



THE FOURTH REPUBLIC, THE ORGY OF VIOLENCE AND THE PLIGHT OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NIGERIA, 1999-2009

Jimoh Adele Bamgbose

Abstract

The twenty-ninth day of May 1999, marked the beginning of a more enduring democratic transition in the annals of democratic transitions in Nigeria. The earlier two democratic experiments of between 1960 and 1966, and between 1979 and 1983 suffered a political shipwreck as the military swept the two republics into oblivion. The Third Republic was stifled at the incubation stage, as it was not allowed to see the light of the day. This paper however examines the Nigeria's Fourth Republic and argues that even though, it stands as a democracy with the longest life span in Nigeria, its attendant crises made it the worst type the country has ever experienced since the First Republic as thousands of people met their untimely death while scores of people were internally displaced with little or no government attention.

Keywords: Nigeria, violence, ethnicity, democracy, internally displaced persons

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Introduction

Political revolution, which has taken diverse forms of transitions from authoritarianism to democracy, has become a common phenomenon the world over. So widespread has it become that Rustow claimed that: 'A tide of democratic change is sweeping the world, not only in the once monolithic communist regions but . . . in Mediterranean Europe . . . to Latin America, Asia, Africa and even South Africa'.¹ Schmitter and Karl had equally made it known in their contribution that: 'For sometime, the word democracy has been circulating as a debased currency in political market place'.² Similarly, Diamond stated that: 'The world in 1990 is in the grip of a democratic revolution'.³ Obviously, the political discourse given above helps to negate the earlier notion as pointed out by O'Donnell that democracies used to be few in number and that most of these democracies were located in the north western quarter of the world.⁴

Unlike the restriction which democratic experiment had suffered in the time past, the flavour of it has spread to the world's most isolated and forgotten places. The legacy of indifference to democracy in Africa has become a forgotten issue. African leaders have come to believe that the only way to solve the myriads of problems confronting them was to resist authoritarianism and embrace democracy. Similarly, at the Bretton Woods Committee meeting in Washington by April 1990, the World Bank president, Barber Conable listed democracy as the primary requirement for Africa's economic recovery.⁵ But the task of democratization has not been solely left to African leaders as the west regarded democracy as an important item on African agenda. Africa's democratic struggle was not however unconnected with the reform that had earlier taken place in Eastern Europe beginning from 1989. Two fundamental events since the early 1990s had been responsible for more enthusiasm towards democratic reforms. The first had been Nelson Mandela's release from a South African jail; the second, was the calling in Benin of the National Conference designed to arrange the end of an authoritarianism.⁶ This is what Gyimah-Boadi referred to as "domestic and external pressures against authoritarian rule...".⁷

¹ D. A. Rustow, 'Democracy, A Global Revolution?', *Foreign Affairs*, (1990), 75-91.

² P. C. Schmitter and T. L. Karl, 'What Democracy is . . . and is not', *Journal of Democracy*, 2: 3 (1991), 75-87.

³ L. Diamond, 'Three Paradoxes of Democracy', *Journal of Democracy*, 1: 3 (1990), 48-60.

⁴ G. O'Donnell, 'Illustrations about Consolidation', *Journal of Democracy*, 7: 2 (1996), 32-51.

⁵ C. Ake, 'Rethinking African Democracy', *Journal of Democracy*, 2: 1 (1991), 32-44.

⁶ C. Monga, 'Eight Problems with African Politics', *Journal of Democracy*, 8: 3 (1997), 32-45.

⁷ E. Gyimah-Boadi, 'The Rebirth of African Liberalism', *Journal of Democracy*, 9: 2 (1998), 18-31.

These factors had helped to change African politics significantly. For instance, a number of African countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire that cherished one party system during and after independence have turned to multi-partyism. Bratton corroborated this when he stated that in 1994, not a single *de jure* one-party state remained in Africa.⁸ Thus in 1990, Nyerere, the architect of one party rule declared that, it was no longer treasonable to discuss the introduction of multi-party politics.⁹ Similarly, Ndue portrayed how African states began to show their dislike for single ruling parties after three decades of independence when he said:

After three decades of independence, disillusionment is taking hold in most African countries. Single ruling parties, with their presumptuous attempts to impose this or that monolithic ideology and to mould individuals in accord with a pre-established ideal, have proved less builders than destroyers of national unity.¹⁰

Many African leaders have come to the realization that the multi-party system is more promising and *ipso facto*, the majority of African countries have embarked on multiparty elections. It has now become glaring that despite the tenacious economic and political problems that African democracies are confronting, their citizens have continued to support democracy as a form of government. Arising from this is that, the new democratic dispensation in many African countries has lasted longer than any previous authoritarian regime.

Paradoxically, in spite of the democratic whirlwind blowing through Africa, the new African democracy has been facing daunting challenges. These challenges include: large scale unemployment, corruption, violence among ethnic and religious groups, and instability among others. Poor democratic performance as a result of democratic deficiencies has in the words of Huntington generated authoritarian nostalgia¹¹ as people in different countries began to put their trust in dictators whom they had jettisoned long ago. Thus towards 2003, the trend towards the entrenchment of democracy in Africa began to suffer a set back as the President of Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe (DRSTP), Mr. Frandique de Menezes was overthrown in 2003 in a military coup, there was an attempted coup in Nigeria to topple the government of President Obasanjo. Guinea was once under a military rule through the 23 December 2008 coup, which brought Captain Mousa Dadis Camara to power. The Guinea-Bissau attempted coup in 2008 turned to the death of her President by 2009 and recently, the Niger President Mamadou Tandja was ousted from office. This contagious effect had affected Madagascar, an Island in the Indian Ocean.

This threat to democracy had necessitated the coming together of ECOWAS summit which was held at Abuja in 2009 and attended by nine heads of State, five state officials and ministers from Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, the Republic of Benin, Mali and Senegal. The heads of state included the immediate past chairman of ECOWAS, Blaise Campaore

⁸ M. Bratton, 'Deciphering Africa's Divergent Transitions', *Political Science Quarterly*, 112: 1 (1997), 67-93.

⁹ M. Nyirabu, 'The Multiparty Reform Process in Tanzania: The Dominance of the Ruling Party', *African Journal of Political Science* 7: 2 (2002), 99-112.

¹⁰ P. N. Ndue, 'Africa's turn towards Pluralism', *Journal of Democracy*, 5: 1 (1994), 45-54.

¹¹ S. P. Huntington, 'Reforming Civil-Military Relations', *Journal of Democracy*, 6: 4 (1995), 9-17.

(President of Burkina Faso), Laurent Gbagbo (Cote d'Ivoire), Alhaji Yahya J. J. Jammeh (The Gambia), John Evans Atta-Mills (Ghana), Ellen Johnson-Sir Leaf (Liberia), Ernest Bai Koroma (Sierra Leone), Faure Essozinmma Gnassingbe (Togo) and Seini Oumarou (Prime Minister of Niger). The summit expressed deep concern at the resurgence of the scourge of *coup d'etat* in Africa, which have been threatening democratization processes in the continent.

