

CURBING VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA (I): THE JOS CRISIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	i
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. NIGERIA’S INDIGENE-SETTLER DIVIDE	3
A. A NATIONAL PROBLEM.....	3
B. THE MIDDLE BELT CONTEXT.....	6
C. THE JOS MICROCOSM	7
III. CHRONOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY VIOLENCE IN JOS	9
A. 1994, THE ONSET OF A PROTRACTED CRISIS.....	9
B. THE 2001 AND 2004 EPISODES	10
C. THE 2008 EVENTS	12
D. ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE SINCE 2010	13
IV. DRIVERS OF CONFLICT IN JOS	16
A. THE INTERPLAY OF IDENTITY, POLITICS AND ECONOMY	16
B. AGGRAVATING FACTORS	18
C. WORSENING SEGREGATION AND POLARISATION.....	19
V. RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS	20
A. JUDICIAL COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY AND PEACE INITIATIVE COMMITTEES	20
B. POLICE AND MILITARY ACTION	21
C. OPERATION RAINBOW	22
VI. THE WAY FORWARD	23
A. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	23
B. A HOLISTIC SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PACT.....	24
C. CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES	25
D. NATIONAL SECURITY MEASURES.....	26
E. BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE	26
VII. CONCLUSION	27
APPENDICES	
A. MAP OF NIGERIA	28
B. MAP OF PLATEAU STATE	29
C. MAP OF JOS	30
D. MAJOR INDIGENE-SETTLER CONFLICTS	31
E. ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN PLATEAU STATE	32
F. LIST OF ACRONYMS	33

CURBING VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA (I): THE JOS CRISIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since 2001, violence has erupted in Jos city, capital of Plateau state, in Nigeria's Middle Belt region. The ostensible dispute is over the "rights" of the indigene Berom/Anaguta/Afizere (BAA) group and the rival claims of the Hausa-Fulani settlers to land, power and resources. Indigene-settler conflicts are not new to Nigeria, but the country is currently experiencing widespread intercommunal strife, which particularly affects the Middle Belt. The Jos crisis is the result of failure to amend the constitution to privilege broad-based citizenship over exclusive indigene status and ensure that residency rather than indigeneity determines citizens' rights. Constitutional change is an important step to defuse indigene-settler rivalries that continue to undermine security. It must be accompanied by immediate steps to identify and prosecute perpetrators of violence, in Jos and other parts of the country. Elites at local, state and federal level must also consistently implement policies aimed at reducing the dangerous link between ethnic belonging and access to resources, power and security if intercommunal violence is to end.

The indigene principle, or indigeneity (that is, local origin), means that some groups control power and resources in states or local government areas (LGAs) while others – who have migrated for different reasons – are excluded. This gives rise both to grievances and fierce political competition, which too often lead to violence. Indigeneity was given constitutional force at independence in 1960 to protect the ethnic minorities from being submerged by the larger Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba groups and preserve their cultural and political identity and traditional institutions of governance. Religion is a pertinent, albeit secondary factor, which reinforces underlying tension and, over the years, has assumed greater importance, especially since the return of democracy in May 1999. Fierce and unregulated political competition characterised by ethnic mobilisation and violence, coupled with poor governance, economic deregulation and rampant corruption, have severely exacerbated ethnic, religious and regional fault lines. The notion of national citizenship appears to have been abrogated by both ethnicity and ancestry.

The persistent settler-indigene conflict in Plateau state reflects the longstanding sense of grievance the BAA, includ-

ing a small Muslim community among them, continue to nurse against their perceived treatment as second-class citizens by the Hausa-Fulani. The predominantly Christian Middle Belt, famous for its history of bitter struggle against attempts by the Muslim-dominated Far North to subjugate it, understands the citizenship malaise better than any other region. Reclaiming their rights, as the indigenous peoples of Plateau state, is the dominant narrative that runs through the BAA's attempted politics of reverse discrimination against their perceived ancient oppressors. Conversely, the Hausa-Fulani claim that they, not the BAA, are the authentic indigenes of Jos and have been aggrieved about their lack of access to power and resources despite being the majority in the biggest of the LGAs, Jos North.

Because the settlers are almost entirely Muslim and the indigenous people predominantly Christian, struggle over land ownership, economic resources and political control tends to be expressed not just in ethnic but also religious terms. The dispute is compounded by the fact that, of the settler groups, only the Hausa-Fulani lay proprietary claim to Jos. As violence recurs, spatial polarisation and segregation accentuate social and political divisions; people become more conscious of their sub-national solidarity and allegiances and are more forthcoming about expressing them.

Since the end of 2010, security has further deteriorated in Jos because of terror attacks and suicide bombings against churches and security targets by suspected militants of Boko Haram, the Islamist group responsible for an unprecedented wave of terrorist attacks in the north. Thousands have been killed, hundreds of thousands have been displaced internally and billions of dollars of property have been destroyed.

Thus far, responses from local and national authorities have proven mostly ineffective. They have come in three ways. First, several judicial commissions of inquiry have been appointed to "get to the root of the crises" and recommend "lasting solutions". But authorities have been slow in publishing reports and acting on their recommendations. Tough public speeches have not been translated into tangible political action against instigators and perpe-

trators: none of the suspects named by the various commissions have been prosecuted, and impunity continues to feed violence.

The second response is police and military action, which has had little success. Security forces not only fail to share intelligence among themselves, they are also suspected of taking sides in the conflict and soldiers are accused of trading guns for money. Finally, Operation Rainbow (OR), a joint initiative since June 2010 between the federal government and the Plateau state government with support from the UN Development Programme (UNDP), is considered a holistic response to the crisis. Still in its infancy, OR appears useful but will only be effective if it can, at the minimum, win the confidence of both sides. It should be publicised at the grassroots so that the population can own it.

The crisis in Plateau requires both national and local solutions. Constitutional provisions, by virtue of their ambiguity over the terms “indigene” (which the constitution fails to define satisfactorily) and “residency” for accessing citizenship rights, have done little to clarify the situation. Nigeria’s current conception and implementation of its citizenship (or national) question are inadequate and flawed. The way forward is for the National Assembly, via a referendum or by itself, following its nationwide public hearings on the matter, to replace the indigene principle with a more inclusive residency provision to fight discrimination and inequalities between settler and indigenous communities while consciously taking immediate steps to assuage the fears of ethnic minorities.

At the state level, the current Plateau government should change its approach. It can no longer carry on as if it is in power to serve only indigenous communities. It should not wait for national constitutional reform before abolishing discriminatory policies on education and employment between indigenes and settlers, as did the Sokoto state government. Otherwise, political differences will harden further, more pain will be inflicted on the hapless population, and the state’s – and, invariably, the country’s – development will be impaired.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Federal Government of Nigeria:

In the short term

1. Publish reports of previous commissions of inquiry and the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos crisis, including various white papers, and implement recommendations promoting principles of political inclusiveness, fairness, equity and justice. These include:
 - a) establishing a truth and reconciliation commission;
 - b) creating new local government areas and districts out of the highly disputed Jos North LGA;
 - c) adopting zoning and power rotation among the ethnic groups residing in it; and
 - d) establishing grazing reserve for the nomadic Fulani herdsmen.
2. End impunity by prosecuting those responsible, within and outside Plateau state, for masterminding and perpetrating violence and killings across the state.
3. Ensure the federal military Special Task Force (STF) in Jos works closely with the Plateau state government to protect various ethnic and cultural groups and reinforce security.
4. Ensure, together with the Plateau state government, that Operation Rainbow is fully operational and has the capacity to take over from the STF within the shortest possible time, while guaranteeing its objectivity and neutrality at all times in order to elicit ownership by all participating parties.
5. Facilitate, in collaboration with the Plateau state government, a genuinely bottom-up approach to the peace and confidence-building process, through effective engagement with community, civil society and traditional leaders, informal peacemakers like elders, youth and women groups to assess their concrete needs and demands; and creation of a legal framework and an implementation committee at the state level to meet these needs and demands.

In the medium term

6. Work with the National Assembly to give the settler problem a constitutional solution by replacing the contentious indigene provisions in the 1999 constitution with a common citizenship for all Nigerians based on residency; quickly revive and pass into law the Residency Rights Bill sponsored in 2004 by a group of senators.
7. Organise and fund a nationwide civic education program that would inculcate in Nigerians the significance of a common notion of citizenship, based on respect of ethnic and religious diversity, national unity and cohesion.
8. Strengthen intelligence sharing with regional and international partners to assess external terrorist threats (notably from al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, AQIM) with a view to increasing state capacity to respond adequately, by:
 - a) taking part in U.S. initiatives such as the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) and the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Programme (CTF); and

- b) drawing on the examples of countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines that face similar intercommunal conflicts and have initiated policies against radicalisation and violence.

To the Plateau State Government:

In the short term

9. Implement the recommendations of the published Fiberesima, Tobi and Ajibola commissions of inquiry and the white papers, that promote peace and security. These include:
 - a) prosecution of instigators and perpetrators of conspiracy, murder, arson and public disturbance;
 - b) checking the illegal possession of firearms; and
 - c) ending the indiscriminate construction of places of worship in residential areas in Jos and other towns.
10. Reach out to all settler groups in the state, particularly the Hausa-Fulani, to restore trust and confidence.
11. Provide security posts in strategic areas within the Jos metropolis and its environs in order to prevent civil unrest – a strategy that proved effective in Kaduna state.

In the medium term

12. Take measures against discrimination in education and employment opportunities between indigenes and settlers, following the example of Sokoto state.
13. Facilitate meaningful and sustained dialogue between the various communities to help defuse the crisis; revive the moribund Plateau State Inter-Religious Council for Peace and Harmony (IRCPH) and replicate it at the local government and community levels, so as to value the expertise and experience of its special advisers on religious affairs (Christian and Muslim), security, community relations, youth and women mobilisation, rural transformation, project monitoring, ethical re-orientation and peacebuilding.
14. Ensure that future local government elections are credible, free and fair, and that winners are duly declared and unencumbered to take office and exercise power.
15. Modify the structure of the Jos North LGA to make the local council more representative of the desires of all the communities to foster a sense of community and belonging.

To the UN and Bilateral Donors:

16. Press for accountability for perpetrators and instigators of violence to combat impunity.
17. Encourage the Nigerian government and the National Assembly, via a referendum or by itself following its public hearings on the matter, to amend relevant sections of the 1999 constitution in order to provide a national, constitutional solution to the perennial settler-indigene problem.
18. Provide further capacity building and technical assistance to the Nigerian and the Plateau state governments to complement current UNDP contributions in these areas and empower Operation Rainbow.
19. Provide requisite expertise and skills to the Nigerian government and security agencies to support efforts at improving intelligence gathering and sharing, so as to boost efficiency in containing intercommunal conflicts and fighting terrorism and extremism.
20. Work with the Nigerian government, the Plateau state government and the ethno-religious communities in the state to attenuate the youth's social marginalisation, economic disempowerment, idleness and political exclusion through education and establishment of a working group of progressive, educated people from all communities that could promote fresh ideas into public policies.

Dakar/Brussels, 17 December 2012

CURBING VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA (I): THE JOS CRISIS

I. INTRODUCTION

Situated approximately in the centre of Nigeria, Plateau state, the country's twelfth largest, self-described as "the home of peace and tourism" and the "most endowed state", is a veritable mini-Nigeria, with its mosaic of indigenous ethnic communities (over 50 by most accounts, about 100 linguistic groupings and 40 spoken languages).¹ Other ethnic groups (mainly the Hausa-Fulani, but also the Igbo, Yoruba and Urhobo) from other parts of the country are also inhabitants of the state (or so-called settlers) and constitute at least half the population. Plateau state is the 26th most populous state (out of 36), with a population of more than three million, much of which is young – over 60 per cent between fifteen and 24 years old.² Nigerians from across the country, as well as a sizeable number of Europeans, were attracted to the then famous, Jos industrial-scale tin and columbite mines between 1904 and the 1980s.

Mining destroyed much arable land and although there is a thriving potato and vegetable market, the land is not Nigeria's most fertile. This has contributed to rising unemployment, idleness and a high crime rate among the youthful population. The main indigenous ethnic groups – the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere (BAA) – are aggrieved that mining, as well as colonialism, dispossessed them of

much of their customary land.³ British rule marginalised them economically and indirect rule placed them under the authority of the Far North,⁴ but they were, and have remained, predominantly Christians.

Located on the cusp of the Core North, Jos, a relatively new city, grew rapidly to become the country's ethnic melting point. It emerged in 1910 during British colonial rule as a metropolis and became a political division in 1927. It was named the capital of Benue-Plateau state during the first exercise of state creation by General Yakubu Gowon's regime in 1967. In 1976, it became the capital of Plateau state following another round of state creation.⁵

Plateau state and the Middle Belt – which represents, roughly, the centre of the country – used to be a bridge between north and south. Between 1980 and 2000 – except during the 1994 crisis, a period that witnessed widespread intercommunal violence in key northern towns such as Kano, Kaduna and Bauchi – Jos enjoyed relative peace and calm. The city mirrored the peaceful coexistence of Nigerians from different ethnic backgrounds and religious persuasions. Cosmopolitanism, anchored in multi-ethnicity and multiple languages, evinced a culture of tolerance and friendly relations between Christians and Mus-

¹ Plateau state is carved out into seventeen local government areas (LGAs). See Appendix E. Much of the violence is perpetrated in and around Jos South, Jos East and Jos North. For more historical details, see Paul Logans, *The Middle Belt Movement in Nigerian Political Development: A Study in Political Identity, 1949-1967* (Abuja, 2004); Abimbola O. Adesoji and Akin Alao, "Indigeneship and Citizenship in Nigeria: Myth and Reality", *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, vol. 2, no. 9 (March 2009), pp. 151-165; Adam Higazi, "The Jos Crisis: A Recurrent Nigerian Tragedy", Discussion Paper no. 2, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, January 2011, pp. 7-8; Ogoh Alubo, "The Public Space in Nigeria: Politics of Power, Gender and Exclusion", *Africa Development*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2011), pp. 85-87; Aaron Sayne, "Re-thinking Nigeria's Indigene-Settler Conflicts", Special Report No. 311, U.S. Institute of Peace, (Washington, July 2012).

² The population is 3,178,712. See www.onlinenigeria.com/links/plateauadv.asp.

³ Higazi, op. cit., pp. 4-5. The BAA or indigenes (both are used interchangeably in this report) are also called the *Jarawa* while the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group with roots in Jos are referred to as the *Jasawa*. On the evolution and the political dynamics of these ethnicities, see Victor A. Adetula, "Ethnicity and the dynamics of city politics: The Case of Jos", in Abdoumalik Simone and Abdelghani Abouhan (eds.), *Urban Africa: Changing Contours of Survival in the City* (London, 2005), pp. 206-234.

⁴ The Far North is also known as the Core North. Both are often used interchangeably to refer to the dominant Hausa-Fulani ruling elite, almost wholly Muslim, which has ruled Nigeria for much of the post-independence period.

⁵ Nigeria has had five rounds of state creation since 1967 when twelve states were created in the wake of the Biafran secession. Seven new states were created in 1976, bringing the number to nineteen. Two more states (Akwa Ibom and Katsina, respectively carved out of Cross River and Kaduna states) were added in 1987. The last two rounds in 1991 and 1996 brought the total to 36. All these exercises were undertaken by military regimes, except for the 1963 decision by the elected Northern People's Congress (NPC) government to create the mid-west region from the western region.

lims. All that has changed since the September 2001 meltdown, described as “the first episode of mass violence in Jos since the anti-Igbo pogroms in 1966”.⁶

The cycle appears interminable. Since 2001, violence has become tellingly more frequent and deadlier. Between 1999 and 2004, there were more than 80 episodes of violence involving the BAA and Hausa-Fulani communities. Attacks have increased in number and intensity since 2004, but no exact figures are available. About 4,000 people have been killed in the past eleven years. Non-indigenous communities, particularly the Yoruba and the Igbo, claim they have lost 1,654 people and property worth 970 billion naira (\$6.4 billion) since 1994.⁷ Increasingly sophisticated and deadly terror attacks and suicide bombings by Boko Haram, mainly in northern states, since 2010, have compounded insecurity. Plateau state has not been spared from the group’s menace, but its presence and strength there remain, for now, limited.⁸

This report, the first in a series that examines insecurity in three regions of Nigeria, explores the dynamics of the recurring violence in Plateau state predominantly as a settler-indigene issue. It situates the violence within the historical evolution of this phenomenon in the Nigerian, Middle Belt and Jos contexts. The Jos crises mirror other parts of the country, but there is a specific local dimension with the indigenous groups ranged against the Hausa-Fulani. The latter is not only the most politically dominant ethnic group in the country; historically its relations with much of the Middle Belt have been characterised by tension arising from its attempts to subjugate and repress the BAA. The Hausa-Fulani are the only community that claims to be also indigene, which is why violence has not implicated other settler groups such as the Igbo, Urhobo and Yoruba, except as collateral victims.

Violence in Jos is defined and worsened by both local and national dynamics. The failure of Nigeria’s ruling elite to satisfactorily address and resolve crises woven around the key issues of citizenship, identity and political inclusion has aggravated the situation. The use of the indigene principle rather than residency to determine individuals’ citizenship rights creates a national malaise, even though this does not give rise to conflict everywhere. A major challenge in Plateau state is managing the unique ethnic, linguistic and religious pluralism with minimum group disaffection; and promoting, through public policy targeting the younger generation, a culture of tolerance, understanding and co-operation between the different communities.

⁶ Higazi, *op. cit.*, p. 2. The pre-independence intercommunal and inter-ethnic conflicts that took place in Jos in 1930, 1945 and 1953 pitched the Igbo against the Hausa-Fulani. The indigenous populations were not involved. See Leonard Plotnicov, “An Early Nigerian Civil Disturbance: The 1945 Hausa-Ibo Riot in Jos”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2 (August 1971), pp. 297-305.

⁷ “A cycle of reprisals turns Jos into killing field”, *Vanguard*, 1 January 2012. There is no consensus on these figures, however. Peter Gai, president of the Abuja Berom (an association of Berom people living in Abuja), said that 10,000 lives were lost and property worth over 180 billion naira was destroyed during the same period. See Jude Owuamanam, “Berom seeks election of Fulani herdsmen from Plateau state”, *Punch*, 16 July 2012.

⁸ See also Section III.D. For background on the initial activities of Boko Haram, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°168, *Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict*, 20 December 2010, pp. 18-19.

II. NIGERIA'S INDIGENE-SETTLER DIVIDE

The evolution of the indigene-settler divide needs to be understood within a national, Middle Belt and specifically Jos contexts.

