# Concepts and Methods of Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: Imperatives for Religious Leaders in Nigeria
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*Abstract*
*The need for conflict resolution in our society is crucial. It is imperative because no two people perceive a particular thing exactly in the same way. Efforts to curb conflict and crisis-situations have often times been unsuccessful; occasioned not only by the complex nature of humanity, but also by the methods and means employed by those on mediation. It is the position of this paper that a factor that has not received sufficient attention in this regard is the culture, tradition and biblical frameworks or paradigms determining our understanding of conflicts, their causes and appropriate tools for reconciliation. This paper will locate and explore these necessary basic tools and frameworks on peace initiatives and conflict resolutions as the symbolical rites of procedure. It will argue that all of them have to be taken seriously if we really have to move from rhetorics and good intentions to sustainable behaviour change that leads to solid reconciliation and peace that will finally lead to decreased rates of conflict situations and socio-political rascalities in Nigeria today.*

## Introduction

Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop emeritus of South Africa, is reported to have commented from within the situation of social revolution in South Africa that "without reconciliation, there is no future" (Wustenberg, 1998:5). This assertion by the astute cleric and winner of this Noble Peace Prize underscores the universal desire of all nations for peace and conflict resolution.

Any initiative for reconciliation and conflict resolution rests upon the conviction that present relationships are flawed, and that wrongs or injustices have been committed; but that these flaws, wrongs and injustices should be addressed by establishing other kinds of relationships rather than by revenge or separation. Inadequate consensus about what wrong was done in the past and which future relationships to promote might however, be a big obstacle. How would people for instance be motivated to ask for forgiveness when they believe that, according to the norms and values of their community, what they did was not wrong? Shriver (1995) pointed out that "…alleged wrongdoers are wary of being told that someone 'forgives'

them. Immediately they sense that they are being subjected to some moral assessment, and they may not consent to it" (p. 7). Such disagreements, one may argue, are to a great extent based on the diverse and opposing tools and moral landscapes within which the values and norms are embodied. Partly influenced by Kammer (1988), one considers the following elements as dominant tools in a moral landscape in the process of reconciliation and conflict resolution in a crisis-torn society like ours. These are:

- Story sharing of the experiences of the conflict (more precisely experiences of trauma, bereavement, separation and socio-economic inequalities);

- Views of the conflict, its history and its causes;

- Identifications and loyalties;

- Views of oneself and of "the other" (i.e. one's adversary);

- Norms for interaction, and interpretations of values such as "peace and reconciliation.

We shall return later to explain these points in some details.

It should be observed that in all civilized societies of the world today, there is growing resort to the peaceful settlement of disputes. The image of violence presented by the media is not, as such, a true reflection of the dominant method of settling conflict situation. There is an enormous amount of peaceful and non-violent settlement of disputes taking place at various levels and in many communities all over the world especially in Africa. Many groups and individuals are involved in this process of peace initiatives including Non-Government Organizations and Faith-based groups

In Nigeria, inter and intra communal, ethno-religious and political conflicts and wars, including the endless battle between militants and Federal Government/multinational companies in the Delta region, present an

endless ugly phenomenon that had provoked the sympathy and engagement of some clergymen/religious leaders in a bid to find solutions for resolution and transformation of the conflict situations. They tend to offer free dispute resolution services.

It is the intention of this paper to offer some recipes to those on mediation that they may find reasons to do a critical appraisal of their performances. The suggestions may equally serve as resources for capacity building for further engagement in the provision of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) scheme, and as symbolical rites of procedure.

**Delineating Some Basic Terms/Concepts**

Before commenting on the tools, methods, structures and procedures for non-violent transformation of conflict, it will serve our purpose well to begin by clarifying some basic terms and concepts:

**Conflict:** Conflict was originally used to mean "strike at another, to fight with an enemy or to do battle with an opposing force". Today it equally means to be antagonistic towards others or to be in sharp disagreement with others. The ability to successfully manage conflict within oneself and between persons reduces antagonism, disagreement and hatred.

How a person manages his inner conflicts has a great impact on how he lives and relates with others. A person, who manages inner conflicts well, tends to transfer his ability and emotional strength to his associates. This is why one advocates that it is very important for those on mediation to learn how to manage their inner conflicts in a positive way before they try to help manage others' conflicts.

