and programmes in trying to combat violent conflicts and also take care of internally displaced persons. This paper is qualitative in nature because data for it were derived from secondary sources such as text book, journals, magazines and newspapers. The data analysis methods adopted in this paper are descriptive and historical. The theoretical framework for this paper is the frustration-aggression theory. The paper recommends among others that there should be encouragement of good governance in Africa because it can go a long way in reducing violent conflicts and also promote its development.

Keywords: Conflict, Governance, Development, Violence, Projects and Programmes

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1-Introduction

Violent conflicts have been in existence in Africa from time immemorial. This is because they exist wherever there is the existence of human beings and this explains why the human relations school of thought on conflict opines that wherever there is the co-existence of human beings; conflict is bound to occur. This is so because human beings have interests and goals and in a bid to pursuing and achieving these interests and goals, clashes of interest may occur between and amongst individuals. According to Aja (2007), "it has been observed that conflict is a theme that has featured more in mankind's search for interests, peace and security. We affect conflict, and conflict affects us as individuals, families, communities, organizations, nations and states. Indeed, conflict does affect every group behaviour". The way and manner human beings conduct themselves particularly in their pursuit of interests and goals to a very large extent determine whether violent conflicts would occur or not. This means that violent conflicts are products of human conduct.

Central to conflict and violence in post-colonial Africa are colonialism and leadership problem, the activities of the colonial masters entrenched and exacerbated violent conflicts in Africa. Colonialism made it possible for disparate ethnic nationalities that were hitherto existing independent of one another to be brought together. The co-existence of different ethnic nationalities in Africa and the way and manner they are managed has a great potential for violent conflicts. The nature of leadership in most African countries has also led to violent conflicts. Many countries in Africa have bad leaders who amass their country's wealth for themselves and their families occasioning unemployment and poverty to the vast majority of the citizens. This view was corroborated by Abubakar (2004:154) when he asserted that "the tragedy of most post-colonial African states is that they lack visionary political leaders who will transcend personalist and primordial interests to transform the state into a viable vehicle that could address basic needs of the citizenry through the provision of adequate health facilities, qualitative education, food, good roads, water, telecommunication facilities and security of lives and property". Failure of the political leaders in most parts of Africa to provide public goods is partly responsible for the continuous existence of violent conflicts.

According to Gilpin, "the number of African countries embroiled in violent conflicts rose sharply in the 1960s as groups contested the legitimacy of post-colonial governance structure. Nigeria's Biafra war is a notable example. In other cases, contested legitimacy took the form of independence and liberation struggles which were protracted and costly in terms of lives and treasure".

There are many incidences of violent conflicts in Africa in the 21st century. Al Shabab in East Africa, Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin and dominant in the North Eastern part of Nigeria and other militant groups in parts of the Niger Delta and North-Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo contributed to the resurgence of conflict in recent times. There were also the post-independence conflicts in South Sudan, the Malian crisis and post-Gadhafi Libya. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) with its armed wing the Eastern Security Network is causing violent attack on lives and properties in Eastern part of Nigeria. Countries such as Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Guinea Bissau and others have at one time or the other experienced violent conflicts. These conflicts have resulted in destruction of lives and property, the internal displacement of people, a region wide refugee crisis, poverty and disease, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, human and drug trafficking, illegal exploitation of natural resources and banditry (Afolabi, 2019:125). Governments of the countries affected have also wasted billions of their currencies on trying to find solution to the violent conflicts and also cater for people in the internally displaced camps. This partially explains why most African states are still battling with issues of development.

This paper is divided into different sections, the first is introduction, the second section dwells on the conceptual clarification, third section looks at the theoretical framework, and section four examines the root causes of violent conflicts in Africa. Section five examines effects of leadership on violence conflicts in Africa. Section six looks at the nature and effects of violent conflicts on Africa. The last but not the least in this paper is the conclusion and recommendations.