A. A NATIONAL PROBLEM

Relations between “indigene” (or “host”) and “settler” communities in Nigeria have been historically complex, vexed and tense.⁹ The British colonial authorities were the first to articulate a formal distinction between indigenous and non-indigenous communities. In the 1940s and 1950s, they enforced a policy of rigid residential segregation between “natives” and “settlers” – as evidenced by the so-called *Sabon Gari* (strangers’ or non-natives’ quarters) in many mixed Nigerian cities.¹⁰ Britain favoured an ethnic conception of citizenship and post-colonial governments have done little to fundamentally change this policy.

The indigene principle first appeared in the Native Authority Law of 1954, which defined an indigene as “someone whose genealogy can be traced to particular geo-ethnic space within a local council or state in which s/he is resident”.¹¹ In contrast, a non-indigene, settler or stranger is a “[n]ative who is not a member of the native community living in the area of its authority”.¹² Given Nigeria’s multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism, the rationale for the indigene principle was to guarantee control of part of the public space for minority communities to protect their political and cultural identities and traditional governing institutions from majority groups. Since independence, however, the indigene principle has impacted very negatively on intercommunal relations across the country. It has generated so much conflict that it needs to be replaced by more inclusive citizenship provisions¹³ while also providing effective protection for minority rights.

The 1999 constitution failed to address this problem and remains ambiguous. The indigene principle promoted in Section 147 (3) appears to be in conflict with the citizenship provisions of Section 15 (3) (b), which stipulates that

“for the purpose of promoting national integration, it shall be the role of the State to secure full residence rights for every citizen in all parts of the Federation”. The Nigerian state has not ensured implementation of this provision. Experts have suggested that residency, rather than indigeneity, should become the determining factor of citizenship. Section 25 (1) (a) declares as citizens of Nigeria “every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria”. The modalities for such a determination are nowhere spelled out and the constitution offers little clarity. Its main emphasis is on “ethnic groups” and “states”.¹⁴

Article 14 (3) stipulates that “the composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or any of its agencies”. The Federal Character Commission (FCC), created and mandated by the constitution to ensure strict adherence to the federal character principle,¹⁵ first used the phrase “indigenes of each state” at the federal level, thereby contradicting the citizenship provisions.

The constitution mentions protecting Nigerian citizens, not indigenes of states or local councils. Despite the attempt of Section 42 to protect Nigerians from “any disability or

⁹ See Crisis Group Africa Report, N°113, *Nigeria: Want in the Midst of Plenty*, 19 July 2006, pp. 2-5.

¹⁰ The British colonial government saw this as an effective way to pursue its divide-and-rule strategy of governance. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹¹ Human Rights Watch (HRW), “‘They Do Not Own This Place’: Government Discrimination Against ‘Non-Indigenes’ in Nigeria”, April 2006, p. 19. See also Alubo, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹² Cited in HRW, “‘They Do Not Own This Place’”, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

¹³ See Nabila Isa-Odidi, “Ethnic Conflict in Plateau State: The Need to Eliminate the Indigene/Settler Dichotomy in Nigeria”, *Human Rights Brief*, vol. 12, issue 1 (2004), pp. 18-21.

¹⁴ Because the 1999 constitution uses the term “indigene” but does not precisely define it, “internal citizenship remains a disputed issue that fuels local violence all over the country, most notably in the Middle Belt”. See Crisis Group Report, *Nigeria: Want in the Midst of Plenty*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

¹⁵ Among others, the FCC was charged to “promote, monitor and enforce compliance with the principles of proportional sharing of all bureaucratic, economic, media and political posts at all levels of government”. See the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Third Schedule, Part 1 (C), Section 7 (2) (b). One of the guidelines released by the FCC for the implementation of the federal character principle stipulated that “on the basis of strict inter-state equality, the indigenes of each of the thirty-six states should account for only 2.75 per cent in the federal public service”. To deter rigidity, the FCC added that “the norm of inter-state equality should be modified such that indigenes of each state would be required to constitute not less than 2.5 per cent and not more than 3 per cent of officers in the federal bureaucracy”. Cited in Rotimi Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria*, U.S. Institute of Peace (Washington DC, 2001), p. 114. As an instrument of integration, the federal character principle has come at a great cost, namely, “the country’s disaggregation into hundreds of tiny principalities run on the basis of indigene sovereignty”, Philip Ostien, “Jonah Jang and the Jasawa: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Nigeria”, *Muslim-Christian Relations in Africa* (August, 2009), p. 6.

deprivation merely by reason or circumstance of his birth”, a Nigerian is a citizen only in his/her state of origin and not in other states. Neither the federal government nor the National Assembly has done much to address the various constitutional ambiguities.

Proving that one community is more indigenous to a particular space or territory than others can be an extremely difficult exercise. Since settlements and communities have arisen out of waves of migration that took place several decades or centuries ago, establishing the veracity of often poorly documented historical records is a huge challenge. This explains why contradictory and mutually exclusive narratives of migration waves and arrivals are so common. Some groups may be able to point to distinct ancient landmarks such as houses, walls, traditional structures and cemeteries which separate them from others; but it is often due solely to the word of the indigenous community, which claims to have been the first to occupy the land, against that of the settlers, who it insists arrived later. The resort to oral traditions and communal myths of legitimation, while valid, is not always reliable, as these tend to create exclusive narratives.

Hardening positions and the absence of compromise on how to manage contending claims have caused intra and, most importantly, intercommunal strife. Nigeria has had more than its fair share of indigene-settler conflicts since independence and particularly since the May 1999 return of democracy, when pent-up anger and frustration, accumulated over the years but suppressed by military diktat, finally began to be vented.¹⁶

¹⁶ Perhaps the most intriguing conflicts were the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba clashes in Lagos, Kano, Ogun and Oyo states between 1999 and 2000. Both groups had lived peacefully together for decades, but the immediate trigger of tension was the election of Olusegun Obasanjo as president in 1999, a position that had been held almost exclusively since independence by northern politicians and military officers. Others were recurrent, such as the three-cornered Urhobo-Ijaw-Itsekiri conflict in Warri, Delta state; Hausa-Fulani and Igbo clashes in Kano state; and conflict between southern Kaduna and Zaria Christians and Hausa-Fulani Muslims in Kaduna state, including the Sharia riots of 2000. There were also the Tiv-Junkun conflicts in Benue and Taraba states; the violence between the Tiv and the indigenous Kwalla ethnic groups in the southern senatorial district of Nasarawa state and the intra-ethnic clashes between the Aguleri and Umuleri groups in Anambra state. For details, see Alubo, *op. cit.*, p. 88; Eghosa E. Osaghae and Rotimi T. Suberu, *A History of Identities, Violence and Stability in Nigeria* (Oxford, 2005), p. 19 and Siri Aas Rustad, *Power Sharing and Conflict in Nigeria: Power Sharing Agreements, Negotiations and Peace Processes* (Oslo, 2008), pp. 7-9. According to Shima Ayata, then special assistant to the Benue state governor, during the intercommunal clashes in Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba states in 2001, over 500,000 were killed and about 375,000

The conflicts are often very bitter precisely because privileges and entitlements are nearly a zero-sum game; the gain of one group is the loss of the other because, across Nigeria, scarce resources generate fierce competition. In a political economy largely dominated by huge but highly centralised oil revenues controlled by very often corrupt and unaccountable political elites in the three tiers of government (federal, state and local), one has to belong to an indigenous community to access them. Those who cannot – referred to as either “settlers”, “stateless citizens” or “stateless indigenes”¹⁷ – and do not qualify to be issued with “certificates of indigeneity” are victimised not only by the state government but also by local councils, where discrimination against non-indigenes is increasingly the norm.¹⁸

The certificate of indigeneity is weighty and those without it are deprived of meaningful citizenship. The actual number of those affected is not known, but all of them are considered as non-indigenes or settlers. They suffer discrimination in recruitment into federal institutions, admissions to most of the federal universities and education at military academies. At sub-federal levels, where the practice is most rife, they are denied access to schools, health care, roads and academic scholarships and are discriminated against in access to jobs. Finally, the door to participation in local politics is virtually shut against them.¹⁹

Tiv people were displaced. See “Over 500,000 people died in communal conflicts – Adviser” *Daily Trust*, 21 May 2002. In a clash between the Ezza and the Ezillo communities in Ebonyi state in December 2011, over 60 people were killed. See “Ezza-Ezillo crisis: both communities cannot live together – Elechi [Ebonyi state governor]”, *Vanguard*, 3 January 2012.

¹⁷ See HRW, “They Do Not Own This Place”, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

¹⁸ See Crisis Group Report, *Northern Nigeria*, *op. cit.*, p. 11; and Lauren Ploch, “Nigeria: Current Issues and US Policy”, Congressional Research Service (CRS), 18 July 2012, p. 10. Certificates of indigeneity (or indigene certificates) qualify holders or recipients for material and social citizenship, including easy access to schools, health care, academic scholarship, jobs, and state and federal political appointments. Those without these certificates have little or no access to these entitlements. Even though much of the discrimination against hiring non-indigenes in the public sector (mainly on contractual, non-permanent bases) is a recent phenomenon, and not mandated by official employment policies, it is becoming an entrenched practice. In Plateau and Kano States, respectively in 2000 and 2002, most non-indigenous employees were sacked. Explanations provided by the state governments included “the debilitating effects of Nigeria’s long history of economic decline” and “a necessary response to rising levels of unemployment”. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27. These states and many others openly violate their recruitment laws.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39 and Umar Danfulani, “The Jos Peace Conference and the Indigene/Settler Question in Nigerian Politics”, unpublished paper, 2006, p. 15.

The process of procuring a certificate of indigeneity is fraught with unpredictability and patronage, if not outright corruption. Local officials and district heads determine who is an indigene. The federal and state governments handed over the responsibility to them in violation of the spirit of the constitution, but they rarely take into account that the definition of an indigene is far from static. “Troubles start with the award of ... indigeneity certificates Without written guidelines, local officials can have almost unfettered discretion The well-heeled buy up certificates from multiple local government areas, then pick and choose among them like passports to wealth”.²⁰

As new states and local councils were carved out of existing ones over the years, the notions of indigene and settler acquired new meanings and different interpretations. New ethnic majorities and minorities were created, local equations altered and new contestations appeared around social citizenship, resulting in new demands for further administrative decoupage. While this exercise has tended to boost minority groups’ prospects of political autonomy, it has also dangerously exacerbated indigene-settler fault lines. In states such as Plateau, where the BAA have a long history of struggle against politico-cultural and religious domination by the Far North, this fight has continued against their “guests”.²¹

Common to all Nigerian communities are varying degrees of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment in a country where abundant oil revenues over decades have been synonymous with fierce competition for lucrative political positions and neglect of public and private investments in more job-intensive economic sectors such as industry and agriculture.²² Oil wealth has hollowed out government and alternative industries. Since the mid-1980s, poorly conceived market reforms, corruption and mismanagement

have left the state prostrate and a majority of Nigerians poorer. The scramble for scarce resources and opportunities at the state level, in particular in Plateau state, has promoted ethnicity and ancestry as the key determinants of access to resources, thereby derailing social cohesion.²³

The Plateau state syndrome is replicated almost everywhere. Groups in charge, whatever their numerical strength, amass resources at the expense of others. In Kaduna state, contestation, though not always violent, prevails between the minority – Southern Kaduna and Zaria Christians – and the majority – Hausa-Fulani Muslims; in Delta state, the Itsekiri are in charge even though they are numerically inferior to the Urhobo and the Ijaw. The Southern Senatorial district in Nasarawa state, Plateau state’s southern neighbour, has witnessed violent intercommunal conflicts between the Tiv majority originally from Benue state and the indigenous Kwalla ethnic groups (notably the Jukun), especially since 2001 following the denial of Tiv political representation and inclusion. When a new head of Kurume district in the Azara chiefdom was appointed from the rival group, a position to which the Tiv thought they were entitled given their demographic weight, and all judicial attempts to challenge the decision fell on deaf ears, some members of the Tiv community retaliated by beheading the appointee.²⁴

Because of the countrywide indigene-settler question, intercommunal conflicts tend to take on national character and expression. Various initiatives by the federal government, such as the 2004 Plateau Peace Conference, have failed to end the settler-indigene dispute because it is “more of a national than a state issue” and could be best resolved “if the citizenship of all Nigerians is accepted”.²⁵ As the Niki Tobi Commission of Inquiry into the 2001 violence has argued, “indigeneship is a thorny problem in the sociology and culture of Nigeria. It causes perennial problems in our polity. Crises are experienced regularly in the country as a result of problems of indigeneship”.²⁶

²⁰ Sayne, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

²¹ HRW, “They Do Not Own This Place”, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

²² Nigeria’s population, according to the March 2006 census, is 140,003,542. A 2011 estimate of the Population Council, an international non-governmental organisation, put the population at 162.3 million. (www.popcouncil.org/countries/nigeria.asp). Adult literacy, defined as “the percentage of people, ages 15 and above, who can, with understanding, read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life”, was put at 61 per cent in 2009 (with 48.8 per cent for females and 71.5 per cent for males). 70.9 per cent of men and 74.8 per cent of women in the total civilian labour force reported being self-employed in 2005. Finally, the unemployment rate was 23.9 per cent in January 2012. See The World Bank Data, “Literacy rate, adult total (per cent of people ages 15 and above)” and “Employment to population ration, 15+, total (percentage)”, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicators/SL.EMP.TOTL.SP.ZS>; Trading Economics, www.tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/unemployment.r1; and Ngozi Onyejeli, “Nigeria Work Force Profile”, no. 22, July (Boston, 2010).

²³ Since 1999, 500 separate incidents of intercommunal conflicts have cost some 11,000 lives across Nigeria. See Victor Adetula, Darren Kew and Chris Kwaja, *Assessing Democratic Assistance: Nigeria*, Fundacion para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior, FRIDE, (Madrid, May 2010), p. 12.

²⁴ Alubo, *op. cit.*, p. 89. See Appendix D for indigene-settler conflicts in Nigeria.

²⁵ Danfulani, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²⁶ “White Paper on the Report of the Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Civil Disturbances in Jos and its environs, September 2002”, Jos, Plateau state government, 2010, p. 44.

B. THE MIDDLE BELT CONTEXT

The settler-indigene crisis in Plateau state can only be properly understood in light of the historically tense relations between the Middle Belt region (contemporary north-central geopolitical zone) and the Far North. The former is mainly Christian with pockets of animists and Muslims; the latter is largely Muslim but with a significant Christian population, including southern immigrants. Memories of deprivation, subordination and exploitation since the slave raids by the Far North between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries continue to run deep in the Middle Belt.

The British first used the notion of “Middle Belt areas” in reference to the southern tip of the northern region as a political identity distinct and separate from the north-west and north-east geopolitical zones.²⁷ Because the region is predominantly Christian, the disparate groups also tend to use religion as a socio-cultural identity. The Middle Belt consists roughly of the following states and areas: Adama-wa, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Taraba and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Some Plateau public intellectuals and activists tend to include southern fringes of Kebbi, Kaduna, Borno, Bauchi and Gombe states because they are not dominated by Hausa-Fulani people.

Throughout the eighteenth century, during Usman dan Fodio’s jihad and the establishment of an Islamic theocracy in Sokoto and Borno,²⁸ the Middle Belt was defined as “peripheries to be exploited” by the jihadis. Subsequent British colonial rule legitimised the Far North’s “indigenous imperialist system” over the Middle Belt’s ethnic minorities. In the eyes of the BAA, British rule empowered the Hausa-Fulani community to subjugate the indigenes, and, by so doing, establish the hegemony of the north over the country – which jihad could not achieve because Islamisation of the Middle Belt had failed.²⁹ Marginalisation and oppression had driven these minorities to embrace Christianity as a tool of political emancipation. Middle

Belt Muslims have also complained of treatment as second-class citizens by Hausa-Fulani Muslims.³⁰

Between the late 1940s and late 1960s, the Middle Belt expressed itself politically in two major ways: first through the creation of the Non-Muslim League (NML) of Northern Nigeria and, later, through the creation of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). In 1959, the Middle Belt Movement clamoured for the creation of a political entity separate from the Islamic-leaning Northern People’s Congress (NPC). The Middle Belt describes itself as non-Hausa speaking, non-Fulani and non-Kanuri – the major ethnic groups in the Far North.

On the eve of independence, the country’s ethnic minorities had “expressed fears of domination in a post-colonial Nigeria, but a 1958 commission largely dismissed their concerns”.³¹ Since 1960, the Middle Belt has never been at ease with the fact that it was faced with *fait accompli* incorporation within northern Nigeria and not granted a separate existence. The BAA remain angry that the Hausa-Fulani they had forced to retreat during the jihad became their political masters during the colonial period and today prosper through politics and democracy at their own expense.³²

For some Plateau state politicians, the primary function of the state government is to ensure that its indigenes, who feel threatened by perceived central government support to the settlers,³³ enjoy the tangible benefits of emancipation from the Far North.³⁴ The BAA do not trust the Hausa-Fulani, arguing that they have a hidden agenda to Islamise the entire Middle Belt, though this narrative does not mean that they want the total exclusion of all non-indigenes from power and resources.³⁵ The suggestion during an August 2011 national debate to amend the constitution to solve

²⁷ Nigerians usually referred to these areas as the political north.

²⁸ Usman dan Fodio, leader of a revivalist revolution at the dawn of the nineteenth century, “led a Jihad initially aimed at purifying Islamic practices in the [northern] region [of Nigeria] and ultimately at installing a new righteous leadership”. The jihad subdued the fourteen Hausa states between 1804 and 1808, replacing their chiefs with Fulani emirs. For an overview, see Crisis Group Report, *Northern Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 3. The resultant Sokoto Caliphate was West Africa’s most powerful pre-colonial state and the biggest state south of the Sahara.

²⁹ HRW, “They Do Not Own This Place”, op. cit., pp. 34, 46-47; Ostien, op. cit., p. 8; Alubo, op. cit., p. 88. Between 1902 and 1947, the British appointed twelve successive paramount chiefs in Jos, called *Sarkin Jos* (*Sarkin* is a Hausa title), all of them were of Hausa-Fulani origin. See Sam Egwu, “The Jos crisis and the national question”, *The Guardian* (Lagos), 25 January 2009.

³⁰ Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists and conflict experts, Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

³¹ Crisis Group Report, *Northern Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 5.

³² Crisis Group interviews, senior journalists, civil society activists and conflict experts, Jos, April and July 2011.

³³ HRW, “They Do Not Own This Place”, op. cit., p. 44. Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists, Jos, April and July 2011.

³⁴ Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists and conflict experts, Jos and Abuja, April and July 2011.