**Conflict Resolution**

Miller (2003) posits that conflict resolution is "a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict" (p. 8). For Mial and Wood House (2001), by conflict resolution, it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitude hostile any longer, while structure of the conflict has been changed. In the understanding of Mitchel and Banks (1996), conflict resolution refers to:

> an outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self sustaining in the long run and productive of a new, positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries; and process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved (p. 21).

In all this, one understands conflict resolution to imply that conflict is bad hence it is something that should not be encouraged. It also assumes that conflict is a short term phenomenon that can be "resolved" permanently through mediation or other intervention processes. Best (2005) putting these ideas together, concludes that:

> …in principle, conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense of it. Some conflicts, especially those over resources, are permanently resolvable (p. 94).

From the point of view of needs, a conflict is resolved when the basic needs of parties involved have been met with necessary "satisfiers", and their fears have been allayed. Others "like those over values", according to

Best (2005), may be "non-resolvable and can at best be transformed, regulated or managed" (p. 95).

**Conflict Management:** Conflict management seen in the right perspective, correctly assumes that conflicts are long term process that often cannot be quickly resolved. The notion of "management" suggests that people can be directed or controlled as though they are physical objects. In addition, the notion of management indicates that the goal is the reduction or control of volatility more than dealing with the real source of the problem. This view is aptly supported by Best (2005) as he sees conflict management as, "the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict" (p. 95). He equally opines that the term is sometimes used synonymously with the term, conflict regulation. By extension, the term covers other areas of handling "conflicts positively at different levels, including those efforts made to prevent conflict by being proactive" (Best, 2005:95). The concept equally includes such other terms like conflict limitation, containment and litigation. It may also include "conflict prevention". Burton (1990) uses this phrase 'conflict prevention' to connote "containment of conflict through steps introduced to promote conditions in which collaborative and valued relationships control the behaviour of conflict parties" (p. 57). In summary, conflict management seeks in the main, to indicate the fact that conflict is inevitable, and that not all conflicts are resolvable. Therefore, what those on mediation would do is to 'manage' and regulate them.

**Mediation**: This is seen and described as the voluntary, informal, non-binding process undertaken by an external party that fosters the settlement of

differences or demands between directly interested parties. Miall et al (1999) support this description by seeing mediation as, "the intervention of a third party; it is a voluntary process in which the parties retain control over the outcome (pure mediation), although it may include positive and negative inducements (mediation with muscle)" (p. 22).

Mediation, therefore, is understood and taken as assistance by a third party (mediator) where the parties to a conflict admit that they are both committed to solving, but in which the mediator manages a negotiation process, but does not impose a solution on the parties. It is purely a voluntary process. Mediation is a common skill that many people have, but which they hardly realize they do. Simply put, the role of a mediator is to create the enabling environment for the parties to carry out dialogue sessions leading to the resolution of a pending conflict. He works on communication between parties. He is simply a reconciler.

## Symbolic Procedures/Tools towards Peace Initiatives

All conflict has a resolution. However, not all conflict resolution is successful. It depends at times on the procedure(s) and/or styles employed. For conflict resolution to really take place, and be successful, both parties need to have the sense that the procedural style is fair, satisfactory and in their best interest. We intend to sketch few steps that would create reconciliatory atmosphere towards resolution of conflicts.

**The Beginning: Ritual Dialogue Procedure** – Drawing an analogy from a South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission Scene in October 1986 in the town Pearl near Cape Town, Wustenberg (2002) described the proceedings in the following abridged form:

> … a candle was lit in the sight of all who were present. After the members of the commission took their places, the chairperson signaled with his hand that all in the hall should stand. The victims and perpetrators were then ushered in. Good morning everyone! I welcome you all very warmly… (p. 31).

The above extract of a dialogue in South Africa is a pointer to how a reconciliatory dialogue could begin. It recognized the place of ritual – the parties (victims and perpetrators) entered, the public was called on to stand, a candle was lit, a moment of silence was observed probably to reflect on the "victims" of apartheid, and thus history was dealt with within the framework of a dialogue. By the entry of the "victims and perpetrators" which resembled a procession, a separate and even "holy" space was created. The ritual helped to relax tensions and created a space in which it was possible to tell one's own story, and "let go" of the past.