2-Conceptual Clarification

It is very apt and germane at this juncture to attempt a clarification of conflict and violence for ease of understanding. The concepts to be examined in the paper include: violence, conflict and leadership. The

words conflict and violence are related but distinct terms. This explains why some scholars tend to use the terms interchangeably as if they have the same meaning.

According to Idowu (1999), violence is often the manifestation of an extreme, consistent and intense level of conflict. To this end, violence is always conflictual, while conflict may not necessarily be violent. Violence is harm perpetrated on persons or property. In the case of persons, it ranges from restraining their freedom of movement to torture and death, and in the case of property, from simple fine or damage to complete expropriation or total destruction (Girvetz, cited in Idowu 1999:34). The most common notion is that violence entails the use of physical force, usually with the purpose of injuring or damaging the object of the violence. The tools of such violence can range from flying fist and feet to clubs and bullets to nerve gas and nuclear missiles (Danzinger, 1998). Violence is associated with harm done with the aim of causing destruction, injury or death to victims be it property or any living being. To Dzurgba (2006:30) violence is a behaviour that is intended to hurt other people physically, mentally and emotionally. Violence causes physical damage or destruction and these results to suffering, pain, agony and anguish. Having looked at the concept of violence, what then is conflict?

According to Deng cited in Idowu (1999:37), "conflict is a situation of interaction involving two or more parties in which actions in pursuit of incompatible objectives, or interests, result in varying degrees of discord. Aja (2007:2) sees conflict as an attitude, behaviour or an action or a process that introduces strains and stresses in the relationship between two or more parties on, say, the attainment of a set of interests or goals. In conflict, parties perceive or treat each other as a stumbling block that will result in frustrating the other in attaining a set of goals, or even furthering one's interest". Pursuit of interests or goals is at the core of conflict. This is because in the pursuit of goals and interests, interactions with diverse people is compulsory and there is the tendency that some individuals may be interested in the goals one is pursuing and as such would act in a way that would not be favourable for the achievement of one's goals. On the other hand, some individuals out of sheer wickedness may not want one to achieve his goals and as such would do everything within their power

to frustrate one from achieving his goals. These scenarios are what often times bring about conflict.

Chaplin (1979:109) defines conflict as "the simultaneous occurrence of two or more mutually antagonistic impulses or motives". Deutsch (1977) views conflict as "an action, which prevents, obstructs, interferes with, injures or renders ineffective another action with which it is incompatible". To Forsyth (1990), conflict occurs when "the actions or beliefs of one or more members of a group are unacceptable to and, hence are resisted by one or more groups or members. Pruitt and Rubin (1986) define it as a "perceived divergence of interest or beliefs that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously".

According to Oyeshola (2005), conflict connotes "disagreement, dispute or controversy in ideas or viewpoints held by two or more individuals/groups. In general terms and by way of comparison, disputes involve negotiable interests while conflicts are concerned with issues that are not 'negotiable' issues that relate to ontological human needs that cannot be compromised".

Having considered and examined the concepts of conflict and violence, at this juncture the concept of leadership will be examined. What is leadership? The centrality of leadership in the affairs of men has made it to attract the attention of scholars across the globe and this explains why leadership has been defined in different ways. This view was corroborated by Ogbeidi (2012:4) when he asserted that "leadership has been defined in so many ways that it is hard to come up with a single working definition". To Ogbeidi (2002:4), "leadership may be defined as a body of people who lead and direct the activities of a group towards a shared goal". Leadership can also be seen as a responsibility of certain category of people who were deliberately chosen to lead, organize, direct and harness both material and human resources for the good of men and the society at large. For leaders to be able to do this, they are meant to be selfless with integrity and character that is good. This explains why Norman Schwarzkopf cited in Ogbeidi describes leadership as a potent combination of strategy and character and strongly emphasized that, of the two elements, character is the most preferred for leadership. The term leadership according to House (2004) cited in Oladejo (2016:533), "is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organizations

of which they are members". This explains the fact that the bottom line of leadership is the progress of the organization, society or state as the case may be. It is only good leadership that can lead to peace and progress, bad leadership has the potential of bringing about violent conflicts, retardation and underdevelopment.