³⁵ Jos indigenes had always wanted “their own identity separate from the North . . . in particular [the] indigenes insist the settlers from the North must not rule them . . . the problem is the feeling believed to exist among the Hausa that *they must rule*” (emphasis in the original). See Ostien, op. cit., pp. 19-20. “The violence in the Middle Belt is becoming chronic rather than episodic, and it is acquiring a distinctive religious dimension as Christians increasingly suspect Muslims of seeking to capture the state government or hive off the northern part of Plateau state into a separate Islamic state”. See John Campbell, *Nigeria: Dancing on the Brink* (Ibadan, 2010), p. 137.

the indigene-settler problem was shot down by much of the Middle Belt, because it was perceived as a subtle way to entrench Hausa-Fulani domination over the indigenes and their land. Concerns were also raised that such amendments would empower the Fulani herdsmen to take over lands and grazing areas. According to a local official from the region, “before long, the Core North will be in charge of the north-central zone”.³⁶

C. THE JOS MICROCOSM

During the colonial period, unlike their Middle Belt counterparts in Adamawa, Southern Bauchi and Southern Zaria, where Hausa-Fulani and Islamic leadership had almost complete control over society, the Berom in Jos division had a district head, control over local courts and a police force. In 1947, Rwang Pam, head teacher of the government school in Riyom, was appointed as the chief of the Berom and the chief of Jos (the *Gbong Gwom* Jos), as a result of protests led by the Berom Progressive Union (BPU). Rwang was subsequently named paramount chief of Jos Native Authority (the equivalent of today’s local council), a position which made him politically superior to the district chiefs in Jos division and gave him political authority over non-Berom villages. To counter growing Berom influence, the Hausa-Fulani leaders increased their claims, particularly between 1910 and 1954, over the political control of Jos and its environs.³⁷

Mutually exclusive claims to the “ownership” of Jos notwithstanding, virtually all commissions of inquiry into the Jos crisis since April 1994 concluded that the city is “owned” not by the Hausa-Fulani, but by the BAA. “Ownership”, granted through indigeneity, means not only that all the land belongs to the rightful claimants but also that they have the right to rule the city. The Niki Tobi Commission argued that “the claim by the Hausa to the ownership of Jos is not authenticated beyond the oral evidence

of persons” and “the Hausa-Fulani community should be encouraged to dialogue with other communities and accept the ownership of Jos by the BAA. Anything short of that will not make for peace”.³⁸

The commission said this conclusion is based on several pieces of documentary evidence. The first was a 1934 colonial account in the *Gazetteers of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria*, which described the BAA and other groups that formed the former Jos division as people “sharing a common native treasury at Jos”.³⁹ Only these communities were judged to have proof of ancestral land in Jos. The second document was a 28 February 1945 letter written to the secretary of the Northern Provinces in Kaduna (the capital) by the resident of the Provincial Office in Jos about the management of immigrants by the Berom authorities. The resident expressed anxiety about the tendency of the Fulani to squat on the land and insisted they should “seek formal authority from the appropriate Native Authority to settle”. Another letter by the same author referred to the Hausa as “the majority tribe of the stranger settlement”, including the Igbo and the Yoruba. The third piece of evidence was that the Fulani paid tributes to the BAA to obtain grazing land from them, which the commission argued “is consistent with the right of ownership”.⁴⁰

The commission may have made a persuasive case for the ownership of Jos by the BAA but there are other historical proofs that appear inconsistent with this position. As in other parts of the country, both parties use similar artefacts to establish their respective supposed pre-eminence. These include traditional history and colonial records, as well as oral tradition and genealogy. None of these is wholly reliable. Ancient landmarks, such as which group controls the first or oldest cemetery, have also been contested as some communities bury their dead in their homestead.⁴¹

Ownership has also proved difficult to establish as existing historical indications do not always appear definitive. The processes of migration of the Berom from “somewhere in the south” probably began in the eighteenth century, partly to escape Hausa slave raids, and were completed by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1873, the BAA and many other Plateau groups saved themselves

³⁶ In the context of Sharia compliance in several northern states – from 1999, including Kaduna where Muslims do not enjoy a clear-cut numerical majority – the BAA have in large part feared that the Hausa-Fulani are bent on taking over Jos, after which they would install an emir and introduce Sharia. President Olusegun Obasanjo’s May 2004 declaration of a six-month state of emergency, shortly after another round of bloody intercommunal conflict in Jos, was “vehemently rejected by the majority of the citizens of Plateau state” who viewed it as “the extension of Hausa-Fulani hegemony on them, since they concluded that the President acted under the influence of the Sultanate”. See Danfulani, *op. cit.*, p. 7. Yet, at an interactive session between the various communities of Jos North LGA on 25 June, the Hausa-Fulani representatives reportedly “made it clear that they lay no claims to the ownership of Jos and the traditional stool of the *Gbong Gwom* [chief] of Jos”. *Ibid.*, p. 12. Crisis Group interview, former senior journalist, now academic, Jos, 10 April 2011.

³⁷ Logams, *op. cit.*, pp. 322-328.

³⁸ See “White Paper on the Report of the Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission”, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 and 224.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30. The north and the south were previously denominated the Northern Provinces and the Southern Provinces respectively.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 30 and 35.

⁴¹ Justice Constance Rekiyah Momoh discussed the limitations of these sources to establish first arrivals. See “Government White Paper on the Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Conflict in Namu Town, Qua’an Pan Local Government Area, Plateau State”, Jos, Plateau state government, May 2006.

from the all-conquering Fulani jihadis by taking refuge in mountains, hills and caves across the state, a probable indication of prior settlement. Some Hausa-Fulani groups, notably from southern Bauchi and southern Zaria, escaping from the same conquest, migrated to Plateau during the nineteenth century to take refuge. There have been several other migration waves since then, including in the 1980s and 1990s, due mainly to intercommunal conflicts, drought and desertification in several northern states. Further migration after 2000 was largely a fallout of conflicts in Sharia-compliant states.⁴²

To get around this problem, the Plateau Peace Conference in May 2004 recommended that the state government direct all the local government councils to find original names of towns and villages which reflect the cultures and traditions of the people so that they could be officially gazetted for permanent public use.⁴³ The April 2010 draft report of the Presidential Advisory Commission on the Jos Crisis claimed that all reports of judicial commissions of inquiry (as well as the 2004 Plateau Peace Conference Report, also known as “Plateau Resolves”) attributed ownership of Jos to the BAA but omitted to add that the Hausa-Fulani community had challenged this in court. The same draft report acknowledged that questions over the ownership of Jos remain the major reason for the persistent indigene-settler crisis. While the indigenes appeal to ancestral origin, the settler community evokes historical antecedents and its contribution to the development of the city.⁴⁴

Another way of addressing the contestation is to look at the demographic pattern and sectarian distribution of the Jos area over time. The 1952 census showed that 84.5 per cent of the state’s inhabitants are Christian, 12 per cent are Muslim and 3.5 per cent are traditional religion adherents. Over the last decade, the Christian population increased to 95 per cent.⁴⁵ The BAA are unanimous that, as the different commissions of inquiry have recognised, they sold land to the Hausa-Fulani and not the other way around when the latter arrived. The Anaguta people would go as far as saying that Jos started from Naraguta (derived, according to them, from Anaguta, their ethnic name) but that they accepted the two other groups (Afizere and Berom) as co-natives because they have lived together for long and share similar history and interests.⁴⁶ The 2006 census showed that the BAA continue to enjoy overwhelming numerical superiority and have remained predominantly Christians. The exact percentage is not known, however, because contemporary population counts in Nigeria have been silent on religion.⁴⁷

⁴² Logams, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 65-66, 310, 312 and 764. Conflicting narratives of ownership of Jos did not, however, precipitate any major crisis until the late 1980s-early 1990s. There was, to the contrary, evidence of harmony between the “natives” and “settlers”. *Ibid.*, p. 317. Jos and Plateau appear to have retained their allure to many northern migrants, long after the repeal of the “Twenty Years’ Indigenization Edict” that promised indigene status to people who could show evidence of twenty consecutive years of residence in the 1970s. Two main factors led to the repeal: its alleged manipulation that unduly benefited the migrant Muslim population and the absence of a similar law in other states. *Ibid.*, p. 770.

⁴³ This resolution was echoed by the Justice Momoh Commission of Inquiry. See “Government White Paper on the Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Conflict in Namu Town”, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

⁴⁴ The report of the 1994 Fiberesima commission, for example, defines an indigene of Jos as “one whose ancestors were natives of Jos, beyond living memory. This may not include any person who may not remember from where his father or grandfather left his native home for Jos as a fixed home, domiciled there as of choice for life; or who is ignorant about from where his family moved to Jos permanently in quest of better living or in the process of his business”. It adds that “in the light of the above consideration or careful thought, we concede to the claim of the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom tribes, and ... declare that they are

‘indigenes’ of Jos. But as to the Hausa-Fulani people’s assumption, we make bold, on the evidence at our disposal, to advise that they can qualify only as ‘citizens’ of Jos ...”. Cited in Danfulani, *op. cit.*, p. 11. In spite – or perhaps because – of this submission, eighteen years on, intercommunal contestation over the indigene-settler issue has not abated.

⁴⁵ Danfulani, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Crisis Group interviews, University of Jos professor of religious studies, 14 April 2011 and Branch Chairman, Anaguta Youth Movement, Jos, 20 July 2011.

⁴⁷ The last Nigerian censuses that officially collected data on religious persuasions were those of 1952 and 1963. See Philip Ostein, “Percentages by Religion of the 1952 and 1963 Populations of Nigeria’s Present 36 States”, Nigerian Research Network (NRN), background paper no. 1, Department of International Development, University of Oxford, (www3.qeh.ox.ac.uk/pdf/nrn/BP1Ostein.pdf), January 2012.

III. CHRONOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY VIOLENCE IN JOS

Virtually all intercommunal conflicts have been centred on, and originated from, Jos North, the biggest, richest and most contentious LGA in Plateau state. Its creation in September 1991 by General Ibrahim Babangida's military junta (1985-1993), alongside 88 others across the country, was a watershed in the politics and governance of Jos city. Created at the insistence of the Hausa-Fulani community in Jos, the exercise, by design or default, fundamentally altered the city's political equation in two major ways. Indigenous peoples were no longer the most populous in Jos North and they no longer had total control over the palace of their paramount leader, the *Gbong Gwom*, located in the heart of Jos city.⁴⁸ The decision also gave the settlers the space for group expression that they had always clamoured for.

The local council's creation came at a huge cost. Relations between the indigenes and settlers became increasingly strained; latent tension was awakened and, over time, became unduly politicised.⁴⁹ Intercommunal peace was not

⁴⁸ Jos city is divided into three LGAs: Jos North, Jos South and Jos East. Jos North is the state capital. The actual city lies between Jos North and Jos South. The Berom Elders Council (BEC), the Berom Forum (BF) and the Du Youth Movement (DYM) were angered because the indigenes lost control over this metropolitan area. Jos South and Jos East are home to the seat of their traditional institutions and part of their districts (such as Du, Gyel and Gwong). The metropolis became part of Jos North LGA, where the Hausa-Fulani community has numerical superiority. The Berom perceived this as a deliberate and pre-meditated action by the federal government to favour the settlers. The same evening the creation of the Jos North LGA was announced, some members of the Hausa-Fulani community went to the paramount chief's palace (the *Gbong Gwom*) to ask him to quit. Crisis Group interview, research fellow, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, 15 July 2011. Governor Jonah Jang eventually relocated the palace to the Jos South LGA where the Beroms are in the majority. For political and cultural reasons, the indigenes refuse to allow the Hausa to control Jos North. Crisis Group interview, political science professor, University of Jos, 26 July 2011.

⁴⁹ In 1989, the BEC had demanded the creation of Jos metropolitan local government (also called Federe local government) out of the former Jos local government with Jos town, Vwang, Kuru, Du, Gyel and Gwong districts included. The Hausa-Fulani community immediately rejected this and insisted that the same area be split into two, Jos North and Jos South. Not fully satisfied with what it got, the BEC clamoured for the creation of a new Jos North LGA out of the present one with its capital at Angwan Rogo. Before the Niki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry (2002) and the Ajibola Judicial Commission of Inquiry (2009), the Jasawa Development Association (JDA, a Hausa-Fulani group) also called for the splitting of Jos North into three autonomous local governments, namely, Jos North-East, Jos

immediately breached because the first elected chairman of the Jos North local government council, Samaila Mohammed, a Hausa-Fulani settler, appeared to have been even-handed because he issued indigene certificates to members of both communities. However, he appointed members of his community to sensitive positions in the council, a move resented by the indigenes. Three years later in 1994, after the appointment of another Hausa-Fulani, Aminu Mato, as chairman, the anger of the indigenes boiled over, laying the foundation of intercommunal violence in Plateau state.⁵⁰ The worst outbreaks of intercommunal violence followed in 2001, 2004, 2008 and 2010.

A. 1994, THE ONSET OF A PROTRACTED CRISIS

The appointment of Aminu Mato as chairman of Jos North was interpreted by the indigenes as the imposition of a settler by the state's new military administrator, Colonel Muhammed Mana, of the same ethnic group, and by the then-head of state General Sani Abacha.⁵¹ Long-standing disagreements over farmland and chieftaincy affairs stoked violence.

Peaceful demonstrations by some members of the BAA communities at the office of the military administrator and at the palace of their paramount ruler took place on 5 April to reject Mato's appointment, and on 8 April they stopped him from being sworn in and assume office. Three days later, some members of the Hausa-Fulani community expressed their anger at the government's perceived backtrack by slaughtering cows and other animals on the highway near the abattoir. At a meeting the same evening, the president of the Jasawa Development Association (JDA) and the Plateau state chairman of the Butchers' Association mobilised their members to protest perceived discrimination against their community by the state government. Hausa-Fulani youths clashed with their BAA counterparts. Sev-

North-West and a diminished Jos North. See "Report of the Ajibola Commission of Inquiry into the 28 November 2008 Unrest in Jos", Jos, Plateau state government, 2010, pp. 74-81. Over two decades later, to address the challenges posed by the creation of Jos North, the Presidential Advisory Committee on the 2010 Jos Crisis recommended to the federal government to, among others, "(a) revisit the creation of the local council in consultation with relevant stakeholders and communities to create additional local government(s), taking into account needs as expressed by the factors of population size, tradition, geographical contiguity, administrative convenience and affinity; and (b) create additional electoral wards". See "Draft Report of the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos Crisis", Jos, Plateau state government, April 2010, p. 53.

⁵⁰ Ostien, op. cit., p. 9.

⁵¹ Abacha ruled Nigeria between 17 November 1993 and 8 June 1998 when he died reportedly of a heart attack.

eral people from the latter group were identified by witnesses before the Justice Aribiton Fiberesima Commission of Inquiry as among those accused of arson, looting and murder, while 83 out of the 104 rioters arrested by the police were Hausa-Fulani.⁵²

At least four people were killed and key public properties, most notably the popular Jos main market, were destroyed.⁵³ An enduring outcome of this crisis is that non-indigenes have been excluded from becoming chair of the Jos North local council. Since the Hausa-Fulani, as the most populous group within the LGA, is likely to win free elections, the strategy of the BAA-dominated authorities in the state has been to either manipulate polls or, where possible, avoid or delay holding them.⁵⁴

B. THE 2001 AND 2004 EPISODES

As in 1994, the immediate cause of the September 2001 violence was the appointment of another settler, Mukhtar Usman Mohammed, by the civilian government of Oluse-

gun Obasanjo⁵⁵ on 20 June of that year, to the office of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) coordinator and as chairman of the Local Government Monitoring Committee (LGMC) for the council. Although he was appointed as a representative of the Hausa-Fulani community, Mukhtar is Kanuri (a northern minority ethnic group), as he admitted before the Niki Tobi Commission.⁵⁶ Two other immediate factors intensified conflict: the expansion of the application of Sharia in twelve northern states,⁵⁷ prompting a section of the Hausa-Fulani in Jos to demand its introduction in Plateau state; and street blockage for Friday prayers, a practice that began in early 1996 but was hardly a major issue before.⁵⁸

The 2001 crisis had a fairly long gestation period. Between 1991 and the 29 May 1999 handover of power to elected officials, military governors in the state, all of them Hausa-Fulani, and the Jos North caretaker chairmen, all indigenes, had worked together to deliver indigene certificates to everybody. This changed with the election of Joshua Dariye as Plateau state governor in 1999 and 2003 and Frank Bagudu Tardy in 1999 as the Jos North local council chairman. Both of them are from the BAA community.

⁵² Ostien, op. cit., pp. 6-12. Several Hausa-Fulani community chieftains were also accused in the report. The JDA, formed in 1987, was alleged by the 1994 and 2002 commissions of inquiry to have committed offences. According to the 1994 commission, "A problem of policing Jos metropolis may be attributed to the rise of JDA, which seems to attract recognizance [recognition] by force, harassment and intimidation and conduct which has logically eroded the legitimacy of its operation, thereby creating problems of policing". Consequently, the commission recommended to the government "to spread its intelligence-gathering network far and wide to cover all individuals and organisations (such as religious, cultural, and social organisations) that could be potentially dangerous to peace and order. In this regard, we will advise on the monitoring of the activities of the Jasawa Development Association". See "White Paper on the Report of the Fiberesima Commission of Inquiry into the Riots of 12 April 1994 in Jos Metropolis", Jos, Plateau state government, 2004, pp. 21 and 29-30.

⁵³ See *ibid*, pp. 9-10. The Gada Biyu market and its adjoining mosque were burned. School buildings, an office complex, residential houses and a mosque, all of which were situated at the Rukuba headquarters of the Jama'atu Izalatul Bidi'ah Wa'ikamatus Sunnah (JIBWIS) – Izala, for short, a muslim organisation – were destroyed in the riots. Properties belonging to the Jos Metropolitan Development Board, the Nigerian Telecommunications (Nitel), PLC [public liability company] and the police suffered the same fate.

⁵⁴ After a few postponements, the chair of the electoral commission, Peter Dalyop, announced in August 2012 that local council elections to replace chairpersons whose terms expired in December 2011 would be held in December 2012. See "PLASIEC assures of credible local government elections in Plateau", *Leadership*, 21 August 2012 and Isa Abdusalami, "Plateau may hold council polls in December", *The Guardian*, 23 August 2012.

⁵⁵ Obasanjo was inaugurated on 29 May 1999 as the first elected president of Nigeria's fourth republic, effectively marking the end of over fifteen years of uninterrupted military rule.

⁵⁶ "White Paper on the Report of the Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission", op. cit., pp. 125-126.

⁵⁷ Zamfara state was the first to impose Sharia, which "had a bandwagon effect on other states, whose governors followed with varying degrees of enthusiasm". Crisis Group Report, *Northern Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 16.