It is possible to compare the framework of dialogue, which began with the greeting to a rite of initiation. The participants now belong to those who have been chosen to present their concerns. The call to tell their story was usually preceded by a personal enquiry after the "victims" good health or an expression of appreciation that the persons concerned had undertaken pains and inconveniences to come and tell their story for reconciliation and peace. This helped to loosen their tongues, so that telling the stories flowed easily from that.

This ritualized framework canalized anger and impotence and enabled the people to tell their stories and so tell the truth. In many cases, plea for forgiveness ensued. We see from this that the ritual procedure with which things began opened up the political dimension of reconciliation. We strongly recommend that the procedure be adopted by those on mediation

especially the religious leaders (ecumenical groups) who crave for peace initiatives. It is a workable formular.

**Story sharing:** This involves telling one's personal experiences as well as listening to people from "the other side" of a conflict, it is identified as a central symbolic procedure to the broadening of the moral landscapes of those involved, and to challenge the traditional, established views of the conflict. Some important conditions for story sharing as well as certain dilemmas should be identified and discussed.

It is very important that these "stories" – combining confessions, mourning regeneration/repentance and apologies be told because it is psychologically and emotionally assuaging. Some stories will tell of obvious sufferings, such as those resulting from forced removals (from land, etc), killing of loved ones and other brutalities. Others will bring out the intense affront and feeling of, rejection that resulted to some social classifications. Others may recount how people were misled by empty promises, had their fears played upon, or were induced to act in ways they are now ashamed to admit. Such a process of self-discovery/self-outpouring and discovery of "the other" is considered a necessary basis for conflict resolution and enthronement of lasting peace. We strongly believe this to be so because imaging oneself in the position of the other person (after hearing his/her pathetic story) could elicit and enhance empathy.

However, for story sharing to be effective, it is necessary to create what one might term, "safe space". It implies in the first instance physical safety – i.e. a space one could enter without fear of being killed or injured. Again, it entails psychological safety i.e. a space where one could speak about one's personal experiences without being interrupted, ridiculed or disputed. Furthermore, for the unofficial story sharing initiative, it also

means confidentiality (confidential space). Lack of this 'Safe space', could make people less confident and unable to express themselves and positions fully and/or listen to the other side "conscientiously".

**Concept of Conflicts, its History and its Causes**

This is a veritable strategy for peace initiative as it tends to focus on sharing experiences rather than merely debating or exchanging views about the conflict. Such idea of sizing up divergent views to a conflict can be a way of addressing sensitive issues. The inherent observations would raise questions of how to evaluate and integrate different views, and how much room there can be for dissent. It entails and points to the importance of fact finding, in order to be able to assess divergent statements, especially on controversial issues such as the kinds of deprivations, discrimination and abuse people have experienced.

These approaches would in no way devalue the various points of view, however, in the words of Ericson (2003), it calls for a "hermeneutics of suspicion in the form of an awareness of the position from which each person or group is speaking" (p. 29 – 30). Proper evaluation and/or hermeneutical interpretation of views and causes of conflict and the consequent exposure to the personal stories of people from "the other side", would no doubt, lead to a revaluation of own's view. Something positive might result from such inner re-consideration.

**Identifications and Loyalties**

Reference to our common heritage in God and a commitment to it enhance willingness to dialogue and co-operation. Inspite of ethnic, religious, socio-cultural or racial identifications and loyalties, initiatives for peace and conflict resolution could be hinged on and inspired by a religious

faith which could be found in a commitment to the God of all peoples (rather than merely of one's own community or group) for instance, in a situation of conflict between christians/christian communities/groups, the "false God of Sectarian interest" would be rejected; and the stress would be on obedience to Christ which is far more important than all affiliations and/or loyalties. Faith in and obedience to God breaks barriers and creates a common ground that inspires a shared sense of belonging and oneness to one's own country or even to one's own local town.

So, the identification of commonality in God and a shared sense of loyalty to this command may symbolize a break with hostilities. This opinion is echoed by Tutu (1994) thus: "this unity would be based on a common humanity and a common nationhood with space for diversity of cultures, races, faith and languages (p. 259).