Theoretical Explanations

Hitherto, the general consensus is that, violence is a universal phenomenon. Groups as well as individuals throughout ages have in one form or the other resorted to the use of violence to express their feelings. Violence has been considered as part of a normal political life. In fact, conflict theorists believe that anything that is done from the beginning to the end without a disagreement is not a political act.¹² However, violence is of different types. It may involve riots, party clashes, and demonstration with violence, looting, arson and political assassinations. Gurr writing on the violence against the state gives the following three classifications: turmoil or mass-based, relatively unorganized and spontaneous political violence (demonstrations, riots, strikes and localized rebellions); Conspiracy, that is, organized political violence which involves limited participation (assassination, coups and small-scale guerrilla wars); and internal war, or organized political violence involving mass participation (terrorism, large-scale guerrilla warfare and revolution).¹³

Consensus has however not been reached on whether violence is objective or subjective in nature as well as what should be included or excluded as violence nor has any consensus been reached on the types of violence. Two theories have therefore emerged in the explanation of violence. These are the legitimist theory and the structuralist theory.¹⁴ To the legitimists, violence is the illegitimate use of force. Sydney Hook, one of the proponents of this model conceived violence as the "illegal employment of methods of physical coercion for personal or group ends".¹⁵ The structuralists theory of violence is concerned with an analysis of violence arising from abnormalities in the present structures of public institutions. In as much as political violence is a type of violence, scholars have developed three theories to explain this. These theories are: the relative deprivation, rising expectations and frustration-aggression theory; systematic theory; and group conflict theory.¹⁶

The most influential personality of relative deprivation, rising expectations and frustration-aggression theory is Ted Gurr. Relative deprivation is interpreted to mean a state of mind where there is a discrepancy between what men seek and what seems attainable. The greater the discrepancy between what men seek and what seems attainable, the greater their anger and their propensity towards violence. Ted contended that when we feel thwarted in an attempt to get something we wanted, we are likely to become angry, and

¹² H. Nwosu, and R. Ofoegbu, *Introduction to Politics* (Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1986), 13.

¹³ See E. E. Osaghae, 'Violence in Africa: State, Ethnic and Regional Dimensions', in I. O. Albert (ed), *Perspectives on Peace and Conflict in Africa Essays in Honour of Abdulsalami A Abubakar* (John Archers Press, 2005), 100-21.

¹⁴ I. Williams, 'A Philosophical Analysis of Conflict in Africa', in I. O. Albert (ed), *Perspectives on Peace and Conflict in Africa Essays in Honour of Abdulsalami A Abubakar* (John Archers Press, 2005), 10-27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 11.

¹⁶ R. Anifowose, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience* (Nok Publishers International, Lagos, 1982), 5.

when we become angry the most satisfying inherent response is to strike out at the source of frustration. Rising expectations locate the genesis of violence in the feeling of dissatisfaction arising out of the comparison between what one currently enjoys and what one thinks one ought to have or what one regard as ideal.¹⁷ The lack of alignment between expectations and attainments as Feierabends and Nesvold see it,¹⁸ creates the intolerable discrepancy, which is postulated as the motivational antecedents to political violence. Frustration-aggression simply put says aggression is always the result of frustration.

The systemic theory proponents insist that this approach has a social-structural explanation for the origins of most acts of violence. They further state that for a proper understanding of the problem of violent political behaviour, one should look at the social context within which it occurs.

The Group conflict theory views violence as a product of a struggle for power among various groups within the society. The proponents (the sociologists) claim that conflicts within the society occur when there are cleavages within the society especially between ethnic, racial and religious groups.

We now turn to another important concept in the paper and this is Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). When the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNESCO) considered for the first time the issue of IDPs sometime ago, it relied upon the definition contained in the analytical report of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of 14 February 1992 which defined Internally Displaced Persons as persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters and who are within the territory of their own country.¹⁹

In Colombia, the Colombian Government defined Internally Displaced Person (IDP) as any person who has been obliged to migrate within the national territory, abandoning his place of residence or his customary occupation, because his life, person or freedom has been jeopardized or is threatened owing to the existence of any of the following situations: internal armed conflict, internal disturbances and tensions, widespread violence, massive violations of human rights, natural or man made disasters, or other circumstances originating from prior situations liable drastically to disturb public order.²⁰

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement defined Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or place of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.²¹

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 6.

¹⁸ See B. Nkemdirim, 'Political Process as a Source of Collective Violence: The Nigerian Experience', *The Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 17: 3 (1975), 184.

¹⁹ *Refugee Review Quarterly* 14: 1 and 2 (1995), 36.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 49.

²¹ *The First Regional Conference on Internal Displacement in West Africa held at Abuja between April 26-28 2006* 13 and 14.

The Birth of the Fourth Republic

Historical developments in Nigerian politics show that, three republics have been swept into oblivion. The first was experimented between 1960 and 1966; the second, 1979 and 1983 and the third, 1989 and 1993. In spite of these incessant breakdowns of democratic experiments, Nigerians have been demonstrating their love for democracy because, the collapse of one democratic experiment was being followed by the desire to constitute another. Such love had been expressed by the key Nigerian leaders.²² This love was demonstrated by the Nigeria's nationalist leaders during the struggle against alien control which culminated in the formation of political parties.

The birth of Nigeria's Fourth Republic owed much to the appointment of General Abubakar as the Nigeria's head of state on 9 June 1998 after the sudden death of his predecessor, General Sani Abacha. The General announced his transition of civil rule programme on 20 July 1998 and equally made it known that the transition programme would terminate with the swearing in of an elected president on 29 May 1999. In line with the transition programme, the General inaugurated a new Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The body had Justice Akpata as its chairman and there were other twelve (12) members known as National Electoral Commissioners to assist the Chairman. The body was saddled with a number of functions.

The General instructed the Independent National Electoral Commission to work out the guidelines to be used for the registration of political parties within two weeks. The release of the guidelines²³ was followed by the formation of about 50 political associations in one month. Of these, thirty-one (31) collected registration forms from INEC headquarters at Abuja and out of these, 25 returned their forms. Based on the performance of these political associations after the verification exercise by INEC, it granted provisional registration to nine of the political associations, which were:

1. Alliance for Democracy (AD)
2. Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)
3. All Peoples Party (APP)
4. Democratic Advance Movement (DAM)
5. Movement for Democracy and Justice (MDJ)
6. National Solidarity Movement (NSM)
7. Peoples Redemption Party (PRP)
8. United Democratic Party (UDP) and

²² J. O. Akintunde, 'The Demise of Democracy in the First Republic of Nigeria: A Causal Analysis', *Odu*, 4: 1 (1967), 3-28. Also, O. Awolowo, 'Representative Government: Theory and Practice', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 1 Oct. 2002.

²³ For a comprehensive analysis of the guidelines, see E. Akpata, 'Guidelines for formation and Registration of Political Parties', in *The Guardian* (Lagos) 26 Aug. 1998.

9. United Peoples Party (UPP)

These nine (9) political associations were further subjected to screening to identify those that would get permanent registration. Subject to this, they were required to get ten (10) per cent of votes in at least twenty-four (24) states by 5 December 1998 council polls. However, before the election, this standard was lowered to five per cent in at least twenty-four (24) states with a view to registering a third political party. After the December election, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Peoples Party (APP) met the requirements without much stress while Alliance for Democracy (AD) achieved five (5) per cent of vote in thirteen (13) states. This is shown below;

Figure 2 The scores of the parties *vis-à-vis* the five (5) per cent requirement.