⁵⁸ Both sides had mobilised their members and threatened violence, but "for lack of technical skills, the intelligence community missed it before it snowballed into open crisis". Crisis Group interview, conflict expert and senior academic, Jos, 26 July 2011. Remnants of the followers of the Maitatsine Islamist sect that wrought havoc in northern Nigeria in the early 1980s, and] long-time residents in Anwan Rogo and Kona Shagari areas of Jos were the force behind the push for the introduction of Sharia in Jos. Danfulani, op. cit., p. 5; Ostien, op. cit., p. 13. For background on Maitatsine, see Crisis Group Report, *Northern Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 18. While virtually all commissions of inquiry concluded that blocking roads during hours of worship by both communities triggered violence, the practice was formally sanctioned as a state policy on 12 March 2012, in a meeting of security agencies seeking to prevent suicide bombings against churches. According to Dipo Ayeni, the state's commissioner of police, "on Sundays and Fridays, all roads leading to all worship centres must be totally blocked or diverted. No vehicle should have access or park near any worship centre during service. There should be perimeter fencing of all the worship centres not only in Jos, but all over the state, to prevent easy access by suicide bombers to the places of worship". In addition, "every worshipper must, as a matter of compelling necessity, subject himself or herself to security checks no matter how highly placed". See "Plateau security agencies order blockage of roads during service", *Leadership*, 13 March 2012.

Without the certificates, the Hausa-Fulani would be denied citizenship claims and rights by the state.

The trigger was the attack in early September against a female Christian pedestrian who was alleged to have disrupted Friday prayers by crossing a blocked street near a mosque, in Kongo-Russia area, a sprawling squatter camp, the closest route to her work place. According to the Niki Tobi Commission, after one of the three guards at the mosque who refused her passage slapped her, she rushed to her house nearby and was pursued by the same aggressor with a pistol. Her brother managed to snatch it but more Muslims arrived at the scene after prayers. The growing crowd injured the girl's father by stoning him; destroying her mother's car and setting Christian houses ablaze in the neighbourhood. The girl and several other people were forced to take refuge for a week at the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) in Chwenyap.⁵⁹

A war of loudspeakers to mobilise adherents followed between Christians and Muslims on 7 and 8 September. The Hausa-Fulani community was reportedly the first to go on the offensive. At various locations in Jos and Bukuru, repeated appeals were made to Muslims to "come out and fight the infidels as God has given them into their hands". The Christians retaliated shortly afterwards.⁶⁰

Within a week of violence, indiscriminate killings by militants and youths from both sides had resulted in the death of over 1,000 people and several thousand internally displaced. Mosques, churches, schools, shops, homes and vehicles were extensively damaged in several parts of the state. The Central Mosque was not damaged but churches in its vicinity (notably COCIN, Sarkin Mangu and the Assemblies of God Church) were destroyed. In addition, several villages and communities in Angwan Rogo, Dilimi, Trade Centre, Heipang and Taho were decimated.⁶¹ The military, asked to restore order because the police were overwhelmed, reportedly killed many people indiscriminately and, by so doing, sowed the seeds of future violence.⁶²

The Niki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry identified several organisations and individuals it deemed responsible. Aside from the JDA and the Berom Educational and Cultural Council (BECO),⁶³ the Plateau State Youth Coun-

cil (whose members are mainly indigene) was also alleged to have heightened tension through abusive language. By far the most significant individual criticised in the report was Mohammed Dikko Abubakar, Plateau state commissioner of police during the crisis and, since 12 July 2012, Nigeria's inspector general of police, after six months in an acting capacity. While he denied the allegations against him, the commission concluded that his performance was extremely unsatisfactory and blatantly partisan and recommended his dismissal.⁶⁴

There were three major differences with the 1994 crisis: for the first time, religious or sectarian rhetoric and identity were massively used; the scale of killing and destruction was more significant, with guns freely used; and the crisis was not limited to Jos metropolis but spread to other parts of the state. The Niki Tobi Judicial Commission said it observed "during the proceedings, acrimony and bitterness along religious lines and coloration and such also naturally affected the evidence. Some witnesses were blind to the truth in religious matters and it should not be so".⁶⁵

The violence broke out again twice: on 30 and 31 December 2001 in Vom, Turu and Vwang districts of Jos South LGA and Kwall and Miango districts of Bassa LGA; as well as in 2002 during a ward election in Naraguta community in Jos North, the result of which the BAA allegedly sought to reverse in their favour. Violence was also fuelled by the killing of some indigenes by Hausa-Fulani gangs in other parts of the state. In short, in 2001 and 2002, identity politics were overtly encapsulated by both ethnic affiliation and religious confession.⁶⁶

In February-May 2004, massive killings took place in Yelwa, an important market town and commercial centre in the Muslim-majority Shendam LGA. In February, Christians, most of them in COCIN, were killed. Reprisal kill-

mation ... of the JDA ... it has used most of its time for confrontation There is nothing wrong for a body to propagate and protect a particular religion, but there is everything wrong for that body to disturb the peace and tranquillity of a town or state. We clearly see negative ambitions of [the] JDA in respect of the disturbance and destruction of peace in Jos in particular and the state in general". The commission recommended that the activities of both the JDA and the BECO – which was accused of leading resistance to Mukhtar Usman Mohammed's appointment – be suspended for two years, and that the former be proscribed should it engage in violence during that period. The Plateau state government, however, immediately banned it, while it only suspended the BECO's activities for two years. Such seeming lack of even-handedness is a likely recipe for future crises.

⁶⁴ Ibid, pp. 80-96. No investigation was launched against the individuals identified in the report and none of them were subsequently tried.

⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 75-76 and 229.

⁶⁶ Alubo, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

⁵⁹ "White Paper on the Report of the Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission", op. cit., p. 12.

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 60-62.

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 6 and 93.

⁶² Crisis Group interviews, conflict experts, civil society activists and senior journalists, Jos and Abuja, April and July 2011; and February 2012.

⁶³ The commission reported that it did not "have the slightest doubt ... that the [JDA] was one of the bodies responsible for the 7 September 2001 crisis. They [sic] added materially to the crisis as a body and that is not acceptable [S]ince the for-

ings of Muslims followed in May. Some 1,000 people died, with over 700 of them in two days. Between September 2001 and May 2004, about 5,000 people perished in the clashes⁶⁷ and over 250,000 people were displaced from their homes.⁶⁸ In May, President Obasanjo announced a six-month state of emergency in the state and replaced governor Dariye with retired general Chris Alli, a Plateau indigene but not a BAA.

C. THE 2008 EVENTS

The 27-28 November 2008 violence was mainly electoral and political even though rioters again used religion and ethnicity to justify their attacks. Unlike in 2001, the mayhem was limited to Jos North. While the 27 November local council election in the seventeen LGAs was generally peaceful and credible, what appeared to some Hausa-Fulani as an attempt by the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) to alter the votes in favour of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) sparked violence. In Jos North, the PDP candidate – an indigene – declared as winner, was, at a point, reportedly trailing his All-Nigerian People's Party (ANPP) opponent – a settler – by about 26,000 votes. The central collation centre was changed at least three times and the final counting took place in a primary school situated in a different LGA. Yet, the settlers' attacks happened before the results were announced. The seemingly bungled election, the results of which the Hausa-Fulani did not challenge in court, fed into existing intercommunal tensions.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Higazi, op. cit., p. 18.

⁶⁸ According to HRW, "much of Yelwa was razed to the ground and hundreds of dead (Hausa) were buried in a mass grave near the centre of the town". See HRW, "They Do Not Own This Place", op. cit., p. 43.

⁶⁹ According to a retired senior police officer who presented an eye witness account of what happened at the collation centre before the Ajibola Commission: "When the results were coming in, the Hausa/Fulani were leading with almost 30 something thousand But later the other results were coming from the indigenes. At about 11.00 pm, the results of the indigenes were almost 50 something thousand ahead. Then some of Hausa-Fulani started shouting 'the *Arnas* (infidels) have won the election ... Hon. Nazif (Yusuf) raised an alarm using a telephone call and said ... 'come out! The infidels have won the election! He said so more than ten times ... (He also said) 'come out, come out, come out, come out, we are finished, they have won'. It was after these phone calls that we witnessed people coming out, the next I could see was smoke everywhere They set COCIN Church, Sarkin Mangu on fire". They also reportedly attacked and destroyed the businesses and properties of Igbo and Yoruba residents, who did not present candidates in the election. "The Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry Report on the 28 November 2008 Crisis", Jos, Plateau state Government, 2010, pp. 26, 30-32.

As in the past, there was ample evidence of large-scale preparation. Attacks took place simultaneously in six places and were reportedly masterminded by men in fake military uniforms. The crisis, which started from Angwan Dalyop Pam-Osumenyi, a neighbourhood slum of Ali Kazaure in the early hours of 28 November, was apparently orchestrated mainly by residents of the slum and Gangare, including over 200 Hausa-Fulani youths and children. They were said to be "brandishing dangerous weapons such as cutlasses, swords, machetes, clubs, bows [and] arrows and ... guns".⁷⁰ They mounted roadblocks, and even though their attempt to forcibly enter the collation centre was repelled by the police, they still were alleged to have maimed and killed non-Muslims in areas such as Laranto, Nasarawa Gwong and Angwan Rogo where they dominate. The BAA and other settler groups were apparently caught unawares.

Their main targets were nearby churches. Muslim youths also reportedly destroyed and burned down houses of their Christian neighbours. Tudun Wada Christian Youth Vanguard was accused of retaliating by setting Muslim houses and businesses ablaze.⁷¹ The Igbo-controlled Katako timber market, the city's largest, was badly torched. The same fate befell the Hausa-controlled grains and yam market. Hausa car traders along Zaria road lost hundreds of vehicles to arson. Over 200 people died in the attacks, and another 130 perished in alleged extra-judicial killings by soldiers going from house to house, apparently randomly, without targeting any religious or ethnic group in particular. The Ajibola Commission, established by then-President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua in January 2009, reported that at least 312 people were killed and 323 sustained varying degrees of injuries.⁷²

The commission identified 92 individuals, groups of persons and institutions that it alleged were directly responsible for the unrest. The police and the army top the list of indicted institutions, while Hausa-Fulani people and groups (including "the entire Muslim youth" and the "entire Muslim elders" residing within the Old Mining Camp), the

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 105.

⁷¹ Ibid, pp. 24 and 109-140.

⁷² See Higazi, op. cit., p. 20; Danladi Atu, "The Citizenship-Indigeneship Contestations in Nigeria and National Security: Implications for Social Studies Education", paper delivered at the Social Studies National Conference, Epe, Lagos State, 17-20 November 2009, pp. 5-6; HRW, "They Do Not Own This Place", op. cit., p. 33; Crisis Group interviews, policeman who took part in some joint police-army operations during the crises, Jos, 20 July 2011; sociology professor, University of Jos, 23 July 2011; and conflict expert and senior academic, University of Jos, 26 July 2011.

Berom Youth and the Tudun Wada Christian Youth Vanguard figured prominently among accused groups.⁷³

The commission also listed 21 individuals, groups of persons and institutions it considered indirectly responsible. Two of them were already accused in 2002, which underlines the significance of impunity in the perpetuation of the crisis. The Council of the Ulama and Jamaatu Nasril Islam (JNI) of Jos North were also accused of provocative preaching. As with previous cases, no one was held to account.⁷⁴

D. ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE SINCE 2010

Few analysts could point to more than circumstantial factors responsible for the January 2010 violence. For some, it was a hangover from 2008. For others, it was precipitated by rising mistrust and lack of meaningful communication between the BAA and the Hausa-Fulani. Positions had hardened during the proceedings of the 2008 Ajibola Commission. Members of the Hausa-Fulani community did not make any representation at the commission and ultimately rejected its October 2009 report.⁷⁵ Sparks may, however, have been drawn from pre-existing divisions and previous violence.

The first half of 2010 saw separate and apparently planned intercommunal and inter-faith clashes, which “began and ended at roughly the same time on the same day”, in January and March.⁷⁶ Attacks started at Dogo Na Hawa village, outside the Jos South local council, a predominantly Berom area, went on for four days in January and resulted in over 500 casualties. At least 300 people, mainly women and children, were murdered allegedly by Fulani herdsmen and their surrogates. Violence engulfed the entire council and spread to the north. Reprisal attacks by the BAA resulted in Hausa-Fulani loss of life in rural areas in three LGAs: Barkin Ladi, Jos South and Riyom. A number of businesses and houses were destroyed and scores of people relocated within and outside the state.⁷⁷ Two months

later, a further 80 people were estimated killed in an overnight attack apparently masterminded by some members of the Hausa-Fulani community.⁷⁸

Multiple bomb blasts, a new phenomenon in Jos, which killed about 80 people on Christmas Eve, worsened the situation. Boko Haram claimed responsibility, but there are many conflicting reports on the true identity of the perpetrators.⁷⁹

eau state government; and University of Jos professor who was a member of the Ajibola commission, all on 14 April 2011. The latter told Crisis Group that only three of over 200 memoranda received by the commission on the 2008 crisis presented the views of the Hausa-Fulani group, while others overwhelmingly accused it of complicity in the crisis. The group saw this as a BAA conspiracy against its members.

⁷³ Kwaja, *Nigeria's Pernicious Drivers of Ethno-Religious Conflict*, op. cit, pp. 5-6

⁷⁴ Crisis Group interviews, Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012. Some analysts argue that Jos has not been an easy target for Boko Haram because of the city's emergent segregated settlement pattern and its peculiar native-settler problem. The group's best strategy has been to infiltrate the state and carry out periodic attacks, such as, supposedly, the multiple bomb blasts on Christmas Day 2010 and subsequent attacks in 2011 and 2012. Others contend that the group has been present in different Jos settlements since 2001, with its militants responsible for some of the killings in Jos suburbs and remote villages. Its sympathisers in the military and police have allegedly perpetrated crimes while wearing their official clothing. There are also suspected al-Qaeda cells in Bukuru (the headquarters of Jos South LGA). A third and final group of analysts contends that the current phase of suicide bombings represents a heightened form of criminality, not proof of Boko Haram activity. Crisis Group, interactive session with a group of senior journalists, senior scholars, conflict experts and civil society activists, Jos, 9 February 2012. According to another source, the late Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram's founder, recruited his followers and militants not only from core northern states such as Bauchi, Borno and Katsina, but also from Kogi, Kwara and Plateau states, all in the Middle Belt. Crisis Group interview, civil society activist and Jos community leader, Abuja, 11 February 2012. Abul Qaqa, one of the sect's main spokesmen, arrested in January 2012 and whose father was killed by the sect two months later, hails from Kogi State. In 2008, a leaflet authored by Sheikh Mohammed Usman Kano, addressed to the JDA and attached to a memorandum presented to the Ajibola commission, threatened to “start a Jihad to defeat the infidels ... the arms sent from Lebanon are in Chad. The arms sent by Gadafi [sic] have been brought in and are in Bauchi. The ones sent by Saudi Arabia are in Cameroon ...”. It is difficult to verify the authenticity of these claims. Another group, the Islamic Revolutionary Network, stated in a document accepted as an exhibit before the same commission that “the taking over of Jos North is now ... No compromise, no going back. Allah will punish us if we compromise on issue of Jos North LGA. In-sha-Allah, we shall win over them this time around. We shall go forth (Jihad) Quran 3:39,

⁷³ See “The Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry Report”, op. cit., pp. 128-155.

⁷⁴ In December 2010, however, seventeen Hausa-Fulani people were reportedly convicted by the Federal High Court in Jos for perpetrating violence. See Uduma Kalu, “A cycle of reprisals turns Jos into killing field”, *Vanguard*, 31 December 2011.

⁷⁵ Crisis Group interview, University of Jos professor who served on the Ajibola Commission, Jos, 14 April 2011.

⁷⁶ Chris Kwaja, *Nigeria's Pernicious Drivers of Ethno-Religious Conflict*, Africa Security Brief, Africa Center for Strategic Studies (Washington DC, 14 July 2011), p. 5.

⁷⁷ Ibid. Three Yoruba-speaking graduates were also victims. Crisis Group interviews, former president of the National Union of Journalists, Plateau State Chapter, Jos; former president general of the Yoruba community in Jos; former secretary to the Plat-

2011 was a particularly bloody year. Hundreds were killed during the first six months. Between 15 August and 12 September, over 150 lost their lives, with 50 in a week. These included pregnant women, children and an entire family.⁸⁰ This sudden upsurge in violence, in addition to regular “silent killings”,⁸¹ prompted President Goodluck Jonathan to take two key decisions. He directed the then-chief of defence staff, Air Vice Marshall Oluseyi Petinrin, to immediately move into the state and take full charge of the security situation. He also directed the secretary to the government of the federation (SGF) to bring forward for review all pending reports of relevant commissions of inquiry.⁸² In November, a vicious face-off between Muslim and Christian gangs, which resulted in the loss of an unidentified number of lives in Barkin-Ladi, prompted the military to impose a 24-hour curfew.⁸³

The city witnessed three suicide bombings between December 2011 and March 2012 which Boko Haram was suspected of orchestrating. The first on Christmas Day 2011 killed about 50 people, mostly in churches. Blasts at the Mount of Fire and Miracles Church were accompanied by a shooting spree by suspected Boko Haram militants who exchanged fire with members of the Special Task Force (STF), also called “Operation Safe Haven”.⁸⁴

9:73”. See “The Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry Report”, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

⁸⁰ “14 killed in a gale of attacks in Jos”, *This Day*, 16 August 2011; “Clashes in Nigeria’s Jos kill 22: morgue official”, Reuters, 2 September 2011.

⁸¹ For Jos residents, “silent killings” refer to killings that hardly make the headlines in the local, let alone national or international media.

⁸² The president also directed the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to take prompt action to address the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) within the state. See “Clashes in Nigeria’s Jos kill 22”, op. cit.; “Jonathan orders military to end Jos killings: Federal government to implement reports on the Jos crisis”, *Nigerian Tribune*, 13 September 2011. See also “Jos: federal government upgrades Special Task Force, appoints general as commander”, *Punch*, 19 September 2011; and “Army, air force move into Jos”, *Vanguard*, 14 September, 2011.

⁸³ “Several killed in central Nigeria violence”, Reuters, 25 November 2011.

⁸⁴ See Felix Onuah and Camillus Eboh, “Nigerian leaders rapped after Islamists attack churches”, Reuters, 26 December 2011 and “Boko Haram: U.S. plans more aid to northern Nigeria”, *PM News*, 30 March 2012. This incident echoed the 2010 Christmas Eve bomb blasts, during which all four bombs targeted Jos: two went off near a large market where people were doing last-minute Christmas shopping, the third hit a mainly Christian area and the fourth was placed near a road leading to the city’s main mosque. The then-Plateau state police commissioner, Abdulrahman Akano, claimed that the incident was more political than religious or ethnic. The chief of army staff, Major-General Azubuike Ihejirika, opined that the bombings introduced a ter-

The escalation of violence prompted President Goodluck Jonathan to announce a state of emergency on 30 December in four LGAs of Plateau state (Jos North, Jos South, Barkin-Ladi and Ryiom), as well as eleven others across four states (Borno, Niger and Yobe).⁸⁵ The decision of the state police command, in liaison with the executive of the Motorcycle Riders Association, to ban movement of motorcycles from 6am on 31 December 2011 to 6pm on 1 January 2012 apparently contributed to the relative calm experienced during the two days.