3-Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this paper is the frustration-aggression theory. The proponents of this theory include John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer and Robert Sears in 1939. The theory was further developed by Neal Miller in 1941 and Leonard Berkowitz in 1969. The basic focus and thrust of the theory is that aggression is the result of blocking, or frustrating a person's efforts to attain a goal. In other words, the theory says that frustration causes aggression and it is this aggression that leads to violence.

The theory is relevant to this work because it provides an insight into understanding the nature and causes of violent conflicts in Africa. Many violent conflicts in Africa came into being because of the inability of most African leaders to pilot the affairs of their various countries in such a way as to allow individuals ample opportunity to pursue and achieve their goal of good life with the provision of public goods such as roads, bridges, ports, sanitation, portable water, electric power, telecommunications, public transport and socio-economic and political infrastructure, schools, clinics, markets, courts vaccination programmes, state bureaucracy. Aggression can also be caused by injustice, marginalization of certain ethnic groups in a country manifesting in deprivation in citing of infrastructure and political appointments. These conditions are prevalent in many parts of Africa and as well have been responsible for violent conflicts. The violence currently ravaging the South-Eastern part of Nigeria is partly as a result of marginalization because since the advent of the Fourth Republic in 1999, the region has not produced president of the country.

The frustration-aggression theory also talks about the issue of displaced aggression. According to the theory, "frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. This is also true of the effects of violent conflicts in Africa. Many

innocent people have been victims of violent conflicts occasioned by the so-called aggrieved people when they are not the cause of the grievances.

The theory did not put into consideration personality traits of individuals who perpetrate violence based on frustration. This is because not everyone can carry out violent act simply because of frustration.

The Root Causes of Violent Conflicts in Africa

There are many factors that precipitated and still precipitate violent conflicts in Africa and they are as follows:

Colonialism

A discourse on violent conflicts in Africa cannot be complete without reference to colonialism. This is because of the role it played in making modern day Africa. Colonialism made it possible for different ethnic nationalities existing independent of one another to be brought together under one state and government. Issues of ethnicity came to the fore in Africa as a result of colonialism. According to Nnoli (1989:10) "Ethnicity is the relations between ethnic groups within the same political system, a relation not of mere ethnic contact but ethnic competition". Struggle for power and positions in Africa has taken ethnic dimensions in such a way that it manifests in violent conflicts. Annan and Danso (2013) opined that "ethnicity by itself is not violent however the concept has been manipulated in societies polarized into two imbalanced divides with one faction feeling marginalized". Issues of ethnicity have led to violent conflicts in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Ghana and others.

Sit-tight Syndrome

According to Ehindero (203:51), "A Sit-tight" leader can be taken to be a person representing a region or an ethnic group which insists on holding on to power at all cost and at the expense of other individuals, regions or ethnic groups. It manifests at the regional or personal level. It manifests at the regional level when a particular section of a country has held on to political power for too long, dominating and lording it over other tribes or component parts of the country. At the personal level, it is when an individual ruler tries to hold on to power for personal aggrandizement or gain. At this level, the leaders usually have innate and personal ambition to become "life presidents". This view was corroborated by Felter (2021:3) when he asserted that

"leaders are increasingly securing longer terms through 'constitutional coups', proposing amendments for approval by the legislative or judiciary or in national referenda that allow for additional terms in office". This scenario is very common in Africa; most countries in Africa have experienced a condition where leaders want to stay in office in perpetuity. This situation has given rise to violent conflicts in different parts of Africa. Felix Houphouet Boigny of Cote D'Ivoire died in office after thirty-four years as president, Sekou-Toure of Guinea spent twenty-six years in office, Abdel Nasser of Egypt stayed for sixteen years, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana were in office for fifteen years etc. Part of the reasons for the Arab Spring was due to sit-tight syndrome of some of the leaders affected by the Arab Spring.