He expressed this new shared identity in the notion of "The Rainbow People" (or the Rainbow People of God), a notion that had previously been invoked in the struggle against apartheid. Another metaphor could be found in the African notion of Ubuntu, referred to by Bonganjalo (1995) as a "shared existence within a radically inclusive community which welcomes the stranger" (p. 79). The application of this notion, we believe, would reconstruct meaning and identity and make people to be ready to reach out to others.

**Concept of Oneself and "of Other"**

In a situation of conflict, there is usually a natural tendency to view "the other" as less civilized, legitimate targets for attack, terrorist or oppressors. This devalued view of one's "enemy" dehumanizes people, and tends to destroy empathy and severe the human bond between those in bitter

conflict. A pointer to a better illustration of this claim could be seen in avid assertion by Krog (1999) that:

> In South Africa, there was the notion that a black person is not quite a person in the same way as a white person, not having the same emotional and physical needs (p. 190).

In a situation like this, there is hardly a way in which a white could appreciate the life of the blacks or imagine himself in their position.

There is therefore an urgent need for those on mediation (particularly religious persons/groups) to prioritize, as a "potent tool", initiatives for reconciliation which are based upon the notion of common humanity, which for Christians, is motivated by the idea of all people being created in the image of God.

Ericson (2001) informs us that "in Northern Ireland, the reconciliation groups focus on overcoming segregation by providing space for encounters across the Catholic Protestant divide (p. 227).

He attests that he found "numerous testimonies from participants who had discovered the humanity of and established friendships with people from "the other side" (p. 228).

It goes then to support the view that the notion of 'common humanity' could build relationship across racial, social, cultural and religious divides, and this has much to do with discovering each other as fellow human beings which also entails waking up from attitudes illustrated by the quotation from Krong. Personal encounters should therefore, be facilitated by those on mediation. It is essential, even with your worst enemy, to find out what is causing the problems that make them your enemy. Personal interaction would do the magic.

**Tracks/Methods/and Styles: Approaches to Peace Building**

So far, we have endeavoured to highlight and discuss some conceptual terms as keys and working tools for those on mediation towards conflict resolution and/or management. We intend here to highlight also what may be considered as styles, tracks or methods of handling conflicts. These may include:

(1) **Avoidance**: This style of resolution is seen when one or two of the parties are advised to avoid one another, avoid talking about the issue at conflict. This avoidance style can be a very useful, constructive resolution tool, when words between individuals may become so heated that a period of avoiding one another could lead to reducing the intensity of the conflict; and by avoidance, the individuals could think more clearly and possibly come together in a more friendly way after their feelings have settled down. The saga between Abram and his nephew Lot in Genesis chapter 13:1 – 13 is a very useful illustration in this regard. The physical combat and attendant tragedy that would have ensued between the servants of Abram and Lot was wisely and timely avoided by Abram's counsel for separation between the feuding servants over pasture land.

So when individuals become locked up into such strong conflict that physical violence is a possibility, it is helpful that these people avoid each other for a period of time or if possible even permanently. This undoubtedly may leave some hostile feelings. This we know; however, it is believed that it does preserve the physical health of those concerned. Again, if the persons involved have come to continually clash on matters because of their personality or socio-cultural differences; it is more constructive for them to avoid working together, rather than continually

slowing things down by their personality and idealogical clashes. The two most common types of avoidance are: Denial or withdrawal, and suppression or smoothing over.

(2) **Direct Command Resolution Style (Government)**:- This type of resolution style occurs when a legitimate official or group of persons settle a conflict situation by the power and dominance stemming from State or ecclesial authority. It may be verbal or written. When using this method, care should be exercised as it may be counterproductive especially when the person or group of persons exerting the authority do so in a manner that may increase the conflict. This situation may arise when a command is given without any apparent consultation, concern or interest for the individuals involved in the conflict. The issue of the command may bring resolution or could heighten feelings of anger/rebellion which could lead to a more serious conflict situation in the future.