The headquarters of the COCIN and St Finbarr’s Catholic Church were also targeted by suicide bombings on 26 February 2012 and 11 March, respectively.⁸⁶ There were further attacks in April and June. On 24 April, one person died and nine soccer fans were wounded in a bomb blast close to a football television viewing centre in Tudun Wada area of Jos metropolis. It was the third bomb targeting soccer fans during high-profile European matches.⁸⁷ On 10 June, suspected Boko Haram gunmen and a suicide bomber attacked two churches, including ECWA church, during Sunday services. At least seven people were killed and 50 others were injured.⁸⁸ On 4 and 25 June, bombs planted near a hostel on the University of Jos campus and

rorist dimension to the crisis. “Jos: Christmas Eve blast – 32 confirmed dead, 74 hospitalised”, *Vanguard*, 26 December 2010.

⁸⁵ “Jonathan descends on four states, declares a state of emergency”, *The Moment* (London), 31 December 2011. In reaction, Boko Haram announced an ultimatum, through its spokesman Abul Qaqa, urging southerners in the north to leave within three days, and threatened reprisals on those who failed to take heed of it. “Boko Haram sect gives southerners three days to quit north”, *Daily Sun*, 3 January 2012. A week later, a little known group, the Niger Delta Indigenes Movement for Radical Change (NDIMRC), gave northerners living in the oil-rich region 21 days to leave the region or risk dire consequences. “Niger Delta group gives north 21 days to quit south”, *Daily Sun*, 10 January 2012.

⁸⁶ “Fresh killings in Borno, Kano as Jos buries blast victims”, *The Guardian*, 5 March 2012; “Suicide bombers hit another church in Jos”, *This Day*, 12 March 2012; and “Tension in Jos as death toll rises to 19”, *Vanguard*, 13 March 2012. On 12 March, suspected Fulani herdsmen killed two people and injured three others at Bim village in Jos South LGA. On 29 March in Jos, anti-riot policemen arrested two young men suspected to be members of Boko Haram, in possession of what reportedly turned out to be “toy guns”. See “Boko Haram scare in Jos as police arrest two men with guns”, *Vanguard*, 30 March 2012.⁸⁷ See “Bomb explosion rocks Jos football viewing centre”, *Vanguard*, 25 April 2012.

⁸⁸ “Explosion rocks ECWA in Jos again”, *The Sun*, 10 June 2012; “Nigeria violence: Seven dead after Boko Haram attacks”, BBC, 10 June 2012.

at two different locations in the Tundu Wada area in the city were successfully detonated by the police.⁸⁹

The uptick in bomb attacks, suicide bombings and bomb plantings in Jos may be an indication of Boko Haram's infiltration of and presence in the city. But although the sect continues to claim responsibility for most of the attacks and seeks to exploit tensions, there is no conclusive evidence that it is responsible for all of them.⁹⁰ On 8 July, the group said it was behind attacks on the BAA in about fourteen rural communities in the Barkin Ladi and Riyom LGAs, which killed 63 Christian parishioners, mostly women and children, who had taken refuge in a preacher's house. Police countered, however, that it was the handiwork of rampaging local Fulani herdsmen and blamed the attacks on land disputes. Bitrus Kaze, a member of the federal House of Representatives, representing Jos South and Jos East constituency, said that mercenary Fulani herdsmen from a neighbouring country were responsible.⁹¹ The number of casualties rose to over 200 the next day after the same assailants attacked mourners attending funerals of the victims.

There were at least two high-profile victims, reportedly shot. One was Senator Ayang Dantong, from the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), representing Plateau north senatorial district and chairman of the Senate health committee. The other was Gyang Fulani, PDP majority leader in the Plateau state House of Assembly. Another state lawmaker, Simon Mwadkon, sustained injuries.⁹² The killings of the lawmakers sparked angry reactions around the Plateau as Berom youths took over the highway to protest what they described as "genocide" against the Berom people allegedly by the Fulani. After these attacks, the STF announced "Operation Sweep and Search" in the affected areas to flush out suspected insurgents from their

hideouts. It asked the population, mainly Fulani, to temporarily vacate their residences, a request that did not go down well with their leadership. Ahmed Yandeh, secretary of the Mobgal Fulbe Development Association, a Fulani group, described the operation as a deliberate effort to drive his community out of the region.⁹³

On 11 October, gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen killed fourteen people and destroyed property in three villages in Riyom LGA. An apparent retaliation took place in the night of 19 November, when a group of gunmen shot and wounded twelve Fulani herdsmen and killed twelve of their cows at Bisichi village, in Barkin Ladi LGA.⁹⁴ On 26 November, at least eight people were shot dead at a local drinking spot at Heipang, in the Barkin Ladi LGA, by gunmen who reportedly wore military clothing.⁹⁵ In the past twenty years or so, "increasingly well-armed militants, loosely organised along religious lines",⁹⁶ have proliferated and worsened the Jos crises. The result is that "parts of Plateau ... have now experienced mass destruction of lives, property, relationships, economy and institutions for a generation".⁹⁷

⁸⁹ "Police uncover bomb in UNIJOS", *Punch*, 5 June 2012; and "Bombs discovered in Jos, defused", *Vanguard*, 26 June 2012.

⁹⁰ See Will Ross, "Will Nigeria's Boko Haram add fuel to Jos fires?" BBC, 2 July 2012.

⁹¹ Bitrus Kaze also pointed to a group of Chadian nationals who, he claimed, had stayed in the Fulani community in Plateau state for about two years. "Plateau massacre: we did it, Boko Haram; it's a lie – police", *Vanguard*, 11 July 2012. See also "Nigeria's Boko Haram takes credit for Sunday's attacks on Christians", *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10 July 2012 and Ibrahim Mshezilia, "Nigerian Islamists rule out peace talks, threaten media", Reuters, 23 August 2012. Nigeria's *Guardian* also argued, in an editorial, that suspected foreign nationals "are believed to be camped in the hills and mountains of Riyom and Barkin Ladi local council areas from where they launched coordinated, deadly raids on unsuspecting villagers". See "Terror campaign in Plateau", *The Guardian*, 16 July 2012.

⁹² "Tragedy in Plateau: senator, house leader, 50 others killed", *Vanguard*, 9 July 2012; "Nigeria's Boko Haram takes credit for Sunday's attacks on Christians", op. cit.

⁹³ According to Yandeh, "this directive by the STF is a reflection that the federal government and its security agencies have fallen into the hands of the Plateau State government ... Plateau government's agenda has consistently been that of intimidating, killing of Fulbe [Fulani], destruction of their livestock and properties". See "Nigerian military plans major operation after Jos attacks", *The Christian Science Monitor*, 16 July 2012 and "Rocket aimed at Nigerian Muslim school kills boy: Army", Reuters, 17 July 2012.

⁹⁴ "Gunmen kill 14 in renewed attack on Plateau", *Vanguard*, 12 October 2012 and Isaac Shobayo, "Plateau: Gunmen shoot 12 Fulani herdsmen, kill 12 cows", *Nigerian Tribune*, 21 November 2012.

⁹⁵ "Eight shot dead by gunmen in Jos", *This Day*, 27 November 2012.

⁹⁶ See Ploch, op. cit., p. 10. Since 2000, in Jos (as in Zango-Kataf and Kaduna in the 1980s and 1990s), "the conflicts between Muslims and Christians have ... demonstrated the bitterness of the economic competition between settlers and natives over access to land and state rents and privileges". See Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos, *Boko Haram et le terrorisme islamiste au Nigeria: Insurrection religieuse, contestation politique ou protestation sociale?*, Questions de Recherche/Research Questions, no. 40, Centre d'Etudes de Recherches Internationales, Sciences Po, (Paris, June 2012) p. 31.

⁹⁷ Sayne, op. cit., p. 6.

IV. DRIVERS OF CONFLICT IN JOS

The struggle over the right of ownership to access land and resources has been a major driver of conflict in Jos. Both groups – the BAA and the Hausa-Fulani – have sought to preserve their cultural autonomy, cultivate close relations between their community and the land, have a firm grip on their traditional institutions and be in charge of development, politics and the economy. A combination of factors – economic, political and identity – has instigated violence over the years, producing segregation in the city mainly along ethnic lines.

A. THE INTERPLAY OF IDENTITY, POLITICS AND ECONOMY

Identity – through ethnic citizenship – is an instrument for granting indigenes access to economic and political resources from which non-indigenes are excluded. Because the Hausa-Fulani are almost entirely Muslim and the BAA predominantly Christian, whenever a political crisis erupts, the ownership struggle tends to be expressed in religious terms.⁹⁸ Yet, such violence is a smokescreen for disputes over “such issues as citizenship, group and individual rights and communal distribution of public resources”,⁹⁹ which boil down to competition over power and resources. Cultural differences are also a potent source of conflict.

⁹⁸ See Ogoh Alubo and Musa Ilu, “Ethnicity, Religion and Citizenship Crises in Plateau State, Nigeria”, Department of Sociology, University of Jos, 2011. None of the journalists, civil society activists, scholars, community and youth leaders, business people and conflict transformation experts interviewed by Crisis Group in Jos in April and July 2011 and in February 2012 thought the crisis was religious; the common point of view was that religion has generally been used as a smokescreen and a ploy to garner community sympathy and support. The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammed Saad Abubakar III, spiritual head of the country’s Muslim community, echoes this view. At a meeting with the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos Crisis on 31 March 2010, he argued that politicians have the tendency to manipulate religion for their own selfish ends. Minutes of the meeting were shown to Crisis Group in Jos in July 2011. A young Hausa businessman and a former president of Jos Muslim Youth said the conflict was ethnic, not religious. Crisis Group interview, Jos, 13 April 2011. Yet, the religious angle should not be discounted as its misuse and abuse, since 2001, has made the Jos conflict deadlier. There are perceptions [among the BAA] that the Hausa-Fulani community is fighting on two fronts: to access power and resources and enforce political Islam. Crisis Group interview, a former senior civil servant, Jos, 14 April 2011. Some claim that the Hausa community does not separate politics and religion. Crisis Group interview, Anaguta youth leader, Jos, 20 July 2011.

⁹⁹ Crisis Group Report, *Northern Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 20.

The major debate among the BAA in the early 1980s was how to improve the conditions of their people in the local economy dominated by the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. Apart from purchasing land from the indigenes, the settlers were also buying stalls in the markets, thus economic ownership started changing hands.¹⁰⁰

Politics has become a means to access citizenship rights, entitlements and opportunities.¹⁰¹ The Jos crises are a contest for power and access to decision-making structures at local and state levels. The Jos North local council, through its elective and appointed positions, is a platform for advancing personal and group interests. Post-1999 governments in the state have shown much interest in who gets to power in the council.¹⁰² The Hausa-Fulani see themselves as having been victimised and short-changed by the alleged manipulation of local council elections since 1999 and claim that only one of them has ever been voted into each of the National Assembly and the Plateau House of Assembly. The perceived lack of neutrality and transparency of the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) and the alleged use of the power of incumbency to rig elections have only aggravated their sense of alienation. Disenfranchisement and perceived lack of political inclusion have stoked violence.¹⁰³

Poor political (and, on occasion, religious) leadership at state and federal levels perpetuates the crisis. Leaders do not always carry the people along; they are seen by sections of the public as manipulating primordial identities including by sometimes disobeying the law. The Hausa-Fulani have accused the Plateau government of sometimes openly favouring some groups over others and ignoring them or using state media against them (discussed below). Political exclusion and a lack of a sense of belonging frustrate people. Plateau’s political elites have not only failed to keep violence out of Jos and the state, they

¹⁰⁰ Crisis Group interviews, several University of Jos senior academics and Jos-based civil society activists, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

¹⁰¹ Danfulani, op. cit., pp. 3-4; Alubo, op. cit., pp. 85-88.

¹⁰² As discussed above, what initially triggered the 1994 and 2001 crises in Jos North was the appointment of a settler as chairman of the caretaker committee and of another settler as National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) coordinator for local government, respectively. The BAA was angry that both appointments benefited the Hausa-Fulani community at its expense. See Ostien, op. cit., pp. 11-13.

¹⁰³ See Kwaja, *Nigeria’s Pernicious Drivers of Ethno-Religious Conflict*, op. cit. However, claims of political marginalisation by the Hausa-Fulani community in Jos should be nuanced. Evidence was presented to the Ajibola Commission about members of the community that had been elected and appointed to key political positions at both state and federal levels since 1999. See “The Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry Report”, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

have actually taken measures that have worsened it. By demonstrating political weakness and unwillingness to think outside the box, the Nigerian government appears to sanction the perception that there is an elite conspiracy against peace.¹⁰⁴

In the absence of credible, trustworthy and transparent state authorities, local politicians in Plateau state tend to exploit intercommunal tensions for personal and group gain. The concentration of power and resources in the hands of state governors means that they shape state policy and are hugely influential in determining who holds local office. This, together with the funding that governors reportedly contribute to some state lawmakers' campaigns, means that State Houses of Assembly are often little more than an appendage of the governor's office.¹⁰⁵ This largely explains why the oversight role of the legislature is tenuous, weak and ineffectual.

The state has had two elected governors since May 1999. Joshua Dariye, a Mushere, one of the smaller ethnic groups in the state (from the Bokkos LGA), was elected in 1999 and 2003. He was sacked during the state of emergency in 2004 and impeached by the State House of Assembly in November 2006, but reinstated in April 2007 by the Supreme Court. His arrest by British authorities in London in September 2004 on charges of money laundering, which he denied, and subsequent reported jumping of bail and return to Jos drew controversy.¹⁰⁶ He promised the Hausa-Fulani political inclusion, but appeared to have ignored their citizenship rights and claims and attempted to indigenise all major positions. He allowed settler representatives to sit on the Jos North council's caretaker committee but did not hold local government elections, preferring to appoint sole administrators to run the councils.¹⁰⁷ An inflammatory statement on the issue in a March

2004 interview, at a time when intercommunal tension had erupted into violence around Yelwa, is reported to have at least partly contributed to his removal.¹⁰⁸

Incumbent Governor Jonah Jang was elected in 2007 and 2011, after having lost twice to Dariye. He also belongs to a very small sub-ethnic group, Du, within the bigger Berom community. Some Jos residents claim that he sometimes privileges the interests of the former above those of the latter, in addition to protecting the interests of the BAA at the expense of the rest of the state's inhabitants.¹⁰⁹ From the BAA's perspective, he is an "honest, frank and non-sentimental leader",¹¹⁰ but for the Hausa-Fulani, he is "self-centred, ethno-centric, pro-Christian and intransigent".¹¹¹ Many ethnic groups, particularly the latter, do not feel represented by Jang's government, not least because it reportedly usually excludes them from post-crisis victim compensation. The governor also has consistently refused to promise them anything. He appeared to have rebuffed attempted intervention during the 2010 crisis by three of his predecessors, whose advice he apparently rejected on the ground that, as the governor, security was his sole prerogative and responsibility.¹¹²

¹⁰⁴ The Plateau state government's response to the Justice Moham commission's recommendation that the "government should find a way of checkmating the excesses of the elites and also admonish them to direct their energy and resources toward the development of Namu town" was an appeal to "all citizens to live in peace with one another". See "Government White Paper on the Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Conflict in Namu Town", op. cit., p. 104.

¹⁰⁵ Crisis Group interviews, Jos, Abuja, Kaduna, Lagos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

¹⁰⁶ Ostien, op. cit., pp. 18-19. See also, "Corruption on Trial? The Record of Nigeria's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission", Human Rights Watch, August 2011, p. 34. Dariye was elected senator (Plateau central) in April 2011 on the platform of the Labour Party. In 2007, he defended before two Abuja high courts charges of misappropriating nearly \$9 million of public funds and of money laundering. See Senan Murray, "Profile: Joshua Dariye", BBC, 24 July 2007.

¹⁰⁷ In practice, state governors and governments determine when to organise local government elections.

¹⁰⁸ Crisis Group interviews, senior journalists, civil society activists and conflict experts, Jos, April and July 2011. According to Dariye in an interview (HRW, "They Do Not Own This Place", op. cit., p. 45), "Jos ... is owned by the natives. Simple. Every Hausa man in Jos is a settler whether he likes it or not. In the past we might not have told them the home truth, but now we have They are here with us, we are in one state but that does not change the landlord/settler equation, no matter how much we cherish peace Our problem today is that ... the tenant is becoming very unruly. But the natural law is simple: if your tenant is unruly, you serve him a quit notice The unruly group must know that we are no longer willing to tolerate the rubbish they give us The days of 'over tolerance' are gone forever". According to a former senior civil servant, one of the reasons for Dariye's ouster was because he repeated this view before a federal government delegation to the state led by the inspector general of police in the aftermath of the 2004 killings in Yelwa. Crisis Group interview, former senior civil servant, Jos, 14 April 2011. The *Gbong Gwom Jos* (the Berom paramount chief) spoke in the same vein. Interrogated on whether the Hausa would remain non-indigenes even if they had lived in Jos for a thousand years, he replied: "You are absolutely right. That is what I am talking about ... none of them is going to be given indigeneship here and that is the truth". HRW, "They Do Not Own This Place", op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁰⁹ Crisis Group interviews, former senior journalist now academic and civil society activists, Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

¹¹⁰ Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists, youth leaders and conflict experts, Abuja and Jos, April and July 2011.

¹¹¹ Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists, Abuja and Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

¹¹² Crisis Group interview, former senior journalist, now academic, Jos, 10 April 2011.

Jang gives sections of the public the impression that he is on a personal and communal mission.¹¹³ He told the indigenes to stop selling land to settlers and relocated the *Gbong Gwom*'s palace from Jos North to Jos South, where the former have numerical superiority. Major political appointments and the location of physical infrastructures tend to obey this communal logic. Because of this, many who do not belong to his Berom ethnic and Du sub-ethnic groups see him as an obstacle to lasting peace and stability.¹¹⁴

Some analysts credit Dariye for managing the crisis better than his successor. Unlike Jang, he appeared to have reached out to the Hausa community, with many members of his executive council making inroads into the metropolis to recruit informants who provided early warning signals that helped prevent conflict.¹¹⁵

B. AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Other interrelated factors have aggravated the crisis in Jos. Deepening poverty,¹¹⁶ lack of opportunities and growing

youth unemployment, beginning from the late 1980s, have exacerbated tensions in Jos and the rest of the country. Rampant military and civilian corruption worsened the situation. Confronted by a bleak future, much of the city's overwhelmingly youthful population is bitter and eager to vent its frustration on the state and those who appear well-off, regardless of the source of their wealth. They loot shops and kill across the divides.¹¹⁷ Easy accessibility of weapons and weak policing and impunity have been exploited by youth gangs to perpetuate violence.