1. PDP	36 states and Abuja
2. APP	35 states and Abuja
3. AD	13 states and Abuja
4. MDJ	2 states and Abuja
5. UPP	1 state
6. NSM	Nil
7. PRP	Nil
8. UDP	Nil
9. DAM	Nil

Source: *Daily Times* (Lagos): 15 December 1998, p.1

As a result of the scores above, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All Peoples Party (APP) and Alliance for Democracy (AD) were granted final registration while MDJ, UPP, NSM, PRP, UDP and DAM were not. With this, there was still an enthusiasm to create more political parties. The opinion poll conducted by *The Guardian* in the country's six geographical zones showed that 675 respondents representing 57.30 per cent out of 1178 sampled wanted more political parties to be registered, 321 representing 27.25 per cent did not want more political parties to be created while 163 or 13.84 per cent did not offer any commitment.²⁴ The revised guidelines for registration of political parties however paved way for the registration of more political parties. Thirty-seven (37) political associations collected registration forms from Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Of these, thirty-three (33) of them rejected the INEC guidelines claiming that INEC was working with the script written by the presidency. In fact, these associations referred to the

²⁴ J. A. Bamgbose, 'Multi-Partyism in Africa: The Case of Nigeria' in *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy*, 1:1 (2002), 111-25.

guidelines as draconian, undemocratic and unconstitutional and claimed that any guidelines outside the 1999 constitutional provision would not be accepted.²⁵

The representatives of these associations became embittered and took their protests to the Federal High Court, Abuja. The court ruled out some of the guidelines. It was amidst this situation that INEC registered three more political parties that is, All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), National Democratic Party (NDP) and the United Nigeria Peoples Party (UNPP). Unsatisfied with the registration of only three parties, five of the unregistered associations led by Chief Gani Fawehinmi took the matter to the Appeal Court challenging the constitutional validity of INEC's guidelines that rejected their applications for registration. Some of the guidelines of INEC were struck out by the Court of Appeal.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) took the matter to the Supreme Court for proper interpretation of the Electoral Act vis-à-vis the constitutional provision. The outcome of the Supreme Court was that, on 8 November 2002, it struck out all other guidelines and upheld only the conditions of section 222 of the 1999 constitution as the only requirement for party registration. In conformity with this ruling, INEC registered another twenty-two (22) political parties.²⁶ An additional two political parties were registered later to bring the parties to thirty (30). The *Comet* newspaper gave a break down of these political parties when it stated that:

The number of political parties rose to thirty (30) yesterday as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) registered the African Renaissance Party (ARP) and the United Democratic Party (UDP). Twenty-two political parties were registered on 3 December (2002) to raise the number of parties then from six (6) to twenty-eight (28). Three (3) parties were registered in September 1998.²⁷

These political parties (30 of them) were thus registered before the April 2003 general elections. Towards the 2007 general elections, twenty more political parties were registered bringing the total number of these parties to 50 (*see* Figure 3 below).

Figure 3, showing the names of Political Parties in Nigeria towards 2007 Elections

1. Accord
2. Action Congress
3. Action Alliance
4. Advanced Congress of Democrats
5. African Political System
6. African Democratic Congress
7. African Renaissance Party
8. All Nigeria Peoples Party
9. All Peoples Liberation Party
10. All Progressives Grand Alliance

²⁵ A. O. Okoh, 'The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and Election Management in Nigeria: the April 2003 General Elections in Perspective', *The Constitution*, 5: 1 (2005), 23-48.

²⁶ A. Adeniyi, J. Ogbodo, C. Ndujihe, 'INEC Okays Fawehinmi's Party, 21 others', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 4 December 2002.

²⁷ A. M. Jimoh, 'INEC Registers two more parties', in *The Comet* (Lagos), 18 December 2002.

11. Alliance for Democracy
12. Better Nigeria Progressive Party
13. Citizens Popular Party
14. Community Party of Nigeria
15. Congress for Democratic Change
16. Democratic Alternative
17. Democratic Peoples Alliance
18. Democratic Peoples Party
19. Fresh Democratic Party
20. Justice Party
21. Labour Party
22. Liberal Democratic party
23. Masses Movement of Nigeria
24. Movement for Democracy and Justice
25. Movement for the Restoration and Defence of Democracy
26. National Action Council
27. National Advance Party
28. National Conscience Party
29. National Democratic Party
30. National Majority Democratic Party
31. National Reformation Party
32. National Solidarity Democratic Party
33. National Unity Party
34. New Democrats
35. New Nigeria Peoples Party
36. Nigeria Advance Party
37. Nigeria Elements Progressive Party
38. Nigeria Peoples Party
39. Peoples Democratic Party
40. Peoples Mandate Party
41. Peoples Redemption Party
42. Peoples Salvation Party
43. Progressive Action Congress
44. Progressive Peoples Alliance
45. Republican Party of Nigeria
46. United Democratic Party
47. United Nigeria Peoples Party
48. Action Peoples Congress
49. Green Party of Nigeria
50. Liberal Democratic Party

Transition and Political Violence

Hitherto, there have been a variety of democratic transitions in Nigeria. The first was the transition from colonial to native rule from 1914 to 1960, a period which was characterized

by the nationalist struggle against the departing national bourgeoisie to achieve independence. In spite of this, there was no use of violence as a frontline and first President of Nigeria, Azikiwe himself confirmed when he stated that 'violence has never been an instrument used by us as founding fathers of the Nigerian Republic to solve political problems.'²⁸

The second occurred between 1960 and 1966, and between 1978 and 1983. These were democratic processes intending to institutionalize civil democratic rule. There has also been a transition from the military to civil rule and lastly, there has been transition from democracy to democracy²⁹. Even though there has been a unanimous hatred towards authoritarianism, the new democracies as Huntington put it have thus faced a daunting challenge in their need to reform their civil-military relations³⁰. Of the many factors that have been impeding constitutional democracy in Africa, none, as Joseph pointed out appeared most significant than the upsurge of political violence.³¹

The state of political violence inherent in African democracies has prompted Adebani in his piece 'Democracy and violence: the challenge of communal clashes' to conclude that 'African democracies are associated with a considerable number of violent crises.'³² Political violence seems to be increasing with a return to democracy in Nigeria. All the bottled anger during the military was let loose, which manifested in the form of communal clashes and political violence, which have displaced thousands of Nigerians internally.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria since 1999

Ibeanu in his piece, 'Exiles in their own home: internal population displacement in Nigeria' argues that internal population displacement has been on the increase as a result of communal clashes, bomb explosions, ecological disasters, accidental problems and fire outbreak since the Biafra-Nigeria civil war (1967-1970).³³ Even though, the war ended in 1970, a substantial number of those internally displaced have not been settled. The Mbembe and Isobo Njanegbe from Cross River state in Nigeria are part of this ugly phenomenon.³⁴

However, since 29 May 29 1999, Nigeria has been subjected to another cycle of polymorphous violence, which has generated thousands of IDPs. This situation has been a general phenomenon. For instance, in Africa alone, there are seven million refugees and 18 million IDPs,³⁵ which have been mainly caused by violence. In fact, Hutchful has put African

²⁸ N. Azikiwe, '1966 Killings, A National Calamity' reproduced in *Nigerian Tribune* (Ibadan), 11 December 2006. Also, J. S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (University of California Press, 1958), especially chapter 9.

²⁹ The elections starting from 14 April 2007 marked the beginning of transition from democracy to democracy.

³⁰ S. Huntington, 'Reforming Civil-Military Relations', *Journal of Democracy*, 6: 4 (1995), 9-16.

³¹ R. Joseph, 'Africa, 1990-1997: From *Abertura* to Closure', *Journal of Democracy*, 9: 2 (1997) 3-17.

³² W. Adebani, 'Democracy and Violence: The Challenge of Communal Clashes', in A. B. Agbaje, Diamond Larry and E. Onwudiwe, (eds.), *Nigeria's Struggle for Democracy and Good Governance* (Ibadan University Press, 2004) 326-48.

³³ O. Ibeanu, 'Exiles in their own home: Internal Population Displacement in Nigeria', *African Journal of Political Science*, (1998), 80-96.

³⁴ A. Ben Akpan, 'Home Sick, Heart Broken' in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 22 March 1997. Also, A. Ben Akpan, 'Cross River Threatened as 19,000 refugees flood villages', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 24 March 1997.

³⁵ P. Odiaka, 'Managing African Refugee Crisis as UN celebrates' in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 5 July 2005.

situation in the right perspective when he lamented that “security” has become the big issue in Africa in the 1980s; because during the last decade, Africans have been subjected to an extraordinary variety of sources and forms of violence: civil wars, ethnic pogroms, religious conflict, political repression, forced migrations, and the upheaval associated with structural adjustment.’³⁶

The twenty-ninth day of May (1999) will remain unforgettable in the memories of many Nigerians in that, while some were joyous over the installation of President Obasanjo as the new Nigerian Head of state, some ethnic groups in the country like the Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo were at dagger drawn³⁷. The genesis of the crisis was attributable to the change of the Olu’s title from its original title of Olu of Itsekiri to Olu of Warri by the Action Group (AG) party in 1952³⁸. Within two weeks of fierce fighting among these ethnic groups, several lives were lost and many people were displaced. Some of the affected people were airlifted from the Escravos Airstrip to Osubi Airport by helicopters. Some oil workers and villages were among those who were ferried to safety zones from where they were taken by road to the transit camp. As the dust over this was settling down, another took place on 4 June 1999. Besides that of 1999, there was another that took place in February of 2003, which proved to be more devastating than that of 1999. Many lives were equally lost and about 150,000 people were displaced. This was followed by another ethnic crisis, that is, the Sagamu crisis on 17 July 1999. The cause of this was the Sagamu festival called *Oro* which was hijacked by the miscreants. In the ensuing fracas between the Yoruba and Hausa, over 150 people died on both sides and over 2,000 Hausa were displaced to Kano, Kaduna and Katsina.³⁹

A revenge reprisal by the Hausa on the Yoruba following the Sagamu crisis led to another ethnic crisis in Kano on 22 July 1999 in which properties worth millions of naira were destroyed, many lives were lost and over 10,000 southerners were displaced.⁴⁰ The third day of April (1999) marked a resurgence of crisis that had been on for over 70 years⁴¹ among three communities of Aguleri, Umuleri and Umuoba Anam. The crisis was over the ownership of Otuocha land located in the Anambra East local government area of Anambra State. The land in dispute was claimed by both the Aguleri and Umuleri. Umuoba-Anam was later dragged into the crisis. *Ohanaeze Ndigbo*, a pan-igbo association which had been helping to broker peace in the area confirmed that over 1,000 people were killed and over 500,000 citizens were internally displaced.⁴² The crisis was resolved in 2000 after President Obasanjo’s personal visit to the area during which a “no more war” declaration was made emblemized by a traditional oath taking. By 26 November 1999, Yoruba and Hausa traders clashed over the control of the Mile 12 Market at Ketu, Lagos. The intervention of the OPC, a pan Yoruba Cultural association escalated the crisis which

³⁶ E. Hutchful, ‘Introduction: Africa – Rethinking Security’, *African Journal of Political Science*, 3: 1 (1998), 1-19.

³⁷ I. Uwaleke, ‘Warri: Oil City turning into wasteland’ in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 12 June 1999. Also, E. Ezomon, I. Uwaleke and S. Ogefere, ‘Obasanjo in Warri, pledges remedy to neglect’ in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 12 June 1999.

³⁸ N. Efo, ‘War Without End’ in *The News* 17 February 2003, 62.

³⁹ I. Modibo, M. Chigbo, O. Ojewale, J. Mba-Afolabi, M. Ofuoku, E. Ugwu and F. Adekeye, ‘Unending Wars’, in *Newswatch* 30 August 1999, 16-23.

⁴⁰ T. Suleiman, ‘Massacre in Kano’, in *The News* 9 August 1999, 23.

⁴¹ O. B. C. Nwolise, ‘Traditional Models of Bargaining and Conflict Resolution in Africa’, in I. A. Olowale (ed), *Perspectives on Peace and Conflict in Africa Essays in honour of Abdulsalami A. Abubakar* (John Archers Press, 2005), 152-68.

⁴² *Newswatch*, 30 August 1999.

resulted into the death of 115 persons.⁴³ On 18 October 2000, the Chamba and Ketub ethnic groups in Taraba state suddenly engaged each other in ethnic war. It was believed that this ethnic crisis had been on since 1997 over the boundary demarcation between Takum and Ussa local government areas. In the full-scale violence that broke out in 18 October 2000, thousands of people were killed, properties worth billions of naira were destroyed and many were displaced.⁴⁴ The Kaduna state Sharia crisis of February and May 2000 was regarded as the most turbulent and tragic eruption of ethnic religious conflict in the fourth republic.⁴⁵ The adoption of Sharia in northern states of Nigeria brought fear among the Christians that Sharia would apply to non-Moslems. The crisis that resulted from this claimed some 1,500 lives, more than 2,000 houses were destroyed and many were displaced.⁴⁶

The Odi episode was another case in point. It was alleged that the Bayelsa youth in Bayelsa state protested against the presence of police in their village, which resulted into the killing of twelve (12) policemen. The reprisal expedition by the Nigerian Army led to the death of over 300 people while many were displaced.

The Ife-Modakeke conflict has been a perennial conflict. The third of March (2000) marked the outbreak of another violent crisis that resulted into the displacement of many and the death of about 50 persons. The Damboa religious crisis between the Moslems and Christians took place in Maiduguri on 27 March 2000 while the Nkpor crisis, which was about a claim over the ownership of land, took place by 2 April 2000. In both crises, many people lost their lives and many were displaced⁴⁷. The communal crisis in Nasarawa state was caused by the killing of one Alhaji Musa Ibrahim by unidentified gunmen, which led to retaliation by the Azara people of the Nasarawa on the Tiv people. The attack was unleashed on the Tiv while Governors Abdulahi Adamu of Nasarawa state, George Akume of Benue state, their aides and the traditional rulers met at Kadarko, a boundary town between the two states trying to settle the quarrel between Azara and Tiv. The outcome of the attack led to the displacement of about 45,000 Tiv from Nasarawa.⁴⁸

The Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro local government areas of Bauchi state descended into a religious riot between Christians and Moslems in 2001 over the disagreement over the introduction of Sharia. The matter became a complex one as a result of the deployment of Moslem rebels drawn from Chad and Niger Republics. The Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro local government, with about 300,000 inhabitants, had most of these people displaced. Most of the people displaced fled to Jos and Pankshin⁴⁹. The Okrika violence of September 2001 in Rivers state was partly chieftaincy and partly political in nature. The crisis was reported to have been triggered by one Ngeri Rowland, an influential chief and a staunch supporter of

⁴³ U. Ukiwo, 'Politics, ethno-religious conflicts and democratic consolidation in Nigeria', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41: 1 (2003), 115-38.

⁴⁴ B. Adaji, 'Our Case Against Danjuma', in *The News* February 2000, 18-21.

⁴⁵ T. Suberu, 'Conflict and Accommodation in the Nigerian Federation, 1999-2003', in T. G. Aaron and B. C. Yakubu (eds.), *Democratic Rebirth in Nigeria 1999-2003 I*, 219-37 (African Centre for Democratic Governance, 2005), 219-37.

⁴⁶ S. Odion-Akhaine, *The Next Anarchy* (Panaf Publishing Inc., 2008).

⁴⁷ B. Aidokanya, 'Killing for God', in *The News*, 24 April 2000, 26. Also, O. Omenuwa, 'The Battle of Nkpor', *The News*, 17 April 2000, 24.

⁴⁸ S. Orinya, 'Human Waves', in *The News*, 16 July 2001, 22.

⁴⁹ I. Atabo, 'Foreign Jihadists invade Nigeria', in *The News*, 27 August 2001, 16 and 17.

Dagogo Ibulubo as the next heir to the vacant throne. The tension between Rowland group and another contender, Alfred Semenitaria Abam who was said to belong to one of the recognized royal houses in Okrika resulted into a four-day mayhem of which about 40 houses were burnt. During the vandalisation, properties belonging to elders of All Peoples Party (APP) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) opposed to Governor Odili of Rivers State were burnt. Those displaced took refuge at Ogbogbo, Ibaka and Ogoloma.⁵⁰

The city of Jos known for its deposits of tin experienced a religious crisis on 7 September 2001 when a woman believed to be a Christian and while driving through the capital city of Jos reportedly encountered a barricade on a public road while the *Jumat* (the Muslim prayers) were going on. The barricade was believed to have been planted on the public road by the Muslim faithful. The woman was eventually not allowed to pass but later came back with a group of youth that engaged the worshippers in a brawl. This was how the whole city of Jos was turned to a crisis-ridden city. In the crisis, many churches and buildings suspected to belong to Christians were completely destroyed and burnt and, in the same manner, Christians did not spare any Muslim faithful as well as Hausa/Fulani owned structures in places such as Bukuru, Jenta Adamu, Apata, Tundun-Wada, Rikkes, West of Mines and Ahmadu Bello way.⁵¹ As the fighting raged, thousands displaced sought shelter in police and military barracks. The siege on the Tiv nation, which resulted in the killing of hundreds of Tivs took place when the Tiv people were worshipping in the church. The attack was carried out on the Tivs by a combined team of Jukun, Fulani and Nigerian militiamen. The revenge from Tivs sparked off the crisis between the Tivs and Jukun leading to the displacement of about 105,000⁵² Tivs to Markurdi.

The Wase Local Government Area of Plateau State degenerated into a crisis when eighty eight settlements populated by the Taroh people in Langtang-North, Langtang-South, Wase and Kanam local government areas were attacked and totally destroyed beginning from 3 July 2002 resulting into more than 100,000⁵³ being displaced. It was a religious crisis as the Hausa/Fulani Moslems were embittered against Taroh people for allowing Christianity to become firmly established in that part of the country. Between Wednesday 20 and Saturday, 25 November, 2002 Kaduna witnessed a religious crisis which led to the burning of 50 churches, 20 mosques and 38 hotels, the death of about 1,000 people and displacement of between 4,500 and 5000 persons.⁵⁴ The cause of the violence had been traced to a publication in a newspaper, *Thisday* credited to Isioma Daniel, a British-educated female journalist who wrote on the Miss World contest of the year and thereby mentioned that even prophet Muhammed could probably have married one of the Miss World contestants were he alive. This statement angered the Moslems and eventually set the Moslems against the Christians.

⁵⁰ B. Williams, 'Rivers of Crises', in *Newswatch*, 22 October 2001, 18-20.

⁵¹ O. Omenuwa and I. Atabo, 'Crazy Fanatics of Jos', in *The News*, 24 September 2001, 16-22.

⁵² S. Hon, 'Siege on the Tiv Nation', in *The News*, 19 November 2001, 63.

⁵³ C. S. Miner and D. D. Rimdan, 'The Wase Crisis and Taroh People', in *The News*, 12 August 2002, 10 and 11.

⁵⁴ See 'Internal Displacement in Nigeria: a hidden crisis' online www.idpproject.org 1 February 2005. Also, P. Abbah and D. Offre, 'The killing fields of Kaduna', in *The News*, 9 December 2002, 29 and 30 and T. Ahemba, 'Kaduna is now like Beirut', in *The News*, 16 December 2002, 28.

The perennial ethnic crisis between the Itsekiris and Urhobos reared its ugly head again on January 2003 at Warri. The Urhobos were said to be the aggressor in this crisis. They protested violently the non-implementation of the new 12-ward structure for Warri South Local Government Council. During the crisis, which started on Friday, 31 January 2003 at Ode-Kporo, over 40 buildings were burnt and many lives were lost.⁵⁵ On Friday, 7 March 2003, inter ethnic clash took place in Adamawa state which affected Adamawa villages of Pella, Kubba, Simra, Silol, Bongdol, Kaite, Gyenwa, Lamurde, Pulle-Yanka, Bakka, Sintari and Dumne leading to the death of over 70 people⁵⁶ and about thirteen (13) villages were burnt down. The crisis had been between the natives and the cattle rearers. These cattle rearers were believed to have hired the Chadian rebels to attack the villages.

On 24 March 2003, Warri descended into another ethnic crisis again. The crisis, which was similar to that of January 2003, was about the relocation of the newly created Warri South-West Local Government headquarters from Ogbe-Ijaw to Ogidingbe. It was alleged that the violence had its foundation in the ward delineation exercise by INEC. The Ijaw in Warri-South Local Government area therefore issued a statement distancing itself from the voters' registration exercise, which favoured their Itsekiri neighbours. In the ensuing melee between the Ijaw and Itsekiri, 150 houses were burnt and 150,000 people were rendered homeless.⁵⁷

The second of July (2003) marked another day of dispute between the Ogori people of Kogi State and their Ekpedo brothers in Edo State over a disputed territory. It was very difficult to know who struck first. To the people of Ekpedo, it was alleged that some Ekpedo women were harassed on a farmland by the Ogori youth while in Ogori, it was alleged that some Ekpedo youth stole some yam tubers situated along the border which snowballed into a dispute between the two communities. During the dispute, several people abandoned their houses and ran to the bush.

The month of May 2004 opened up a dispute between the Tarok Christians and settler Fulani Moslems in Yelwa, Shendam Local Government Area of Plateau State over the control of fertile farmland. Beyond this, the crisis was said to have been a religious one between the Christians and Moslems.⁵⁸ The dispute led to the declaration of a state of emergency, the suspension of the state governor, Joshua Dariye by President Obasanjo, the death of more than 1,000 people and displacement of 258,000 people.⁵⁹ The problem led to the suspension of Governor Dariye because he failed to control the problem in his state. Thus, it was alleged that leaders of both the Christian and Moslem communities wrote separately to him before the crisis to warn him of the impending violence and requested his urgent action.⁶⁰ However, the Plateau episode snowballed into a reprisal phenomenon in Kano State. Thus on 11 May 2004, the Moslem leaders organized a solidarity rally to protest the

⁵⁵ N. Efo, 'War Without End', in *The News*, 17 February 2003, 62-4.

⁵⁶ B. Adaji, 'Massacre in Adamawa', in *The News*, 24 March 2003, 56-8.

⁵⁷ R. Elesho and M. Mukwuzi, 'Blood in the Delta' in *The News* 7 April 2003, 20.

⁵⁸ P. Odiaka, 'Mohammed Chris Alli in Plateau: The Great Expectations', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 21 May 2004 26 and 27.

⁵⁹ J. A. Bamgbose, 'The Declaration of State of Emergency in Nigeria's Federal System: Case Studies of Plateau and Ekiti States', *Legislative Practice Review*, 1: 4 (2009), 1-11.

⁶⁰ O. Effanga, 'Beyond an Emergency Rule' in *New Age* (Lagos), 24 May 2004. Page not stated.

alleged killings of Moslems in the Yelwa-Shandam riots in Plateau State. The protest snowballed into a full-fledged carnage and about 10,000 people were displaced.⁶¹

The year 2004 ended with a clash when on 16 December 2004, a quarrel broke out between the Moslem students of Federal Polytechnic Bauchi and the Christian students. The cause of the clash had been that some students pasted blasphemous tracts that depicted Prophet Mohammed on the walls. The tract described Prophet Mohammed as 'incestuous' for marrying Zainab, wife of his adopted son. The tract added that, the Prophet did this in spite of having twenty-two wives of his own.⁶² However when the Rector of the institution vacillated in carrying out the investigation, the Moslem students took law into their hands unleashing terror and destruction on Christian students, Churches and other residential buildings housing Christian Students.

In late January 2005, violence erupted in Benue State when Ullam Community in Gwer Council clashed over land with its Ugambe neighbours in Konshisha Council. The violence left twelve persons dead and forty-five (45) houses and properties destroyed.⁶³ The crisis was a fall out of the fighting between two women on a farmland at Ugambe. The then Benue State Police Commissioner confirmed that the quarrel was as a result of a woman from Gwer who sighted another woman harvesting her cassava. Thus an argument ensued over this and resulted into a crisis.

Towards the end of January, 2005 the yearly hostility between the cattle keepers and local farmers in Adamawa State reared its ugly head. Trouble broke out when the Fulani cattle keepers invaded some farms and destroyed harvested products worth thousands of naira. Farmers who attempted to prevent them from entering their farms were equally attacked. In the hostility, twenty-eight (28) persons were killed and 2,500⁶⁴ displaced when the trouble erupted in Demsa Local Council of Adamawa State. It was even alleged that the cattle keepers enlisted the services of their counterparts from Niger Republic to carry out the attack on the people.

The month of April 2005 brought with it a tragic conflict between two communities at Ebonyi and Cross River States. The conflict had been between the Izzi community in Ebonyi State and the Ukelle of Yalla in Cross River State. These two communities had lived together in peace for over 200 years. But the peace abruptly came to an end as a result of the conflict between the two (2) communities. It was reliably gathered from both sides that the cause of the communal dispute was based on mutual suspicion. Thus, the Izzi people claimed that the Ukelles were jealous of their entrepreneurship and established farms and that sooner or later, the Izzi would dominate them. The Ukelle people claimed that the Izzi people were tenants on the land and therefore must vacate the land.⁶⁵ The crisis claimed more than sixty-seven (67) lives from both sides.

⁶¹ S. Asoya, 'Madness in the North' in *The News* May 2004, 20-3.

⁶² E. E. Okafor, 'Sociological Implications of Communal and Ethno-Religious Clashes in New Democratic Nigeria', *Journal of Social Sciences*, 5: 1 (2007), 35-45.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 39.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

The following month of May 2005 witnessed a communal clash between Kusuv village in Buruku and Ikyurav in Katsina-Ala local councils of Benue State which claimed sixteen lives, destroyed over one hundred houses and farmlands and thousands of persons especially women and children were displaced. The cause of the conflict had been traced to a disagreement over the fertile farmland along their boundaries.⁶⁶

In the same month of May 2005, there was another bloody riot at Kaduna state between the Mariri and Gusa communities in Lere Council of the state. The cause of the trouble was the disagreement over a name to be given to a new secondary school located in the area as well as the control over its administration.⁶⁷ Thus while the people of Mariri wanted the school called *Government Junior Secondary School*, the people of Gusa insisted that the school must be called *Government Junior Secondary School Gusa*. It was this that set the stage ripe for the crisis. Many people were wounded while five people lost their lives.

Similarly, in the month of July 2005, three separate communal clashes took place in Delta and Edo States. The first one broke out between the people of Ugbodu in Aniocha North Local Council of Delta following invasion of the community by the Orhodu Community, the second involved Ekiugbo and Iwhreko in Ughelli. The third was the renewed hostilities between the Akuku and Enwan communities of Akoko-Edo Local Council of Edo State. In all, forty-eight (48) persons were feared missing and eight (8) persons confirmed dead.

In the early month of December 2005, violence rocked various parts of South Eastern States of Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi, Imo and Abia in which about twenty (20) people were killed. The clashes involved the police and members of the Movement for Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). MASSOB is an ethnic separatist militia group based in the South Eastern part of the country.⁶⁸

The last week of February 2006 witnessed another religious crisis between the north and south in Nigeria. The cause of the crisis was the Mohammed cartoons published in Danish newspaper, *Jyllands Posten*, in September 2005 and reprinted in Yemen, Malaysian, Algerian and Jordanian newspapers early in 2006. This publication reawakened the religious intolerance in Nigeria especially between the north and south. The riot that followed the publication spread like a wildfire starting from Maiduguri, Borno State and spread to Bauchi, Gombe and Nassarawa states and created tension in Kano, Sokoto, Zamfara, Kaduna, Benue, Katsina, Enugu, Abia, Delta and Anambra States. In the rampage, many people were killed and properties worth millions were destroyed. This subsequently led to a reprisal attack, which the Igbo unleashed on Hausa Moslems at Onitsha. The riot lasted for about three (3) days during which more than 135 people died and 585 inmates of Onitsha prisons were set free by the people.⁶⁹

Again in 2006, there was a family feud that graduated into violence in Imo State. Umuduru-Orji in Imo State is made up of Umuasojehie, Umuokwara, Umuduruehie and

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 40.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Umuohia.⁷⁰ Umuokwara in turn comprises Umuokwara-Isiogu, Okoro-Enwerem and Okoroduru-Amuka. Until recently, the families of Ibezim, Okoro, Durueke, Odoma, Ogbuehi and Ezeanya belonged to Okoro-Enwerem. The families of Durueke, Odoma, and Ogbuehi broke away from their Okoro-Enwerem kith and kin, and team up with the other families in Okoroduru-Amuka to form Umuebiehie. The entire community could not experience peace because of different rivalries among these different families leading to the destruction of lives and properties.

Between 11 and 12 December 2007, there was a religious crisis that reared its ugly head in Bauchi State. The crisis arose over the construction of a mosque in the premises of Baba Tanko Secondary School, in Kagadama area of the State. Certain persons who were opposed to the building of the mosque reportedly took laws into their hands and decided to pull it down. In retaliation, some angry young Moslems went on rampage burning down churches and houses. Some Christian militants also joined in burning mosques. Lives were lost, men, women and children displaced took refuge in the neighbouring states.⁷¹

Violence unleashed its terror on the city of Jos, the capital city of Plateau State by 28 November 2008. The crisis was a political one between the supporters of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP)⁷² over a local government election. The elections went on smoothly and peacefully without any complaint from any quarters. No sooner was the end of the elections than the supporters of the ANPP got wind of the information that their party had won Jos North local government election with over 50,000 votes against the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), but the result was being manipulated in favour of PDP. With the alleged manipulation, the Chairman of the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC), Mr. Gabriel Zi proceeded to announce that the PDP won the election in all of the seventeen (17) local government councils in the state.⁷³ It was this that sparked off the uncontrollable anger. In the ensuing melee, 400 people died, 4,000 people displaced while properties worth thousands of naira were destroyed.⁷⁴

By February 2009, a religious crisis broke out in Bauchi State. The cause of the crisis had been traced to some Pentecostal Christians who barricaded a pathway used by Moslems attending Friday prayers at a nearby mosque. This ignited a religious crisis between the Christians and Moslems, which lasted for four days. The crisis resulted into the displacement of about 4,500 people, 11 dead and 100 hospitalised.⁷⁵ Both the police and military personnel were taken to the site to maintain peace in the affected area.

In Bauchi State, July 2009 marked an ugly confrontation between the Nigeria Police and members of an Islamic sect called *Boko Haram*. The sect was believed being led by one Mohammed Yusuf. The sect was also believed being affiliated to the Middle-East terrorist

⁷⁰ E. Ahanihu, 'A House divided against itself', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 24 June 2006, 11 and 13.

⁷¹ D. Adesina, 'The Religious Riot in Bauchi', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 2 March 2009, 18.

⁷² I. Abdulsalami, 'Again, Violence Violates the Peace on the Plateau', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 5 December 2008, 26 and 27.

⁷³ A. Adesina, 'The Violence in Jos', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 9 December 2008, 14.

⁷⁴ S. Akhaine, I. Abdulsalami, M. Jimoh, K. Okoronkwo, S. Olumide and A. Fagbemi, '376 Jos Riot Victims get Mass burial', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 1 December 2008, 1 and 2.

⁷⁵ A. Olise and A. Garba, 'Normalcy Returns after four days of Madness', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 27 February 2009, 22 and 23.

organisation, Al-Quida, and sponsored by the Taliban of Pakistan.⁷⁶ The sect-propagate hatred for western education and lifestyle except western made weapons, vehicles, wearing apparels, communication gadgets and drugs. The crisis was caused because the adherents of the sect were not allowed a free atmosphere by the state government to publicly practice their religion. During the ensuing melee, no fewer than 200 people including members of the sect and security operatives were feared killed with several others badly injured.⁷⁷

The *Boko Haram* seemed to be ubiquitous in northern states as the same sect reared its ugly head in another confrontation with the men of Nigeria Police at Maiduguri, Borno State by July 2009. The death toll from the clash went as far as to 300 while thousands of the residents at Maiduguri were displaced. Similarly, in Jalingo, Taraba State, security agents located a school where the sect used to train its members; while in Kano State, the state government demolished a mosque used by the group.⁷⁸

Another religious sect that came under the name *Kala-Kato* in Bauchi clashed in December 2009 with the security personnel in the Zango area of Bauchi metropolis. A number of houses in the Zango were set on fire by members of the sect who went on rampage demanding the release of their leader arrested.⁷⁹

Environmental degradation and lack of benefits from oil revenues appeared to have been producing incessant conflicts between the Federal Government and the inhabitants of Niger Delta for many years. The conflicts have been forcing people in the oil-producing states to flee their houses. In September 2004, it was reported that at least 6,000 people were displaced. The rate of such displacement has become heightened following the Federal Government intention to station in the entire area the Joint Task Force (JTF) comprising the soldiers, air force and naval personnel. For instance, in the renewed hostilities between the militants of the Niger Delta and the troops of the JTF in the deep creeks of Gbaramatu, Warri South West council of Delta State had resulted into the displacement of about 5,000 people in the month of May 2009.⁸⁰

Tragedy that led to much devastation was again reported by June 2009 at Bama Local Council of Borno State. This started as an isolated robbery case. Thus both Yeribe and his younger brother, Gana were claimed to be returning from farm when two Fulani thieves accosted them on the way and demanded money from them. When the thieves could not get money from the people, they started beating them resulting to the death of one of them. Fortunately, the thieves who attacked them were apprehended and taken to the Police Station. Later protesters numbering about 6,000 people stormed the station wanting the police to release the thieves.⁸¹ It was this that snowballed into crisis leading to the death of

⁷⁶ A. Garba, A. Abuh, A. Ahmad, I. Abdulsalami and T. Daka, 'When Hatred, Death consume a people', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 29 July 2009, 13.

⁷⁷ A. Garba, N. Musa and I. Abdulsalami, '200 feared dead in Bauchi police, Islamic sect clash', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 27 July 2009, 1 and 2.

⁷⁸ M. Abubakar, N. Musa, A. Abuh and C. Akpeji, 'Fighting rages, death toll hits 300 in Borno', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 30 July 2009, 1 and 2.

⁷⁹ A. Garba, 'Religious Crisis claims 30 in Bauchi', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 29 December 2009, 1.

⁸⁰ H. Oliomogbe and K. Ebiri, 'Battle in the creeks renders residents homeless', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 22 May 2009, 22 and 23.

⁸¹ M. Abubakar, 'Madness in Bama', in *The Guardian* (Lagos), 23 June 2009, 17.

two people, 11 sustained injuries, 41 motorcycles and 11 vehicles were lost to the crisis while also, the Divisional Police Headquarters, the Area Commander's Office and the State Security Services were burnt.

The month of September 2009 marked another confrontation between members of the Islamic Movement otherwise known as the *Shittes* Islamic sect and the Nigeria Police in Zaria as well as Kaduna State. Members of the Shitte in Kaduna staged a peaceful demonstration in the state capital in solidarity with the people of Palestine. Such demonstrations in Kaduna and Zaria heightened tension resulting in the military and police personnel operation in Zaria and Kaduna cities. During the clash many died, several injured and a lot of people ran for safety.⁸²

Towards the end of 2009 that is, December 2009 marked another uprising between the Fulani cattle rearers and farmers in Nasarawa Local Government area of Nasarawa State. The cause of the quarrel had been that the cattle consumed the produce harvested by the farmers making the farmers to take laws into their hands. The cattle rearers in retaliation shot and killed the farmers. In the ensuing melee, which lasted for six (6) hours, no fewer than 50 people were killed.⁸³

Mechanisms for the Management of Internally Displaced Persons

Ukiwo while quoting the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report stated that 'When we were in the military regime, we didn't get anything from the government but we had peace. Now we are in a democracy, we don't get anything from the government and we do not get peace'.⁸⁴ The absence of such peace had unleashed terror on fellow Nigerians and as Akinyele had stated in his piece 'The men of the underworld appear to have associated democracy with the right to raid their victims with impunity'.⁸⁵ Larry Diamond corroborated this when he stated that, there cannot be democracy without conflict.⁸⁶ But this had been blown out of proportion in Nigeria from 29 May 1999 resulting into widespread arson and internal displacements. Even though there are no accurate statistics on IDPs in West Africa,⁸⁷ tentative statistics of this in Nigeria is 800,000.

However, unlike the refugees that received early attention through the League of Nations that created the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, it was not so originally with IDPs. 'The plight of the internally displaced within their country has gone

⁸² S. Akhaine and A. Abuh, 'Three Feared Dead, 60 injured as Shiites Protest in Kaduna, Kano' in *The Guardian* (Lagos) September 19, 2009 pp. 1 and 2.

⁸³ Shobayo I, 'Nasarawa: Death toll hits 50' in *Nigerian Tribune* (Ibadan) December 23, 2003 pp. 1 and 53.

⁸⁴ Ukiwo op. cit pp. 133 and 134.

⁸⁵ Akinyele, R. T 'Ethnic Militancy and National Stability in Nigeria: A Case Study of the Oodua People's Congress' in the *African Affairs* Vol. 100 No. 401 2001 pp. 623-640.

⁸⁶ Diamond L 'Cleavage, Conflict and Anxiety in the Second Nigerian Republic' in *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 20 No. 4 1982 pp. 629-668.

⁸⁷ See The First Regional Conference on Internal Displacement in West Africa held in Abuja, Nigeria between 26-28 April 2006 p. 4.

largely unaddressed by the international community because primary responsibility for their safety and assistance needs lies with their own government'.⁸⁸

Some of the mechanisms put in place to manage the internally displaced persons include the National Commission for Refugees (NCR). Though, internally, this body is meant to take care of refugees that came into Nigeria from the neighbouring countries (Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone among others), it was the Federal Government of the fourth republic led by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo that became the first government in Nigeria's history to evolve a specific policy framework for the protection of the interest of IDPs in Nigeria. Disturbed by the plight of these unfortunate Nigerians, Obasanjo during the inauguration of the reconstituted Board of the National Commission for Refugees on 19 June 2002 tasked the commission to look into the problems of IDPs.

There is also the Nigerian Red Cross - a body established by an Act of Parliament in 1960. It is dedicated to alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, and protecting life and dignity. Every service provided and direction take is fundamental to the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

A number of other institutions that come under the general name of non-governmental organisations were formed in order to render assistance to refugees and IDPs. In Nigeria, such non-governmental organisations include African Refugees Foundation (AREF). The body caters for victims of displacement. The body was established in September 1993. The organisation gets funds through the help of individuals and companies. The body collaborates with the National Commission for Refugees.

There is also the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The body, initially known as National Emergency Relief Agency (NERA) created in 1976 had its name changed to NEMA in 1999. It had its mandate widened later to encompass all aspects of disaster management. The body had got itself involved in distribution of relief materials to victims of 27 January 2002 Lagos bomb blasts; 2002 *Idi-Araba* Hausa-OPC conflict in Lagos; 2002 *Oke-Popo* fire disaster, Lagos; 2002 Displaced People in Makurdi, Benue State; 2002 Ikorodu Fire Disaster, Lagos State; 2002 Communal and Religious conflict in Plateau State; 2002 Religious crisis in Kaduna, Kaduna State and many more.

However, in spite of the fact that Nigeria has a plethora of institutions for administering IDPs, these institutions lack both finance and experts. These various non-governmental organisations do not have regular sources of funds. They depend on individuals and companies that are not themselves buoyant. Besides, these institutions are laden with inexperienced people who sometimes cannot distinguish their left from their right.

Institutions such as NEMA and AREF are lacking proper management of IDPs. They cannot respond promptly to disaster management. For instance, during the bomb explosion at Ikeja Cantonment in Lagos in 2002, NEMA could not monitor the distribution of the relieve materials to the victims. This attitude made the relieve materials to fall into wrong hands.

⁸⁸ See *Failing the Internally Displaced The UNDP Displaced Persons Program in Kenya*.

Whenever there are cases of internal displacements, IDPs are usually abandoned in Schools, barracks and open spaces with little or no attention coming from the government to alleviate substantially their sufferings. These treatments often made the victims not willing to go to where government will not cater for them rather some of them find their way to their relatives and friends.

Conclusion

The 1990s became the era of unprecedented struggle for the enthronement of democracy throughout the universe. The unanimous decision therefore was a vehement rebellion against communists and authoritarian rule. Africa, since 1998 had risen with the intents and purposes to replace one-party and military dictatorships with multiparty democracy. Nzongola-Ntalaja had forcefully put it when he maintained that: ‘. . . this new social movement for democracy has manifested itself all over the continent, changing the rules of the political game and bringing out meaningful reforms in the institutions of the post colonial state’.⁸⁹

The euphoria that ushered in the transitions of the 1990s had become an outright failure. No wonder Anglin stated that ‘Democracy in Africa as elsewhere, is in something of a crisis. The extravagant expectations of the early 1990s have been only partially realised.’⁹⁰ There have been much contradictions and deviations in the role that African party systems played. The role that political parties played during the pre-independence period is no longer the same after independence.

Oyediran and Agbaje corroborated this development when they maintained that:

What has been observed in Africa to date, however, is that party systems have failed almost everywhere to fulfil their proper functions, mainly because they have not suited the socio-cultural conditions and processes that characterise their environment...the various generations of party systems in Africa have tended to reflect tensions towards ethnicisation, regionalisation, and patrimonialisation of power.⁹¹

With these inbuilt negative characteristics in Nigeria’s political system, a renewed attempt since 29 May 1999 to democratise the political system has been resulting into struggle for political and economic space which has polarised between and among the various religious groups and ethnic nationalities at the community, state and national levels causing the death of several scores of people and displacements of thousands of Nigerians with little assistance from the government.

⁸⁹ Nzongola-Ntalaja G, ‘The State and Democracy in Africa’ in Nzongola-Ntalaja G and Margaret C. Lee (eds) *The State and Democracy in Africa* AAPS Books Harare Zimbabwe 1997 pp. 9-24.

⁹⁰ Anglin D, ‘International Election Monitoring: The African Experience’ in *African Affairs* 97(1998), 471-495.

⁹¹ See Oyeleye Oyediran and Adigun Agbaje, ‘Two-Partyism and Democratic Transition in Nigeria’ in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 29 No. 2 (1991), pp. 213-235; Sklar Richard, ‘Contradictions in the Nigerian Political System’ in *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 3 No. 2 August 1965 pp. 201-213. Also, O’Connell J ‘The Changing Role of the State in West Africa’ in *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies* Vol. 3 No. 1 Nov. 1961 pp. 1-12.