Inordinate Quest for Political Power

According to Idowu (1999:40), "central to the incidence and occurrence of conflict in Nigeria's political system is power. In explaining conflict in Nigeria, therefore, scholars such as Ake and Onimode have found the notion of class politics and struggles and the consistent consumerist pattern of the dominant class as a causal factor in the conflictual and unstable nature of political interaction and attitude in Nigeria". This "Do or Die" attitude to politics is pervasive and prevalent in virtually all African countries. This stems from the fact that politicians in Africa tend to play politics without regard to the rules and regulations guiding the game. The end result of this is violent conflicts.

Bad Governance and Corruption

According to Egugbo (2016), "Bad governance exists when there is failure of government officials to appropriately and effectively harness and manage both human and material resources for common good. It manifests in such a way that those in positions of authority instead of pursuing and achieving the good of all concentrate on the pursuit of personal interest. When the people are neglected in the process of governance, they find themselves in a situation where they decide to take their destinies in their hands and the end result would be the Hobbesian state of nature where life is solitary, nasty, brutish, poor and short". On this note, Akpan (2008:23) asserts that "bad governance triggers conflict drivers in the society such as communal tension, social division, militarization, elites' fragmentation and

competition and the emergence of ethnic and sectarian militias". According to Annan, following independence, several regimes across the sub-region have mismanaged state resources and weakened governance institution which has resulted in economic stalemate, political apprehension and breakdown of social peace and stability.

Lopsided Distribution of Resources and Appointments

As we have noted earlier, colonialism brought about the bringing together of disparate ethnic nationalities to live together. It is expected that equitable distribution of resources and appointments would make the diverse ethnic nationalities to have sense of belonging and this situation would engender peace. But a situation where there is skewed distribution of resources and appointments in favour of some ethnic groups, it would generate a situation of high level disenchantment and disillusionment as well as violent conflicts. Several separatist agitations in different parts of Africa are attributable to lopsided distribution of resources and appointments.

Election Rigging

This has to do with the manipulation of the electoral process in such a way that the outcome of elections does not reflect the choice of the people in elections. In some cases, people are not given the opportunity to vote yet result would be released in favour of some preferred candidates. This scenario has the potential of sparking off violent conflicts. Examples of violent conflicts associated with election rigging abound in Africa and they include Kenya, Nigeria, etc.

Religious Intolerance

Most countries of Africa are not only multi-ethnic but also multi-religious and for peace to reign there must be freedom of worship. When people are forced to abandon their religious beliefs or mode of worship, there is the tendency that violent conflicts would occur.

Effects of Leadership on Violent Conflicts in Africa

The place of leadership in the occurrence or otherwise of violent conflicts cannot be overemphasized. This is because the nature of leadership determines to a large extent whether there would be violent conflicts or not. This brings us to the issue of good and bad leadership. Where there is good leadership, there is less likelihood of occurrence of violent conflicts but the reverse is the case with bad leadership.

Bad leadership is what is predominant in many parts of Africa and this explains the high level of occurrence of violence conflicts in those countries. This explains why Okotoni (2017:44) opined that Nigerian leadership failure has manifested in poor governance, insecurity, electoral violence, policy somersault, high level of corruption, unemployment and underemployment and widespread poverty. According to Achebe (1984:1), the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmark of true leadership". This description of the Nigerian State is not different from many countries in Africa.

Many leaders in Africa instead of concentrating on the provision of necessary public goods and giving every segment of the state a sense of belonging in governance engage in massive looting and marginalizing others in the scheme of things. This situation has resulted to mass poverty, unemployment and general underdevelopment. This has created a wide gap between the rich and the poor leading to a situation where the poor have taken up arms to engage in violent activities like kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, terrorism, etc. This view was corroborated by Felter (2021:2) when he averred that "strong correlations exist between sub-Saharan entrenched leadership and its development and security challenges, including conflict and instability, stagnant or declining economies, and democratic backsliding".