Another aggravating factor is persistent problems between cattle grazers (always on the move in search of green pasture) and farmers. This is not peculiar to Plateau state, but the non-regulation of the trans-border movement of Fulani herdsmen and their cattle compounds the crisis: they trample on other groups' grazing fields and by allegedly carrying out sporadic attacks, mainly nocturnal, on unsuspecting victims, mainly indigenes. The nomads are beneficiaries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Free Movement, but are hardly required to honour their approved intentional migration routes. The problem appears to be worsening despite a high-profile intervention of the federal authorities in 2010.¹¹⁸

Alleged interference by forces external to the state has also compounded violence and insecurity in Jos. Some analysts point to a perceived sense of material, political and financial help to the Hausa-Fulani community from Abuja

¹¹³ Crisis Group interview, civil society activist, Dakar, 11 December. Jang was twice military governor during the Babangida regime – in Benue state (1985-1986) and Gongola, now Adamawa, state (1986-1987). According to Higazi (op. cit., p. 16), the governor is “widely accused of having a Berom ethnic agenda to the detriment of other groups, and by the Hausa-Fulani especially, of having a strong anti-Muslim bias”. In October 2012, in the wake of suspected planned attacks against BAA by Fulani herdsmen, Jang declared, “we must protect ourselves and have the constitutional rights to do so. We would no longer allow anybody to come and slaughter us”. See *The News*, vol. 39, no. 14, (Lagos, 8 October 2012), p. 10.

¹¹⁴ Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists, Jos, April and July 2011.

¹¹⁵ Crisis Group interview, former secretary to the Plateau state government, Jos, 14 April 2011.

¹¹⁶ According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of Nigeria “Poverty Profile 2010” (Abuja, February 2012), the number of Nigerians living in relative poverty rose from 54.4 million in 2004 to 69 million in 2010. The report shows that the north west and the north east have the highest poverty rates, 77.7 per cent and 76.3 respectively, and the south west, with 59.1 per cent, has the lowest. Plateau state has the third highest percentage of absolute poor (38.7) of the Middle Belt. But there has been no concrete demonstration of a direct relationship between poverty and violence, otherwise Sokoto state, with the highest poverty rate (86.4 per cent), would be the country's most conflict-prone area. Poverty (and unemployment) can only predispose young people to taking part in violence; it cannot, and does not, fully account for why they actually do so. However, this is not to deny the widespread phenomenon of idle, poor and dangerous youths in the north, which the Ajibola commission acknowledges: “They are known as *Sara-suka* (hack and stab) in Bauchi, *Yan Kalare* in Gombe, *Yan Daba* in Kano, *Ecomog* in Borno, *Kauraye* in Kaduna and Katsina States and Area Boys in Sokoto. These armed youth are often de-humanised, callous and

often under the influence of drugs. They can do anything”. “The Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry Report”, op. cit., p. 108.

¹¹⁷ Crisis Group interview, University of Jos professor, Jos, 12 April 2011. A former president of Jos Muslim Youths said unemployed young men are always available in all the state's LGAs, with Jos North and Jos South apparently the most dangerous. Crisis Group interview, Jos, 13 April 2011.

¹¹⁸ A meeting between select members of the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos crisis and President Goodluck Jonathan on 25 March 2010 at a time when suspected Fulani herdsmen were engaging in nocturnal attacks on some Berom settlements in Barkin Ladi, Jos South and Riyom LGAs; as well as meetings with the sultan, the emir of Wase (Dr Haruna Abdullahi Maikano), the patron of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) of Plateau state did not solve the problem. Since then, the herdsmen's attacks have increased. The emir of Wase said about the Fulani herdsmen, as reported by the committee: “They have the highest population in West Africa and have a ground network; an attack on one is tantamount to an attack on all. So, whenever they suffer an attack, every effort must be made to pacify them immediately and ensure they did not leave their place of abode because their departure could be very dangerous to their erstwhile host community”. “Draft Report of the Presidential Advisory Committee”, April 2010, op. cit., p. 20.

during crises.¹¹⁹ After the 2010 Christmas Eve bombing, the Plateau state governor, Jonah Jang, lamented, “there are some very senior citizens who are behind these dastardly attitudes”. He added, “anytime such a thing happens, they move the people [allegedly responsible] to Abuja and we never hear anything again”.¹²⁰

Shortly after the Christmas Eve bombing, Boko Haram promised to help Jos Muslim militants. Earlier in the year, following intercommunal violence, a leader of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) allegedly promised to provide funds, training and weapons to the community in order to “respond against the aggression of the Christian minority”.¹²¹ There are concerns that arms supply further exacerbates tensions.¹²² On the contrary, external support for the BAA, if any, appears negligible. Since 2008, security agents, particularly the military, have been accused by sections of the public of uncommon brutality and of taking sides in the crisis often according to their whims and sometimes along ethnic and religious lines.¹²³

C. WORSENING SEGREGATION AND POLARISATION

Successive crises have contributed to polarisation of the city – a form of competition for political space – into two sectarian groups. In Jos, “everyone [is] living in fear of his neighbour”.¹²⁴ Compact ethnic settlements have ossi-

fied political identities, hindering conflict resolution and peacebuilding.¹²⁵

The Yoruba used to cluster in the Nasarawa Gom area of Jos, but after the 2001 killings and house burnings, they moved out, with only a handful of families left there. The Igbo have abandoned the houses and shops along Bauchi road, where the Hausa-Fulani community now holds almost complete sway, for Zaria and Bukuru roads. Bauchi road, a popular road that links the famous, albeit ancient, Terminus Hotel with the University of Jos, is now almost a complete no-go area for other settler groups. In residential neighbourhoods, people swap houses along communal lines. Those whose houses have suddenly been found on the wrong sides of town sell them, sometimes while still under construction, and move to perceived safer areas.¹²⁶

Segregation has also taken place in markets, impacting negatively on access to, and quality of, commercial activities. Some markets, such as Igbo and Yam, have been moved, the latter far away from its original location, resulting in a loss of customers. There are some positive, if paradoxical, dividends, however, such as the gradual withering away of an ethnic division of labour and the possibility of varied economic opportunities. Since 2002, for example, Berom boys have been selling *Suya*, the popular smoked meat, which was until then an exclusive economic activity of the Hausa-Fulani. Many churches have begun to run butcheries and sell meat as a way of avoiding, according to them, Muslim cows and cattle being slaughtered with what they sometimes allege to be the same knives used to kill Christians during conflicts.¹²⁷

Hospitals and schools have not been spared by polarisation. The Hausa-Fulani are said to be scared that wrong medication may deliberately be administered to them in public hospitals, dispensaries and clinics by medical and

¹¹⁹ Crisis Group interviews, Abuja and Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

¹²⁰ “Jos Christmas Eve blast”, op. cit.

¹²¹ See also “Islamist group with possible Qaeda links upends Nigeria”, *The New York Times*, 17 August 2011. The flying of Hamas and Hizbollah flags in Jos and Bauchi by Muslim militants appears equally important. Crisis Group interview, political science professor, University of Jos, 21 July 2011.

¹²² Nigeria’s porous borders have proved extremely difficult to police and safeguard due to hundreds of illegal routes that lead into the country. See “Government identifies 1,497 illegal routes to Nigeria”, *Punch*, 15 March 2012.

¹²³ Shortly after the July 2012 killings in the Barkin Ladi and Riyom LGAs, Sunday Oibe, public relations officer of the Christian Association of Nigeria in the north criticised the STF in Plateau state for failing to “respond to distress calls during the massacre in the rural communities”. See ECOWAS Commission, “ECOWARN Daily Highlights Report”, Abuja, 11 July 2012. Peter Gai, president of the Abuja Berom, said that “since the federal government and the security agencies cannot stop the Fulani from killing our people, we hereby demand that the federal government should remove the Fulani from Berom land to save the lives of our people”. See Owuamanam, “Berom seeks ejection of Fulani herdsmen from Plateau state”, op. cit.

¹²⁴ According to Reverend Noah Maikano, whose house, constructed over a twenty-year period, was burned three times, in 2001, 2008 and 2010. See Rob Walker, “Jos Violence: ‘Everyone lives in fear of his neighbour’”, BBC, 7 April 2011.

¹²⁵ Crisis Group interviews, senior journalists, academics and civil society activists, Jos, April and July 2011. See also Alubo, op. cit., p. 90. The Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos Crisis lamented that “settlement patterns in Jos North are increasingly being polarized along ethnic/religious lines”. See “Draft Report of the Presidential Advisory Committee”, op. cit., p. 38.

¹²⁶ See Abubakar Sokoto Mohammed, “The Impact of Conflict on the Economy: The Case of Plateau State of Nigeria”, A meeting on Nigeria, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 16 June 2004; Jana Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria* (Geneva, 2011), pp. 45 and 60 and Roger Blench and Mallam Dendo, “Access Rights and Conflict over Common Pool Resources on the Jos Plateau, Nigeria”, Report to World Bank/UNDP/DFID-JEWEL (Jigawa Enhancement of Wetlands Livelihoods Project), Jos, 13 September 2003.

¹²⁷ Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists, a policeman, a youth leader and conflict experts, Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

para-medical staff from the BAA,¹²⁸ and they are finding it increasingly difficult to find good schools for their children because of a new settlement pattern largely driven by ethnic-sectarian impulses.¹²⁹

As violence persists, greater spatial polarisation and segregation tend to accentuate social and political divisions between Muslims and Christians and along ethnic lines. Consequently, “more people are directly affected by and conscious of social divisions ... and articulate their religious and ethnic allegiances more categorically than they did previously”.¹³⁰ These developments have reduced formal meeting points or spaces where different groups can interact, build bridges and share ideas about how to end the mutually destructive violence. The Plateau state government, local councils and various communities must move quickly to address this concern.

In addition to the mines, vibrant big and small businesses and a flourishing agricultural economy (trade in grains, potatoes and vegetables), which once made Jos the commercial nerve-centre of Plateau state and the entire north-central zone, are currently experiencing a meltdown. Wholesale and retail trade appears sluggish, with very few bright spots.¹³¹ Many small businesses run in the past mainly by women in Jos and Bukuru have been destroyed progressively since 2001.¹³² Petty traders, farm labourers and households who survived on these sectors have experienced loss of revenue and a decline in living standards.¹³³ In short, the level of food sufficiency among the population, minus the affluent minority, has dipped significantly in the past decade, though exact figures are hard to come by.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ Crisis Group interviews, conflict experts, academics and civil society activists, Jos, Abuja, Kaduna and Lagos, April and July 2011.

¹²⁹ Crisis Group interviews, conflict experts, academics and civil society activists, Jos, Abuja, Kaduna and Lagos, April and July 2011.

¹³⁰ Higazi, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹³¹ One of such appears to be the NASCO group of companies, which started operation in Jos in 1962 and had become renowned in the entire country and in parts of West Africa for its cereals, food and fibre products. Contrary to popular perceptions that it had fallen into bad times (Crisis Group interviews, civil society activists, youth leaders and senior journalists, Jos, April and July 2011), its administrative and human resources manager insisted in a March 2012 interview that the company had continued to invest massively in all its production lines. See Achor Abimaje, “NASCO group has confidence in Nigerian economy – Sule Nyalun”, *Leadership*, 14 March 2012. See also Alicia Daniels, “Nasco Nigeria: A study in corporate social responsibility”, *Nigeria Exchange News*, 28 April 2007.

¹³² See Krause, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

¹³³ Crisis Group interview, senior UNDP adviser, Abuja, 4 October 2012. See also Mohammed, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6; and Blench and Dendo, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹³⁴ Crisis Group telephone interview, Jos-based Nigerian economist, 5 May 2012.

V. RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS

Both the Plateau state and the federal governments have responded to the crisis in three major ways: judicial commissions of inquiry and peace initiative committees; police and military action; and Operation Rainbow (OR). Abuja also has had to respond to the terror threat posed, since 2010, by Boko Haram not only in northern Nigeria, but also in Jos.

A. JUDICIAL COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY AND PEACE INITIATIVE COMMITTEES

Since April 1994, several commissions of inquiry have been set up to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the Jos crisis, in addition to other non-judicial committees and initiatives. As many as five commissions were inaugurated after the 2008 crisis alone. Since the 1990s, the most significant commissions and related initiatives include:

- ❑ Justice Aribiton Fiberesima Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the April 1994 Crisis;
- ❑ Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the September 2001 Crisis;
- ❑ Presidential Peace Initiative Committee on Plateau State, headed by Shehu Idris, Emir of Zazzau, May 2004;
- ❑ Plateau Peace Conference (“Plateau Resolves”), 18 August-21 September 2004;
- ❑ Justice Bola Ajibola Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the November 2008 Crisis; and
- ❑ Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos Crisis, March-April 2010.

In 2001, a broad-based peace conference was organised around the Niki Tobi commission; the resultant communiqué was enthusiastically signed by all groups, except the Hausa-Fulani. The Plateau state government also organised four one-day peace summits in 2002. The federal government’s month-long Plateau Peace Conference in 2004 during the state of emergency was huge and costly. A stakeholders’ summit convened by Governor Jang after the November 2008 crisis was dominated by key sitting and former political officers and senior civil servants at the expense of representatives of ethnic and religious organisations, youth movements and civil society groups. There has been no known follow-up.

Slow publication of reports of the successive commissions (including the 2010 Presidential Advisory Commit-

tee) for wide circulation, public debate and implementation has posed serious challenges.¹³⁵ Neither the federal government nor the Plateau state government has faithfully acted upon the commissions' recommendations, with the appointing authorities often appearing to lack the political will to translate precepts into practice. When authorities do pursue recommendations, acceptance is selective. For example, the Dariye government welcomed a recommendation ("Plateau Resolves") in August 2004 stating that the Hausa community "should not be treated differently" from other settler groups in the state, while it ignored another that declared that indigenes should not discriminate against other Nigerian citizens but should embrace them and accord them full rights and privileges.¹³⁶

Tough public speeches are not followed through with tangible political action against instigators of intercommunal violence, even after they have been identified by security and intelligence agencies and the concerned local communities. After the 2008 crisis, some alleged perpetrators, arrested in the state and handed over to Abuja upon its request, were set free shortly afterwards. Security agencies hardly inquire about authors of inflammatory, inciting and provocative speeches. There is therefore little or no deterrence and disincentive against recklessness and impunity. These factors have combined to keep grievances and recriminations alive, fuel envy, vengeance and a cyclical crisis.

B. POLICE AND MILITARY ACTION

A second official response is pacification by police and military personnel. This measure can only be successful if it is short-term and in full accordance with the law, but it has lasted as long as the crisis. Although it has defused tension in some areas, in the eyes of many residents, the security agencies have become part of the problem. When the Special Task Force (STF, a joint police-military operation) was first deployed to Jos after the 2001 crisis, indigenous and settler groups identified with it and were prepared to contribute to its success. But over the years, its presence, many residents claim, has brought little relief, safety and security. More attacks, particularly against indigenes, and more deaths have been recorded. The STF's

ranks were accused by the BAA of colluding with the Hausa-Fulani community, particularly Fulani herdsmen, in attacking villagers.¹³⁷ Weapons used in attacks and the sophistication with which killings are carried out point, in the eyes of some, to the involvement of experts in martial arts with apparent easy access to arms.¹³⁸

In some cases, identity cards and passbooks of soldiers on duty have apparently been found in crisis areas. Attacks have taken place very close to where soldiers are stationed; yet no arrests were made.¹³⁹ Some of them are suspected by residents of occasionally trading their guns for money to buy cars, live big and sponsor those known in the Plateau as "merchants of death".¹⁴⁰ Women's protests against the STF prompted the federal government to replace almost the entire contingent with 850 new soldiers in 2010.¹⁴¹ Since then, attacks have lessened considerably, killers are regularly being arrested (though little is heard about prosecution and conviction) and communities feel safer than before. Poor state response to the crisis has given youths – Christians and Muslims alike – the opportunity to work together and organise neighbourhood watch groups, by setting up joint patrols and preventing sectarian infiltra-

¹³⁵ In 2004, the Fibresima report and the Plateau state government's white paper on it were published. In 2010, two other reports – Niki Tobi and Ajibola – as well as their white papers were published by the same government. No other report has been published since. See Right to Know (R2K), "Review of the judicial commissions of inquiry on the conflicts in Jos, Plateau state and the government white papers on these conflicts", Abuja, 2010.

¹³⁶ Crisis Group interviews, Jos, conflict experts, April and July 2011. See also Ostien, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-16; Danfulani, *op. cit.*, p. 4; and HRW, "They Do Not Own This Place", *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

¹³⁷ Crisis Group interviews, senior journalists, conflict experts and defence analysts, Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012. In September 2011, the Plateau state chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) accused the STF's leadership of complicity in the killing of its members. See Raymond Gukas, "Jos Violence – STF connived to kill Christians – CAN", *Daily Champion*, 7 September 2011. Broadly, the accusation that soldiers take sides in the crises, watch unconcerned when people are killed, maimed and property looted has persisted despite denials by a spokesperson of the STF, Captain Charles Ekeocha. See "A cycle of reprisals turns Jos into killing field", *Vanguard*, 31 December 2011.

¹³⁸ Crisis Group interviews, conflict experts, defence analysts and civil society activists, Abuja and Jos, April and July 2011 and February 2012.

¹³⁹ Reacting to President Jonathan's September 2011 directive to the army and the air force to move into Jos, Dr Tor Iorapuu, acting president of a civil society coalition in the state, supported the apparent change of strategy in tackling security challenges, called for a review of the security arrangement and urged the STF to weed out corrupt and inefficient staff from its ranks and "court-martial all those [who] have been fingered to have compromised the security of the state to restore public confidence". See "Army, Air force move into Jos", *Vanguard*, 14 September 2011.

¹⁴⁰ Crisis Group interviews, Jos, April and July 2011. Jos residents refer to perpetrators of violence and their suspected well-connected financiers, within and outside the state, as "merchants of death".

¹⁴¹ Crisis Group interviews, senior journalists, civil society activists, conflict experts, university professors, retired senior civil servants and security personnel, Jos, April, July 2011 and February 2012.

tion and indoctrination.¹⁴² This could be an interesting model to try to replicate elsewhere.

In September 2011, President Jonathan directed the then-chief of defence staff, Air Vice Marshall Oluseyi Petinrin,¹⁴³ to become fully responsible for the security situation in Plateau state. The decision coincided with the president's efforts to respond to Boko Haram's terror attacks. Petinrin's main official assignments include overseeing the work of the then 1,200-strong STF after the deployment of an unspecified number of army and air force personnel, and the control of the local vigilante groups. As a result of an apparent change of strategy, the STF was beefed up, during the same month, with an additional 2,000 police and paramilitary personnel drawn principally from the Police Mobile Force (PMF), the State Security Service (SSS) and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC),¹⁴⁴ bringing the total number to 3,200.