However, direct command method could be a very veritable and effective style of conflict resolution when the individual or group using it has the respect of those involved in the conflict situation. This happens when authority is exercised with an apparent concern for the individuals involved in the conflict. Through the use of this method, growing conflict between individuals can be brought to a swift and positive resolution. Such a resolution can lead to a sense of secure leadership bringing about a sense of strength within an organization and can ignite a post conflict peace-building.

(3) **Non-Governmental/Third Party Intervention:-** Third party intervention takes place when a person or a group (especially NGOs or

Professional) not favouring either side in the conflict is asked to make a decision that is acceptable to both parties. This style of conflict management is most effective when the third party is acceptable to the persons in the conflict; and when the third party has the wherewithal to rule on the issues, or is seen as knowledgeable, professional and competent in the area of the conflict.

Third party intervention is usually not successful when the person is seen as favouring one of the parties involved in the conflict. This method of conflict management also fails when the third party is incompetent due to lack of expertise in the matter under consideration, or is so biased that a decision is rendered in an unfair or unreasonable way.

(4) **Compromise or Negotiation Track:-** This is a track which is most familiar to persons in conflict situation. It is usually based on the principle of giving and getting. It is hoped that both parties will profit from the outcome of the conflict situation or at least the persons have a sense of a fair settlement. This style of conflict management is based on the assumed goodwill of the persons in conflict. It is assumed that neither party is totally locked into an adversary position. There is room for giving or adapting. Both parties are willing to negotiate either directly or through a third party. It is also assumed that the eventual compromise will result in a better state of affairs for both parties.

Thus, negotiation is a direct process of dialogue and discussion taking place between at least two parties who are faced with a conflict situation or a dispute. Both parties come to the realization that they have a problem, and both are aware that by talking to each other, they can find a solution to the problem. The benefits of compromised solution, is

believed, outweigh the losses that might arise from refusal to negotiate. The goal of negotiation, according to Jeong (2000) is "to reach agreement through joint decision-making between parties." (p. 108).

Compromise negotiations break down when one or both parties become set in what they are willing to give in order to resolve the conflict. They are no longer willing to negotiate. They state that they have come to the limits of what they are willing to give. They are no longer willing to negotiate. They then believe it is better to resolve the conflict by some other conflict management styles such as avoidance, direct command, arbitration, or adjudication, rather than by compromise.

Usually, when a compromise is successfully negotiated for both parties feel somewhat rewarded or satisfied. However, they may not feel completely satisfied, since they both had to give up part of their original ideas or positions/possession to get the other person to go along. Both participants invariably win and lose something they value as a process and contribution to peace-building.

(5) **Synergistic Style: -** This is the joining action of people or organizations to increase each others effectiveness, and is perhaps the most successful type of conflict management. This style emphasizes on, and uses integration of values, needs and communicative collaboration. It encourages a mutual search for a creative alternative which resolves the conflict and is mutually rewarding to both individuals/parties involved in the conflict. It does not necessarily include the process of giving and getting as involved in compromise. It is rather based on the good faith that both parties sincerely desire a positive alternative to their present state of conflict.

(6) **Religion or Peacemaking through Faith in Action:**- This track or method involves and deals with beliefs and peace oriented pronouncements, statutes and actions of spiritual and religious communities and societies. Best (2005) opines that "Pacificism, humanism, non-violence, brotherliness as promoted by dominant religions are in this track" (p. 113). Confrontations should be relatively rare occurrences in the lives of practitioners or adherents of religious beliefs. If we go around confronting too much and/or endlessly, then it is a sign of spiritual weakness and impatience. This is irreligious. Keep in mind always that it is a man's glory to overlook transgression. Forgiveness is a religious virtue. There can be no resolution of the problem if there is no spirit of forgiveness in a relationship. If a matter or case is settled, then the case is closed and must stay closed. There is a parallel analogy in the way God forgives us. When we are forgiven, there is closure God never reproached anyone for past forgiven sins, and neither should we.

We are to be imitators of God in this regard. In all we are enjoined in Hebrews 12:14 to always, "strive for peace with all men and for holiness without which no one will see the Lord". Let us therefore pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding (Rom. 14:19), and always stress our common heritage and brotherhood in one God and Father. It makes for peace.

**Suggestions**

Before we can do the right thing in a confrontation or conflict situation, we must first be the right kind of people and should possess the

right prerequisites. In the light of the above, we put the following suggestions for those on mediation.

1. **We cannot follow exactly same procedures for all situations:** You cannot use one method for every conflict. Though there are principles that are timeless and firm, yet, the application of these principles may be flexible. Some people by nature are more sensitive than others. You simply cannot speak to them with the same force as others. Be wise and be sensitive to the "matters of the moment".

2. **Focus on Issues and Solutions**: Never confront someone or attempt settling a dispute if you are not genuinely interested in finding a solution. Do not say things in a conflict just for the sake of saying them. Do not vent! Be a true peacemaker and seek for peace as your primary goal.

3. **Ask Yourself "What are the real issues involved?"** This will give you focus to your discussion and prevent rabbit-trails in all directions. When discussing the differences between people or parties, try to think through the symptoms to locate the root cause. Try to narrow things down to one (or at most a few) related issues.

4. **Do not let your emotions run out of control:** Make sure the mind is in the driver's seat: emotions have a habit of driving recklessly. Let your mind regulate the heat of your sentiments and the emotions of the moment like a thermostat regulates the temperature.

5. **Pre-decide your rules of engagement**: The heat of argument is a poor time to think of proper boundaries. We would encourage those mediating in feuds to make up their minds on the types, methods or styles of conflict resolution or management they should adopt. The initiative should be taken ahead of the commencement of the proceedings. Don't

bring up unrelated points of reference. Every conflict situation has its peculiarities and should be treated accordingly.

6. **Do not escalate matters**: The rule of thumb is to lower tensions (the conflict) to the lowest possible level. Keep calm, lower your voice, and reassure every one of your intentions and sincerity. Affirm common goals, be humble and work towards a realistic solution.

7. **How you phrase things is of utmost importance (Pro. 25:12)**: Content alone is not enough. The packaging of the content is as important as the content itself. The way you word what you say is a contributing factor in succeeding or failing in conflict resolution. It matters not only what we say, but also how we word it. Proverbs 15:1 teaches that

   - A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Always remember:
   - A soothing tongue is a tree of life (Prov. 15:4, and
   - Sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness (Prov. 16:21).

8. **Do not bring up past conflicts**: It is so important to have a sense of closure with past conflicts. So the mediator(s) should not encourage or allow the people to build up a supply of weapons to bludgeon someone with. For instance one can recall the past misgiving against him by saying – "this is like the time you did such and such a thing to me…", "and I still cannot believe you did that thing" etc. God expects us to forgive others in the way that He forgives us – He does not require us to keep re-asking for forgiveness. People should not be allowed to bring up unrelated points of contention (Pro. 26:21).

**Conclusion**

This paper has tried to locate and discuss peaceful tools and methods available to the conflict transformation spectrum. Without pretensions, the paper does not in anyway claim to have exhaustively dealt with all the issues of methodology for conflict management. The paper merely presents the methods as symbolical procedures and approaches towards organized responses to conflict.

A common starting point for reconciliation and conflict management is the profound understanding of the basic concepts and terms that are tenable. They indeed point to some profitable areas and strategies for amateurs in the field of peace and conflict studies, to begin to explore more actively through empirical research, different methods so suggested in order to prove their acceptability and effectiveness or otherwise. In this way we can document the relative success and failure of different methods and styles across cultures.

The paper comes to the conclusion that amidst all the methods and points of approaches for conflict resolution and peace-building, that those on mediation must always be emphatic on the common humanity and brotherhood we have in God – the creator. This is very important and fundamental because, it is unlikely that people in a feud can appreciate someone they do not regard to have similar physical, religious, social and psychological affinities, and emotional needs with themselves. Everyone belongs to the commonwealth of God; so, people from different sides should learn to live together.

Storysharing i.e. listening to each other's personal life stories and experiences was identified as an important measure of finding common ground and challenging established views. One important pre-condition for

storysharing is the agreement not to victimise or embarrass each other, but to interact as equals and care for each other. Peace building and conflict management is all involving. Different stakeholders and groups are involved including the individuals and/or parties in a feud. There is therefore, the need to look beyond government and State in the search for harmonious co-existence in the world especially in the Niger Delta quagmire.

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