Authoritarian leadership is the order of the day in many states in Africa. Because of the perquisites of office and the desire to remain in office, many Africa leaders become autocratic to the extent that they engage in violation of fundamental human rights. This view was corroborated by Felter (2021:1) when he asserted that: "Rights abuses in the countries with the longest serving leaders have included secret or arbitrary arrests and detentions, tight restrictions on freedom of expression and police brutality". Zimbabwe under Mugabe, Democratic Republic of Congo under Mobutu Sese Seko, Sudan under Omar al-Bashir, Burundi under President Pierre Nkrunziza are

examples of leaders in Africa who adopted the autocratic style of leadership.

The major aim of autocratic leaders is to silence opposition and having silence them they would be free to do whatever they like including looting of the state treasury and perpetuating themselves in power. According to Ake cited in Abubakar (2004:154), "African leaders place more value on capturing political power for themselves and grew increasingly fearful about what seem to them to be the grieved consequences of losing to their rivals in the competition for the control of state power. Thus, coercion was not only used to constrain the political expression of the masses". Ake went further to assert that the post-independence leadership foisted personalist and authoritarian rule through single-party systems or military dictatorship. This leadership styles no doubt make some segments of the citizens to react aggressively.

Nature and Effects of Violent Conflicts on Africa

Over the years, Africa has witnessed several forms of violent conflicts. There are many countries in Africa that have had and still having armed conflicts and they include Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central Africa Republic (CAR), Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, the armed conflict is in the form of civil war and others are terrorist attacks by terrorist groups. The table below shows the terrorist organizations in Africa.

Table 1: Terrorist Organizations in Africa

S/N	Name of Terrorist Organization
1	Abdullah Azzam Brigades
2	Al-Mulathameen
3	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
4	Allied Democratic Forces
5	Ansar Al-Sharia (Derna)
6	Ansar al-Sharia (Libya)
7	Ansar al-Sharia
8	Ansar Bait al-Maqdis
9	Ansar Dine
10	Ansaw W Islam
11	Ansaru

12	Armed Islamic Group of Algeria
13	Al-Barakat
14	Boko Haram
15	Egyptian Islamic Jihad
16	Islamic Movement (Nigeria)
17	Islamic State in Somalia
18	Jabhatul Islamiya
19	Al-jama'al-Islamiyya
20	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
21	Lord's Resistance Army
22	Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group
23	Al-Mourabiton (militant group)
24	Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslim
25	Movement for oneness and Jihad in West Africa
26	Muaskar Anole
27	Mujahideen Shara Council in the Environs of Jerusalem
28	Muslim Brotherhood
29	Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt
30	Raskamboni Brigades
31	Al-Shabaab (militant group)
32	Soldiers of Egypt
33	Tunisian Combatant Group

Source: *Wikipedia*

The violent conflicts occasioned by civil war and terrorist attacks have affected Africa adversely; many lives have been lost, properties destroyed and government of various countries affected have also wasted billions of their currency to resolve the violent conflicts. According to Afolabi (2009:25), "these conflicts have resulted in the destruction of lives and property, the internal displacement of people, a region-wide refugee crisis, poverty and disease, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, human and drug trafficking". No country or continent with the picture painted above can experience development and that is simply to say that the violent conflicts in parts of Africa are antithetical to development and this explains why many African states are lagging behind in virtually all indices of development.

Table 2: Battle and total war deaths in selected African countries

Country	Period	Battle Deaths	Total Deaths
Algeria	1991–2002	90,200	—
Angola	1975–2002	160,500	1.5 million
Burundi	1990–2002	6750	200,000
Congo, Brazzaville	1993–2002	9791	—
DRC	1998–2008	—	5.4 million*
Egypt	1992–98	1347	—
Guinea-Bissau	1998–99	—	1,850
Liberia	1989–96	23500	150000–200000
Morocco	1975–89	13,000	—
Mozambique	1967–92	145,400	0.5–1 million
Nigeria	1967–70	75,000	500,000–2 million
Sierra Leone	1991–2000	12,997	—
Uganda	1981–91	107700	—

Sources: Lacina and Gleditsch (2005); Coghlan et al (2006); UCDP/PRIO armed conflict dataset; and Human Security Brief (2007).

Table 3: African refugees by origin, 2006

Country	Refugees
Sudan	686,311
Somalia	464,253
DRC	401,914
Burundi	396,541
Angola	206,501
Eritrea	193,745
Liberia	160,548
Rwanda	92,966
Western Sahara	90,614
Ethiopia	74,026

Source: UNHCR (2006)

Table 4: Internally displaced persons in Africa, 2006

Country	IDPs
Uganda	1,586,174
Sudan	1,325,235
Democratic Republic of Congo	1,075,297
Côte d'Ivoire	709,228
Somalia	400,000
Central African Republic	147,000
Chad	112,686
Burundi	13,850
Rep. Of the Congo	3,492

Source: *UNHCR (2006)*

Table 2, 3 and 4 show the number of deaths as a result of violent conflicts, refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa. This explains the fact that violent conflicts have had and still having adverse effects on Africa in so many ways.

4-Conclusion and Recommendations

Violent conflicts are detrimental to the development of Africa; this is because of their destructive nature. Violent conflicts have led to loss of lives and destruction of valuable properties across Africa. It has also necessitated the existence of refugees who are in different internally displaced camps wasting away without engaging in any meaningful productive venture rather government spends huge resources to take care of them. Resources that could have been deployed to bring about the much needed development in Africa is used to find solution to violent conflicts as well as trying to remedy the consequences of violent conflicts.

Having seen the destructive nature of violent conflicts, efforts should be made therefore to reduce to the barest minimum the incidences of violent conflicts. Political leaders in Africa should try as much as possible to ensure there is strict adherence to constitutional provisions not only to respect constitutional term limit but also to ensure that the principles of rule of law are strictly adhered to in leadership, this will give the people confidence in the political and governance processes and hence would be willing to effectively participate in them to bring about good leadership which is panacea to societal development.

Issue of election is very important in leadership. Leaders emerge through elections; it means that the electorates determine who lead them through voting in elections. The desire and wish of the electorate is to have leaders who can promote their welfare and well-being and such as given good atmosphere of free and fair election, the people take their destinies in their hands by electing those who are capable to steer the ship of the state for the benefit of the people. Free and fair election is very important in reducing violent conflicts that are politically oriented.

Furthermore, experience has shown that when certain people are not carried along in leadership by being marginalized they would not only find it difficult to support that government but also would be tempted

to engage in violent conflicts to make a statement and they can also seek to secede from that state. Nigeria is currently witnessing secessionist agitation by the South-Eastern part of the country. There is the feeling of marginalization by the South-Eastern part of the country. To guard against a situation such as this, there should be inclusive governance where every part of the country is made to have a sense of belonging in the scheme of things.

Corruption is very prevalent in many parts of Africa; this situation has occasioned poverty, unemployment, lack of infrastructure for development as well as violent conflicts. States in Africa should try as much as possible to institute reforms that would make it difficult to engage in corrupt acts because those who have looted their countries do not want to be jailed and as such use part of the loot to frustrate the anti-corruption crusade.

Issue of religion is also known to have led to violent conflicts. Religious conflict has to do with conflict associated with religion and mode of worship. This takes different forms ranging from members of same religion having disagreements over scriptures, struggle for leadership positions by members of same religion, religious intolerance such as attempts to impose ones religion on others as well as attempt to discourage others from practicing their religion. Government should try as much as possible to ensure freedom of worship and also prosecute those who take laws into their hands by killing people because of issue of religion as well as those who forcefully convert people or discourage people from practicing their religion.

Politics has been noted to be a source of violent conflicts. Because of the benefits attached to political power in Africa, most members of the political class in Africa see politics as a do or die affair where they can do anything to capture power. This situation is a recipe for violent conflicts, many people have lost their lives and valuable properties destroyed because of politics. To guard against this scenario, political leaders in Africa should try as much as possible to play politics according to the rules and regulations of the game and those who do otherwise should be seriously sanctioned.

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