C. OPERATION RAINBOW

Modelled after "Operation Yaki" in neighbouring Kaduna state, which was reputed to have contributed "immensely towards the sustenance of peace in that state",¹⁴⁵ the principal goal of Operation Rainbow (OR), a joint venture between the federal and the Plateau state governments is to build peace. The initiative is now solely financed by the state government. Headed by a retired air vice marshal, the operation purports to be a peacebuilding and security maintenance system, regrouping members of diverse groups to work for the public good. It seeks to make Plateau safe in order to revive the economy, enhance dialogue with

and between different communities and act as a mediation agency, with a diverse group of facilitators.¹⁴⁶

OR plans to achieve its goal by performing some of the tasks the STF, which it will eventually replace, has reportedly not done satisfactorily, including "timely and accurate information/intelligence for proactive response to situation".¹⁴⁷ The operation focuses on four dimensions of security: political, with the promotion of good governance; economic or human, with emphasis on poverty alleviation and provision of livelihoods through training programs for women and youth; social, by attempts at de-radicalising violent youths and preventing the radicalisation of the most vulnerable segments of the population; and physical, by working with the major security agencies present in the state to control crime and build peace in the communities.¹⁴⁸ Although OR was conceptualised in 2010, it remains in the early stages of operationalisation.

In design, OR brings together all the security and para-security agencies, including the Nigeria Police Force, the State Security Service, the Road Safety, Immigration, Fire Services and the National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). It plans capacity and peacebuilding efforts to cover all the seventeen LGAs, will hold "stakeholders quarterly meetings" with the governor and organise more workshops on conflict monitoring, early warning and early response.

The operation has reportedly recorded some achievements in the areas of physical and human security. By mid-2012, the over 4,000 volunteer youth recruited from the entire 325 wards in the state and trained as neighbourhood watch operatives by OR's team on civil defence, community protection and information gathering were deployed to their respective wards. They are also expected to provide auxiliary security watch over their communities in addition to engaging in communal security awareness. Additional 3,000 youth volunteers are in line for the same training, and those who qualify as instructors among them will teach their peers self-defence.¹⁴⁹

OR's human security program consists of empowering women and youth through various skill acquisition and leadership training. The women's program, a three-month course in sewing, catering and knitting, among others, is organised in collaboration with the grass-roots Women in Peace Development Initiative (GWPI), a local non-gov-

¹⁴² Crisis Group interviews, senior journalist and president of the National Union of Journalists, Jos, 14 April 2011; sociology professor, University of Jos, 23 July 2011; University of Jos professor, 14 April 2011.

¹⁴³ Petinrin lost his position and retired on 4 October 2012 after President Jonathan appointed new service chiefs for the air force and navy, and a new chief of defence staff. He was replaced by Admiral Ola Sa'ad Ibrahim. Only the incumbent chief of army staff, Lt-General Azubuike Ihejirika, retained his position. See Ike Abonyi, "How president Jonathan picked new service chiefs, Ihejirika retained as COAS to protect army", *This Day*, 7 October 2012, pp. 1, 7; and Vincent Ikuomola, "Jonathan to service chiefs: end terrorism", *The Nation*, 9 October 2012, p. 8.

¹⁴⁴ Major-General Seun Oshinowo was appointed as new STF commander. The official rationale for the re-organisation was to stop the spate of killings and wanton destruction of property in Plateau state. See "Federal Government deploys more troops to Jos", *This Day*, 23 September 2011; "Army, Air force move into Jos", *Vanguard*, 14 September 2011; and Jude Owuamanam, "Jos: Federal government upgrades STF, appoints General as Commander", *Punch*, 19 September 2011.

¹⁴⁵ See "An Introduction to Operation Rainbow in Plateau state", Jos, Plateau state Task Force on Peace and Security, 2012, p. 7.

¹⁴⁶ See "Modalities for implementing Operation Rainbow in Plateau state", Jos, Plateau state Task Force on Peace and Security, 2012.

¹⁴⁷ "An Introduction to Operation Rainbow in Plateau state", op. cit., p. 6.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 9-14.

¹⁴⁹ Crisis Group email correspondence, head of OR's implementation committee, Jos, 5 September 2012.

ernmental organisation. Participants, drawn from some of the flashpoints, including Jos North, cut across ethnicity and religion. The first class of 118 trainees graduated in June 2012, and a second batch of 200 followed suit in September. “Over 30,000 women are on the waiting list anxious to acquire a skill, have something to do and get out of poverty”, said the head of OR’s implementation committee.¹⁵⁰ 30 of the operation’s counter-terrorism trainees at the international security academy in Israel recently qualified. In conjunction with the Plateau agriculture ministry, youth drawn from all the seventeen LGAs will soon begin agriculture training.¹⁵¹

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) is providing capacity building and technical assistance in the form of an SMS crowd-sourcing platform for monitoring early warning signs and encouraging rapid response, as well as computer infrastructure and training support for security agencies and civil society organisations, to ensure some synergy between the two categories of actors.¹⁵² ICT training is also expected for security, election and vote counting monitoring systems.

OR appears to be a significant step forward toward empowering Plateau women and weaning the youth out of violence and public mischief by engaging and paying them. However, there are challenges ahead for the operation; it looks like an omnibus outfit that, perhaps understandably, wants to do everything at the same time and be something to everybody. It should prioritise its work in short, medium and long terms and try to concentrate on areas, such as physical and human security, where it seems to have, or can easily attract and mobilise, the right expertise. In addition, it has to demonstrate its objectivity and neutrality to all the groups implicated in the crises.

VI. THE WAY FORWARD

The resolution or, at least, diminution of the recurring conflict between indigenous and settler populations in Plateau state requires both national and local solutions, as well as international assistance. There is a need for a wide array of responses including political, legal-constitutional, security, socio-economic and community reconciliation initiatives. Various actors, state and non-state, institutions and individuals alike, will be required to give these responses concrete and effective expression on the ground. Both the federal and the Plateau state governments will be expected to provide leadership to local councils and community-based peace initiatives.

A. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Nigeria’s current conception and implementation of citizenship are inadequate and flawed. There is an urgent need to openly and sincerely engage in a constitutional reform process to replace the indigene principle with a more inclusive citizenship provision such as residency. Already included in the 1999 constitution (as in its 1979 and 1989 predecessors), the residency provision should be amended, clarified, simplified and implemented with minimum delay.¹⁵³ A Residency Rights Bill has been before the National Assembly since 2004. Sponsored by Senator Jonathan Silas Zwingina (from Adamawa Central), the bill should become law to grant full residency rights to every Nigerian citizen who has lived in a place for at least five years. Exempted, perhaps as a protective cover for minority groups, are rights to chieftaincy titles and other culturally specific matters.¹⁵⁴ Notwithstanding the bill’s provision, legislation on how long a settler should

¹⁵⁰ Crisis Group email correspondence, head of OR’s implementation committee, Jos, 5 September 2012.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. OR also has a partnership with the UNDP and the civil society sector to deepen the justice sector reform and make the electoral process in Plateau state more democratic. Crisis Group email correspondence, head of OR’s implementation committee, Jos, 27 September 2012.

¹⁵² In October 2012, the UNDP started training personnel for the early warning and early response mechanism for peace and conflict monitoring. Crisis Group email correspondence, head of OR’s implementation committee, Jos, 23 October 2012.

¹⁵³ “[T]he federal government and the National Assembly should expedite action to give practical effect to the constitutional provision regarding citizenship rights as enshrined in the constitution”. See “Draft Report of the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Jos Crisis”, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁵⁴ “[T]he residency bill ... would help enhance citizenship for all Nigerians regardless of ethnic origins or residence. This would be an improvement on what is constitutionally provided now”. The aim is to “develop a polity in which class consciousness would supersede ethnic consciousness. In such a dispensation, politics will be more ideological ... the politician will be better known as a conservative, liberal or radical, rather than Hausa, Ijaw or Berom”. See Kayode Komolafe, “Between the citizen and the indigene”, *This Day*, 18 May 2005. The idea was first proposed by the Senator Chuba Okadigbo-led ad hoc committee on the immediate post-1999 inter-ethnic riots. See “Senate proposes residency rights for citizens”, *Vanguard*, 14 February 2002.

live in a place before s/he can become an indigene should be a priority for the National Assembly.¹⁵⁵

A first step in this direction may have been taken in early March 2012 when the federal government, in adopting most of the recommendations of the Alhaji Usman Galtimari Committee on Security Challenges in the North East, inaugurated in July 2011, announced that a soon-to-be released government white paper would remove the discrimination caused by the indigene-settler dichotomy.¹⁵⁶ Nine months on, the paper has not been released.

There will be no easy or quick fixes, however, given the “political reality on the ground”,¹⁵⁷ including how to deal with “historic grievance against inequalities”,¹⁵⁸ experienced particularly by minority groups. Articulating solutions to this festering problem with broad, nationwide appeal goes beyond official proclamation. Indispensable will be sustained political and cultural work in the many communities already torn apart by the settler-indigene dispute.¹⁵⁹ In the specific case of Jos, intercommunal con-

flicts can only be reduced by using largely peaceful means to promote political inclusion and allocate rights and duties on the basis of social justice.¹⁶⁰

B. A HOLISTIC SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PACT

Human security should be accorded the priority it deserves. Because rampant poverty and unemployment have often been unduly politicised and ethnicised by self-interested actors, the federal government should develop a holistic and realistic socio-political and economic pact with the citizenry. The post-independence social contract, currently in tatters, should be re-negotiated with the Nigerian people through good, transparent and accountable governance to address poverty, promote political inclusiveness, give full expression to social citizenship and put an end to the divisive political economy of ethnicity. The “unity of purpose and national solidarity” President Jonathan spoke about in his 2012 New Year national message, which is vital to “overcome terrorism and other current challenges”, can hardly be wrenched from a disgruntled and disaffected citizenry.

The Plateau state government needs to change tack so as to use power to serve all the groups living in the state, not just the indigenous. Otherwise its apparent short-sightedness will elicit only more self-help by competing groups. A concrete way to prevent this is to adopt the Sokoto state model and implement a policy of zero discrimination in education and balanced employment opportunities between indigenes and settlers. The Plateau government should go a step further to articulate a comprehensive public policy that gives equitable access to power and resources. An inclusive political system is perhaps the best antidote to reciprocal fears between the BAA and the Hausa-Fulani. One major way of doing this is to implement the Ajibola Commission’s recommendation that “since [the] majority of the people of Jos North are dissatisfied with the form [in which] Jos North LGA was created, the government can set up a machinery and put up a demand before the National Assembly to consider a restructuring of Jos North LGA to reflect the wishes and aspirations of everybody in Jos North”.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁵ It was reported in early October 2012 that the Senate had started the process of amending the 1999 constitution. The declared objective was a less centralised and less powerful centre through reduction of the federal government’s powers and devolution of more responsibilities and resources to the states and local councils. See “Senate begins constitution amendment”, *Vanguard*, 5 October 2012. The following month, the House of Representatives held public hearings on the question of constitutional amendment in all the 36 states. True or genuine federalism and financial autonomy of the states – two dominant issues – if realised, would facilitate the process of true citizenship in the country. See ECOWAS Commission, “ECOWARN Daily Highlight Report”, Abuja, 11 November 2012. It was also reported that indigeneship – as well as state creation and the inclusion of the six geopolitical zones (north west, north east, north central, south west, south east and south south) in the constitution generated nationwide interest. See “Nigerians seek removal of immunity clause, others from constitution”, *The Guardian*, 12 November 2012.

¹⁵⁶ See ECOWAS Commission, “ECOWARN Daily Highlight Report”, Abuja, 8 March 2012. In addition, consistent with the recommendation in the Galtimari report, the federal government has reportedly adopted the Sokoto state experience as a national model of zero discrimination in education and employment opportunities between indigenes and settlers. See “Boko Haram: FEC endorses White Paper on Galtimari report”, *News*, 7 March 2012.

¹⁵⁷ Komolafe, *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁸ See Ukoha Ukiwo, “Creation of Local Government Areas and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria: The Case of Warri, Delta State”, CRISE West Africa workshop, Accra, March 2006, p. 1.

¹⁵⁹ Optimism is tempered by the fact that between 2001 and 2002, the federal government set up two important committees on indigeneship, namely the Committee on Provisions and Practice of Citizens’ Rights in Nigeria and the Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution in some North Central States. The latter was specifically mandated to examine the issue of indigeni-

sation as it affects Nigeria as a whole. See “White Paper on the Report of the Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry”, *op. cit.*, pp. 44 and 73. Since then, little or nothing has been heard about the committees.

¹⁶⁰ More broadly, it has been argued that “the government must demonstrate at both the federal and state levels that state officials and individuals will be held accountable for using ethnic origin as a means of discriminating against and marginalising other citizens”. See Isa-Odidi, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁶¹ “The Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry Report”, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

There will always be competing claims to land and other resources; what is urgently needed is to ensure all Nigerians have citizenship by applying the laws more fairly. Access to power needs to reflect the existing demography, not who happened to live in a place almost a hundred years ago – while at the same time ensuring appropriate space for minority communities.

If the state government genuinely desires a resolution of the cyclical crisis, there are significant resources that it could crucially mobilise. It should encourage the leadership of both communities to resume talks, with, if necessary, credible and mutually acceptable local, national and international facilitators. It should put in place a system of settlement (re-)aggregation. This will attempt a re-discovery of the settlement pattern of the past, through what some Jos residents say should be “a deliberate, honest and open”¹⁶² re-settlement policy on the part of the Plateau state government. This will also require a lot of civic and political education. As indigenes and settlers begin to mingle freely again in all areas of Jos – as they did in the not-too-distant past – intercommunal mistrust and tension will gradually diminish. Muslims and Christians, as well as people from all ethno-communal stripes, should be encouraged to live again in same areas.¹⁶³

Developing Nigeria’s human capital at local, state and national levels is a social imperative. To “ignore youth employment” is to be ready to “face civil disobedience and revolution”.¹⁶⁴ The federal government, as well as the Plateau state government, should provide leadership and mobilise the private sector – the “biggest beneficiary of [a] skilled workforce”,¹⁶⁵ and Nigeria’s international partners to target youth education, including vocational training, skill acquisition and job creation. They should also work together to identify progressive, educated people cutting across communities in Jos and its environs, constitute them into a working group through which fresh ideas could inspire formulation and implementation of local public policies.

¹⁶² Crisis Group interviews, conflict experts and professor of sociology, Jos, April and July 2011.

¹⁶³ This is not an elusive goal. Already there are certain communities, admittedly for now isolated and far-between, where people from different ethnicities and religious persuasions live together and do many things in common, including preventing communal violence from spreading to their communities. In addition, an international conference on youth and inter-faith communication organised in Jos in October 2010 was a step in the right direction.

¹⁶⁴ See Mamadou Touré, “Nurturing Africa’s human capital”, *New African*, November 2012, p. 64.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 65.

C. CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES

Authorities at both federal and state levels should urgently implement policies that adequately respond to the citizenship crisis in the Plateau. Even if the BAA is historically the indigenous groups, Jos is now a multi-ethnic city and should be seen as belonging to all residents irrespective of the time of arrival of their ancestors. There is also the need to attenuate perceived political marginalisation of some settler groups by articulating and implementing a state-wide policy of equality and reciprocity. One way of doing this is through a bottom-up approach to the peace and confidence-building process that should involve community and other leaders as well as ordinary citizens.

Such a process has happened before in the state. To fulfil his peacebuilding mandate in Jos metropolis, the chairman of the Jos North local council between 2000 and 2007, Dr Dalandi Atu, took certain key decisions:

- ❑ constituting a Council of Chiefs, a replica of the town councils of the 1940s and 1950s, and tabling the most important issues before it. The council visited the wards on a quarterly basis;
- ❑ prioritising the resolution of internal conflicts, particularly over boundaries and farmland, between the Afizere and the Berom, regarded as “minorities within minorities”;
- ❑ initiating peacebuilding processes between different settler communities and allocating them supervisory councillors to protect their interests;
- ❑ constituting peace committees charged with holding regular consultative meetings in all the twenty wards, and awarding budgetary provisions, including a monthly stipend and an official car, to each ward;
- ❑ holding monthly security and town ward meetings and ensuring constant communication between the local government, security and state as well as between the chairman of the local council and the governor;
- ❑ allocating vacant council jobs to groups on the basis of equality and equity; and
- ❑ setting up a neighbourhood watch scheme to monitor movement of people within the different communities.

The former chairman also reached out specifically to the Hausa-Fulani. He invited their leaders to his house to break their fast during Ramadan, worshipped with them in the mosque and acceded to one of their longstanding demands: the provision of a cemetery.¹⁶⁶ To promote peaceful coex-

¹⁶⁶ Crisis Group interviews, Jos, senior journalists, academics and civil activists, April and July 2011. According to Atu, “[the]

istence in Plateau state, there is a need to develop better intercommunal communication channels. One way of doing this is to replicate the experiment by the former chairman in all the seventeen LGAs in the state. Although there were still outbreaks of violence during those years, many of the initiatives he took were useful and could be expanded. Several residents of Jos said that these measures helped reduce tension and improved both inter-faith dialogue and intercommunal relations.¹⁶⁷

In addition, the state government should make a more effective use of the expertise and experience of the governor's special advisers on key and relevant portfolios. These include security, religious affairs (Christian and Muslim), community relations, youth mobilisation and women's mobilisation. Others are rural transformation, project monitoring, ethical re-orientation and peacebuilding. Operation Rainbow should be popularised, and be even-handed and fair to all the communities so that the people can own it. This will help avoid a situation in which "high-level peace settlements tend to fall apart early, due, in part, to weak involvement at the grassroots level".¹⁶⁸

D. NATIONAL SECURITY MEASURES

Emblematic of a national malaise, police and military responses have highlighted many security inadequacies. Some analysts regard most of the responses as "a monumental crisis".¹⁶⁹ Nigeria's weak security architecture has been further exposed by its response to Boko Haram. A viable and effective security solution appears currently elusive without state-of-the-art equipment for intelligence gathering, early warning and ensuring safety.¹⁷⁰ Retooling of security agencies, re-training of personnel in counter-terrorism and urban guerrilla tactics, a more humane approach to law enforcement and winning the trust of local communities are major priority areas.

The federal government appears to have made some progress in this respect,¹⁷¹ but the major obstacle to a more

efficient security response remains entrenched corruption and lack of integrity. Guaranteeing and ensuring the basic welfare of the security personnel should also be on top of the agenda.

E. BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE

Bilateral and multilateral assistance is needed for Nigeria to enhance its efforts to contain violence and insecurity. The U.S. has been the most active partner in counter-terrorism. Training received under the U.S. Government Security Assistance Program by some STF members may have informed the plan of the Nigerian army to establish a division to house this particular expertise. It may also have contributed to recent successes by the STF in "Operation Restore Order" in Maiduguri in 2011 and in arresting or killing Boko Haram leaders between September and November 2012; as well as in proactive measures such as the destruction of suspected bomb factories, bomb detonation and seizure of large caches of arms and ammunitions since February 2012 in the north and the Middle Belt.¹⁷²

Other U.S. initiatives such as the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Programme (ATA) and the Counterterrorist Finance Programme (CTF), which, respectively, are designed to limit the flow of new recruits to terrorist groups, enhance

security personnel trained on counter-terrorism", *Daily Trust*, 3 September 2012.

¹⁷² On 17 September, the Nigerian army announced that it had killed a Boko Haram spokesman and a commander who operated in the north-central Kogi state. The following day, it said the JTF had taken over the sect's command centre in Kano. Again on 19 September, the JTF reportedly shot dead two suspected commanders of the group in Maiduguri. See "Nigeria military kill two radical sect leaders", South Africa Press Agency/Associated Press, 18 September 2012; "We killed top Boko Haram commander – JTF", *Daily Trust*, 19 September 2012; "JTF takes over Boko Haram's command centre", *Leadership*, 19 September 2012; and "JTF kills suspected terrorists' commanders in Maiduguri", *Leadership*, 20 September 2012. On 19 October, the Nigerian army announced it arrested Shuaibu Muhammed Bama, a senior commander of Boko Haram, at the home of a serving senator, Ahmed Zanna (PDP, Borno Central) in Maiduguri, the sect's main base, a claim denied by the latter. See "Nigerian army arrests Boko Haram commander", BBC, 20 October 2012. On 15 November, a Boko Haram commander, Ibn Saleh Ibrahim, reportedly "very close" to Abubakar Shekau, the sect's leader, with a reputation for being "invincible", according to the Nigerian military, was killed during an exchange of fire in Maiduguri, along with six of his lieutenants. See "Un chef de Boko Haram tué dans une opération militaire", *Jeune Afrique*, 15 Novembre 2012. See also Anthony Tucker-Jones, "West ignores Nigeria's terrorists at its peril", 12 March 2012, <http://beegeagle.worldpress.com/2012/03/12/west-i>.

Hausa-Fulani do not have land, but all they want is a sense of belonging", Crisis Group interview, Dr Atu, 25 July 2011.

¹⁶⁷ Crisis Group interviews, defence experts and conflict analysts, Jos and Abuja, April and July 2011.

¹⁶⁸ Sayne, op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁶⁹ Crisis Group, telephone interview, Jos civil society activists, 14 August 2012.

¹⁷⁰ The Plateau state police commissioner, Dipo Ayeni, told those calling on him to dispatch more men and equipment to safeguard churches during the 2011 New Year services that the police lacked the wherewithal to do so. "We're ill-equipped, ill-funded, our training haphazard – Plateau police boss", op. cit.

¹⁷¹ In September 2012, the Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Centre of the Nigerian Army in Jaji, Kaduna state, graduated its ninth batch of 316 personnel. See "Nigeria: 316

Nigeria's border security and investigative capacity, and build capacity to stem terrorist financing, may improve security in the country.¹⁷³

But as attacks by Boko Haram become more vicious and deadly in the north and get enmeshed with settler-indigene political combat disguised as intercommunal conflict in Plateau state, Nigeria will need more specific and coordinated bilateral and multilateral assistance better targeted to contain violence and terrorist threats. One way of doing this is to share experience and exchange information with countries like Indonesia and the Philippines that have faced similar challenges in managing intercommunal conflicts and de-radicalising violent and extremist groups. In addition to the UN and the U.S., the EU, which noted in March 2012 that the Nigerian government was "making progress in developing and implementing a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy",¹⁷⁴ should step up to the plate.

The EU should faithfully implement the bilateral agreement it reached in February 2012 with the Nigerian authorities to "establish a local dialogue on peace, security and stability",¹⁷⁵ as well as the strategic decision to upgrade the technical competence of specialised agencies responsible for organised crime and small arms and strengthen the investigative and forensic capabilities of the Nigeria police.¹⁷⁶ The plan to support local governance, conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Niger delta should be extended to Plateau state and other major flashpoints in the country. Based on the notion that "a poor, disenfranchised community could become a major challenge to national security if conditions do not improve",¹⁷⁷ the EU should also work closely with the state government, communities and non-state actors in Plateau to expand human security, increase youth education opportunities and formulate more encompassing and progressive public policies.

¹⁷³ See U.S. Department of State, *Diplomacy in Action*, "LRA, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, AQIM and other sources of Instability in Africa", Testimony of Daniel Benjamin, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, The House Foreign Affairs Committee, Washington DC, 25 April 2012.

¹⁷⁴ "Statement to the European Parliament on Nigeria on behalf of HR Catherine Ashton delivered by Danish Foreign Minister Villy Søvndal, Strasbourg 14 March 2012", Brussels, 15 March 2012.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ See the "EU-Federal Republic of Nigeria Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Program for the period 2008-2013", Brussels, 19 November 2009, p. 7. (http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/scanned_ng_csp10_en.pdf).

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20

VII. CONCLUSION

For all the apparent efforts of the federal and Plateau state governments, as well as the non-state sector, the gap between a collective aspiration for peace and the reality of persistent violence has not narrowed sufficiently in Jos. On the contrary, mutually exclusive narratives of subordination and discrimination and a politics of reciprocal fear, resentment and revenge have often combined to push Plateau state to the brink. Youth gangs feeling the pain of social marginalisation, economic exploitation and political exclusion are easily recruited as foot-soldiers by conflict entrepreneurs on both sides. The Hausa-Fulani community appears not to trust the state government, and the BAA has shown little or no confidence in the federal government to resolve the crises. However, emerging youth, women and inter-faith platforms in Jos where different groups can talk and growing national and international attention show that the situation is not beyond repair.

Nigeria has to move quickly to get to grips with the indigene-settler divide and the dysfunctional situation this has created in Jos and elsewhere. The National Assembly should rapidly conclude the much-delayed process of amending the 1999 constitution, throw out the indigene clause and replace it with the residency principle as the only basis for an all-encompassing Nigerian citizenship. Sokoto state, which "has cancelled the measures that favoured the indigenes and penalised citizens from other states in Nigeria",¹⁷⁸ should serve as a model and inspiration. Since the Sokoto government did this without constitutional reform, nothing should stop the Plateau state government from doing the same, in spite of their different settler-indigene historical trajectories. In addition, Plateau should immediately implement the recommendations contained in the reports of the three commissions of inquiry published so far (Fiberesima in 2004, Tobi and Ajibola, both in 2010) and its own white papers on them. The most important measures include prosecuting instigators and perpetrators of violence and stopping the illegal possession of firearms. Further delay or inaction will continue to fuel settler-indigene tension and exacerbate intercommunal violence in Jos and other parts of the country.

Dakar/Brussels, 17 December 2012

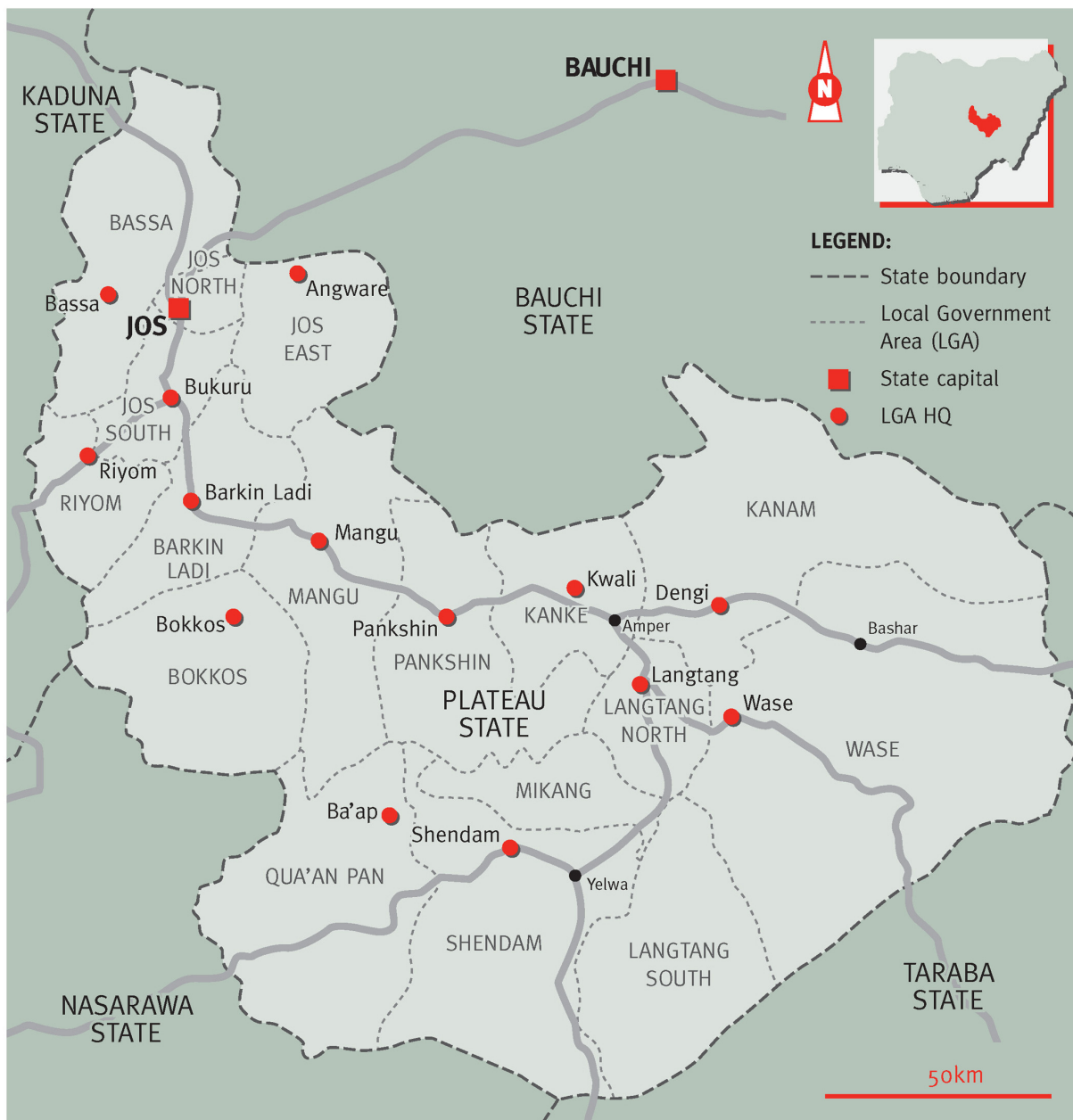
¹⁷⁸ See Perouse de Montclos, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

APPENDIX A MAP OF NIGERIA



APPENDIX B

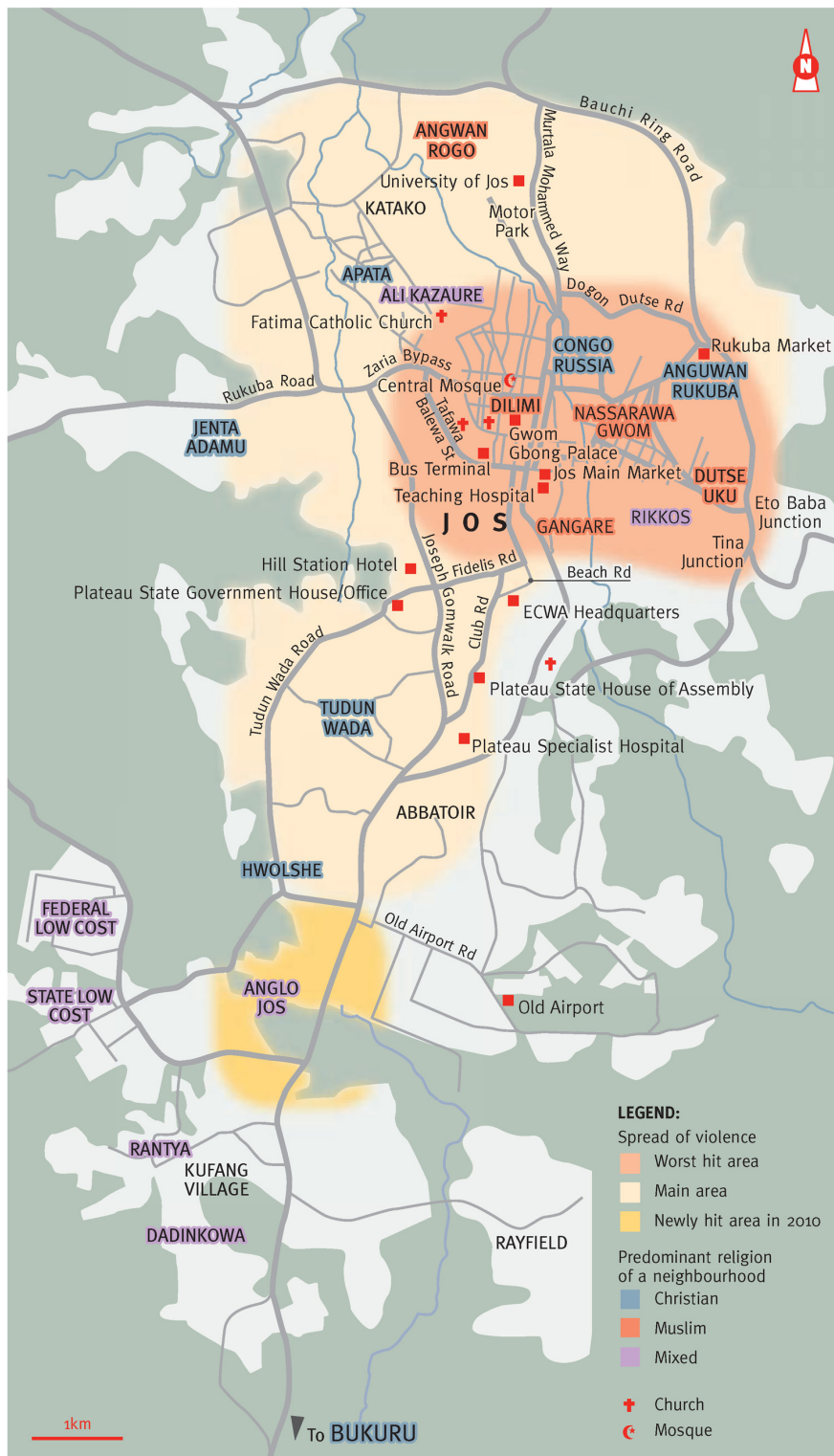
MAP OF PLATEAU STATE



Source: Jana Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria* (Geneva, 2011).
Jillian Luff, MAPgrafix/Geneva Declaration Secretariat.

APPENDIX C

MAP OF JOS



Source: Jana Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria* (Geneva, 2011).

Jillian Luff, MAPgrafix/Geneva Declaration Secretariat.

APPENDIX D

MAJOR INDIGENE-SETTLER CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

Kataf (Atyaps and Bajju) “indigenes” and *Hausa-Fulani* “settlers” in Zongon-Kataf LGA and Zaria, Kaduna state, in the 1980s and the 1990s.

Ife “indigenes” and *Modakeke* “settlers” in the old Oyo state (now Osun state), south-western Nigeria, also in the 1980s and 1990s.

Yoruba “indigenes” and *Hausa-Fulani* “settlers” in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states; and *Hausa-Fulani* “indigenes” and *Yoruba* “settlers” in Kano, between 1999 and 2000.

Junkun/Azara “indigenes” and *Tiv/Fulani* “settlers” in Nasarawa and Taraba states (often spills over to neighbouring Adamawa and Plateau states), ongoing.

Kuteb “indigenes” and *Chamba* “settlers” in Takum LGA of Taraba state, ongoing.

Ebira “indigenes” and *Bassa* “settlers” in Nasarawa state, ongoing.

Indigenous *Kwalla* ethnic groups and *Tiv* “settlers” in the senatorial district of Nasarawa state, ongoing.

Itsekiri “indigenes” and *Urhobo-Ijaw* “settlers” in Warri (Delta state), ongoing.

APPENDIX E

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN PLATEAU STATE AND LINKS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

I. Administrative units

State cabinet: consists of the governor (chief executive), deputy governor, secretary to the state government and commissioners. Special advisers, head of state civil service, permanent secretaries, board chairmen and general managers of parastatals (state-owned companies) are adjunct to the cabinet.

The House of Assembly (25 members)

Seventeen *local government areas* (LGAs) are run by an elected or appointed council chairperson, who is the head of the LGA, and elected or appointed councillors who are also members of the legislature.

Plateau state is further sub-divided into *chiefdoms* and *emirates* in which appointment is made, respectively, by election and succession (that is, hereditary).

II. Seventeen local government areas (LGAs)

Barkin Ladi	Jos North	Kanam	Langtang South	Pankshin	Shendam
Bassa	Jos South	Kanke	Mangu	Qua'an Pan	Wase
Bokkos	Jos East	Langtang North	Mikang	Riyom	

III. Local government areas (LGAs) in Jos

Jos North, headquarters: Jos (the biggest and only LGA where the Hausa-Fulani community is in the majority);

Jos South, headquarters: Bukuru

Jos East, headquarters: Angware

IV. Links with the federal government:

Nigeria has a three-tiered government:

- *federal* (Abuja and Lagos, administrative-political capital and economic capital respectively)
- *state* (36 states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja)
- *local* (774 local councils or local government areas)

APPENDIX F

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANPP	All-Nigerian People's Party
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ATA	Anti-Terrorism Assistance Programme
BAA	Berom/Anaguta/Afizere
BEC	Berom Elders Council
BECO	Berom Educational and Cultural Council
BF	Berom Forum
BPU	Berom Progressive Union
COCIN	Church of Christ in Nigeria
CTF	Counterterrorist Finance Programme
DYM	Du Youth Movement
FCC	Federal Character Commission
IRCPH	Inter-Religious Council for Peace and Harmony
JDA	Jasawa Development Association
JIBWIS	Jamaatu Izalatul Bidiah Waikamatus Sunnah
JNI	Jamaatu Nasril Islam
LGA	Local government area
LGMC	Local Government Monitoring Committee
MACBAN	Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
NDIMRC	Niger Delta Indigenes Movement for Radical Change
NDLEA	National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NITEL	Nigerian Telecommunications
NML	Non-Muslim League
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
NPP	National People's Party
NSCDC	Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps
NUJ	National Union of Journalists
OR	Operation Rainbow
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PLASIEC	Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission
PMF	Police Mobile Force
PRP	People's Redemption Party
SIEC	State Independent Electoral Commission
SGF	Secretary to the government of the federation
SSS	State Security Service
STF	Special Task Force
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership
UMBC	United Middle Belt Congress
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme