A Draft

The State of Christianity in Northern Nigeria

By

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Protocol

"Give honour to whom honour is due".

I. Biblical Quotations

"Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34); and "By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked" (Proverbs 11:11).

"When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a man of understanding and knowledge maintains, order" (Proverbs 28:2)

"This is what the Lord says: Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercise kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight£ (Jeremiah 9:23, 24)

"When the wicked thrive, so does sin, but the righteous will see their downfall" (Proverbs 29:16).

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14)

II. The Preamble

"Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder". Similarly, "The state of Christianity in the Northern States of Nigeria depends largely upon who sees, understands and speaks." I begin our discussion with two very contradictory views about the state of Christianity in the Northern States of Nigeria. The first view was the response of the Nigerian Delegation to the United Nation's Agenda Item 3 General Debate, 26th Meeting 22nd Regular Session Human Rights Council, 11th March, 2013, while the second view was an Executive Summary of a Research Report on the impact of Persisted violence on the Church in Northern Nigeria. These two divergent views on the state of Christianity in the Northern States of Nigeria set the tone of our discussion.

But let me state what brought us here today, "To launch the Congress of Northern Christians." May I bring up-front the role which I envisage for this newly established organization. And it will do well for the entire Northern Region to include these items in its overall agenda.

1. To seek and work for the general welfare and total well-being of every northerner regardless of creed and ethnic affiliation or area.
2. To have a mission of coming together and working together with all Christian churches and organizations in order to achieve the desired Christian unity in the Northern States of Nigeria.

3. To foster and inculcate harmonious relationships and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims, and also among all ethnic groups in the North.
4. To help and encourage Christians to develop good public, civic and political moral and social character and both personal and public ethics.
5. To liaise and work with Christian Communities and Government of the Northern States to ensure that no Christian or Christian Community is discriminated against in terms of education, employment, political participation and religious and human rights.

May I turn to what I said earlier about the two vies of the state of Christianity in the Northern States of Nigeria. There may be some areas of the North where such things are not experienced, but here we speak in general items to cover the whole North.

Listen to the first view and make a judgement of yourself in terms of its truthfulness and or magnified exaggeration.

"Thank you Mr. President. Mr President the Nigerian delegation finds it necessary to use its right of reply to respond to the statement of NGO Jubilee campaign during the general debate last Friday in which it focused almost exclusively on what it called: "the situation of the Christian minority in Nigeria's 12 Northern states" and in the process ruled out a lot of misleading and factual inaccurate allegation. The Nigerian delegation wish to state that the claim by Jubilee Campaign that Christians in Northern Nigeria have suffered, "grievous discrimination from state and local governments" It is inaccurate and misleading.

Nigeria is a secular state and the Nigerian constitution does not require any religion in any part of the country as constituting the majority or minority religion. Consequently state and local governments are duty bound to obey the provisions of the constitution which as the supreme law of the land does not allow for discrimination based on religion or any other factor. We categorically reject the allegation that Christians in Northern urban centers are pressured to live in specially designated zones and been denied basic development and maintenance. No state government I repeat no state government of Northern Nigeria or anywhere else in the country for that matter practices or has a right to practice under our constitutions policy of ghettoization as Jubilee campaign claims. It is also not true that schools in the Christians area have been denied basic maintenance and closed down. Just denying Christian children access to education neither is it true that Christians face severe discrimination when seeking jobs.
Jubilee campaign made other sweeping allegations which cannot be backed up by facts. We categorically reject these allegations. Mr. President the Nigerian delegation would like to make it abundantly clear that there is no any religious kind of discrimination in Nigeria. Christians are not at war with Muslims and Muslims are not at war with Christians. The vast majority of Nigerian Christians and Muslims alike are peace loving and have always their desire to continue to live together in unity, fraternity and harmony to form a united Nigeria. The independent expert on minority issues has requested to visit Nigeria as it will be receiving a fast track attention in our capital. We are confident that minorities are not under siege in Nigeria as Jubilee Campaign would have the world to believe. Finally, Mr. President we would like to give the assurance that Federal Government and non-citizens residing in Nigeria

regardless of their religion or ethnicity. I thank you" **(THE RESPONSE OF NIGERIAN DELEGATION TO JUBILEE CAMPAIGN REPORT DURING THE UNITED NATION'S AGENDA ITEM 3 GENERAL DEBATE (CONT'D) 26TH MEETING 22ND REGULAR SESSION HUMAN RIGHT COUNCIL, 11TH MARCH 2013)**

I am sure that many of you seated here, if giving the chance to respond would have a lot to say about the state of Christianity in the Northern States of Nigeria. So much for the First View. Let's hear the Second View. The Second View comes from a Research on the Impact of Persisted Violence on the Church in Northern Nigeria, which was conducted between 2012 and 2015. Its Executive Summary reads:

"Christians in Northern Nigeria are a substantial minority (> 26 million – 34.8%) but targeted for different reasons by persistent violence (biggest minority, exponential church growth, ethnic composition and associated with the West). They suffer from targeted violence by politically motivated communal clashes, the 2011 post-electoral crisis, the Boko Haram insurgency and Fulani herdsmen attacks, marginalization and discrimination by forced Islamization through Sharia state government and society at large.

Actors of persistent violence impacting the Church in Northern Nigeria are: the Northern Muslim Political and Religious elite, radical Islamic groups, and Fulani herdsmen, acting within the framework of a culture of political violence. Drivers of violence can be summarized as follows: protection of Muslim's endangered interests (political – economic), protection of Muslim's endangered identity (social – cultural) and protection of Islam's endangered 'legitimate' position (religious).

Between 2006 and 2014 an estimated 12,500 Christians have been killed, over 550,000 Christians are displaced and 13,000 chruches are destroyed or abandoned. The most affected communities are in the predominant Muslim far North (e.g. 87.3%, Kano 63.4% and Yobe 77.8%), Christians relocate mainly to the predominant Christian Middle belt (e.g. 75.6%, Kebbi 53.5% and Nassarawa 44%), but at the same time Christian communities in the rural areas of this sub-region are the most affected by Muslim herdsmen attacks (e.g. Benue, Nassarawa, Plateau and Taraba).

In the same period Church life went down substantially to dramatically in violent ridden areas. Christian attitude towards Muslims deteriorated negative to strongly negative due to experiences of marginalization, discrimination and violence by Muslims. Christian behaviour towards Muslims substantially decreased of killings, mistreatment, etc. By Muslims.

Faith however has not been abandoned, and although many Churches have seen a decline in membership and subsequent attendance, those that stayed show an increase in commitment to their faith and church. Engagement in personal prayer, participation in prayer groups, fasting and commitment to faith, has increased. Many experience God's deliverance, protection and presence and persevere and despite personal loss, damage of trauma!

But Christian communities that stay behind are small (e.g. Tudun Wada, Kano State), traumatized (e.g. Southern Yobe) and inclined to resort to vigilante groups for self defense (e.g. Tafwa Balewa, Bauchi State), Christian communities that receive relocating Christians (e.g. Jos, Plateau State; Yola, Adamawa State, Biu, Borno State) are overwhelmed by the humanitarian crisis and lack human, financial and other resources to cope with the urgent needs. Property and land of fleeing Christians is bought, confiscated or simply occupied by local or migrant Muslims (e.g. Southern Taraba State). Returning Christians find great difficulty in starting all over again (e.g. Northern Adamawa). Responses of Church leadership so far lack coherent vision, strategy and planning to cope with this.

What will be the effect for the future? The church in Northern Nigeria had its 'golden age' from the time of the first missionaries until 1987 Kanfachan crisis in which it expanded over the Middle Belt and had great inroads into the Far North. But the impact since then of Muslim dominance in terms of religion and politics, Islamist insurgencies and Muslim herdsmen attacks has led to a decline of the Church in the Far North and an overburdening of the Church in the Middle belt through relocating Christians. At the same time in certain areas the Church seems on the verge of death (e.g. southern Yobe and Tudun Wada city, Kano state). The Church needs to develop an appropriate vision, strategy and actions to deal with this! (The impact of Persistent Violence on the Church in Northern Nigeria, 2015)

I believe that many of you; of given the chance to speak about the state of Christianity in Northern states of Niegria would have so much to say on what is happening to Christians. In my research and studies, I found out that the turning point in Christian – Muslim relations in Northern Nigeria took place in late 1979/1980. This is also the dates of Iranian Islamic Revolution of Ayetoulla Khomeni (1979) and Maitatsine Islamic Uprising (1980) in Kano. "The Islam of Northern of yester-years was suddenly changed for the worse for the peoples of Northern Nigeria and worst Christianity and Christians. Christian-Muslim relations that were cordial and peaceful suddenly changed into militancy and violence. There were two historic events worth mentioning that pre-date the dive of relations between Christians and Muslims in the North. In the late 1970s, the Muslims students Societies (MSS) Ahmadu Bello University of Zaria fired by the teachings of Maulana Maududi of India-Pakistan and Qutb of Egypt (Muslim Brotherhood) on the other hand, the Christian Students of Ahamdu Bello University responded with another kind of slogan and graffiti, "I Found it". This also set that stage for the radicalization of both religions and youths. The competitive nature of religious control of politics and state was introduced in earnest in later years.

Since the 1980s to date the North has experienced incessant ethno-religious crises and conflicts which have culminated to the dreaded terrorist group, Boko Haram and the marauding hit-squad of Fulani Herdsmen. From face-value, there is a historical correlation between the area of operating of Boko Haram and the Sultanate of historical territory of the sultanate of Kanem-Bornu. While that of the Fulani is also a historical correlation between the nature, style and area of operation of the Fulani Herdsmen and Sokoto Caliphate. If these two phenomena are coincidental, as some would want us to believe, but their

historical correlation cannot be disputed as Boko Haram is definitely a grand-child of the Sultanate of Kanem-Bornu, just as the Fulani Herdsmen are of Sokoto Caliphate.

These historical incidences are being re-played in our very eyes today. But the sad thing about it is that religious and political leaders of Northern Nigeria have not mustered themselves to address this destructive issue. The solution to this nagging problem is not what a failed Government could have done, but the failure of Northern Leaders. We need something to wake them up to their responsibilities. All of us that are here today, we are in one way or the other responsible by not taking any civic action. The North is drifting apart toward a catastrophic ruin and here we are, we sit down and look.
The second part of this paper takes us back into certain themes in history so as to establish the fact of the necessary presence of Christianity in Northern Nigeria. Both our Muslims and Christians of Northern origins need to know this as it is essential to Christian-Muslim relations. Looking beyond the hypocrisy and bigotry of religion and ethnicity, the truth is: it is a northerner who is killing a northerner. It is also a northerner who discriminates and marginalizes a northerner. If the dogmas and the tenets of the two foreign religions on African soil, namely, Islam and Christianity, cannot respect basic human values, our Africannes ought to indict them for total disrespect for human values. Our creational human values should call to order the excesses of human vices and evil that we see under the guise of religious and ethnic hypocrisy and bigotry. Our historical roots are more valuable and deeper than our misguided self-destruction in the name of religion or ethnicity.

III. Common primal Ancestry of all Humanity

All human beings races; ethnic religious and language groups have a common primal ancestry. This very social fact is the most important basic human core value. Indeed it is the foundation of human relations, peace and unity. The lack of recognizing, the respecting and embracing this basic human core value by all ethnic and religious groups robs the world and humanity of its basic foundations of peace and dignity. For a human beings to feel superior to another is based upon false or counterfeit knowledge which may lead to self-centredness and pride. The fact of human common ancestry relatives all human claims of uniqueness and superiority. The lack of this creational understanding that all human beings have a common primal ancestry often leads to discrimination, prejudice, bias, stereotype and preferential and differential treatment of people.

This moral and ethical understanding of the common primal ancestry of humanity is what we call *The Primal Human Ethic*. And it forms the foundations of morality and ethics.

IV. Creational Responsibility

All human beings are creatures of God, and for this reason, we have creational responsibilities to both God our Creator and all creation and humanity. Our primary responsibility is rooted in the act and the fact of God's creation, and not in culture, religion, philosophy or science. The human being as a created being primarily preceded human creation of culture, religion, philosophy, science or ethnicity. We worship God because He

is our Creator. We respect and revere creation and other creatures because we are co-creatures of God.

Religion, culture, philosophy or science is subordinate to God and creation. These social facts are man-made, no matter what they claim. They also stand the chance of being corrupted by human beings. Human beings rely so much upon their culture, religion, philosophy or science which may command them to act contrary to both God's and creational ethics. We all know that historically, culture, religion, philosophy and science are human products fashioned out of human corruption and the fall. We need to define the sources of religion, culture, philosophy and science which give us the basis of making these assertions. A religion, culture, philosophy or science may command us to kill or destroy a human being contrary to God's creation, or even the command of God. Such an action comes from the corruption of culture, religion, philosophy, or science. We must be weary of those who use ethnicity or religion to unleash their vices and evil upon innocent human beings. Here at home we have a irony: our Muslim Brothers disowning Boko Haram as un-Islamic, while Boko Haram had kept on issuing threats of Islamic Jihad, especially on Christians. If our Muslims Brothers are correct in Islamic interpretation, then the Islam of Boko Haram is CORRUPTED. This is a typical case of the corruption of religion. If it is also true that Fulani Herdsmen are not using or being motivated by Islamic religion, then, here is a typical case of the corruption of ethnicity, where the value of cow is a million times better than a human being

From the forgoing, we can state categorically that the problem of Christians in the Northern States of Nigeria is rooted in corrupted religion and ethnicity. These are the burning issues which every Christians and Northerner must address. Can the congress of Northern Christians that is being launched today takes onus of addressing.

V. Northern Nigeria: Historical and Social Background

It is important to state briefly the Northern historical background within which Europeans carried out their colonial and missionary activities between 1st January 1900 and 1st October, 1960.

Northern Nigeria can be divided into two large regions consisting of two broad ethnic and religious groups: The Northern part, known as Hausa land and Borno, which was composed predominantly of Muslim groups; and the Southern part, known as the Middle Belt, which was predominantly traditional and made up largely of the non Muslim groups. The major ethnic groups in the Northern part were the Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri of the of Kanem-Bornu Empire, while the Southern part consisted of well over 250 ethnic groups concentrated in Plateau, Bauchi, Southern Kaduna, Adamawa, Sardauna (Former Northern Cameroons) Niger and Benue areas. The relationship between the Muslim groups, in the Hausaland and Bornu, on the one hand, and the traditional groups in the Middle Belt, on the other, was characterized by slave-trading and wars of territorial expansion and the Islamic Jihad before the British occupation and the coming of Christian Missions to the Northern Nigeria in the early 1900s.

Arab and Islamic influence was very strong in this region especially in slave trade and the Trans-Saharan Trade. The irony of the era was that while the Europeans were plundering the West Coast and the East Coast of Nigeria with slave trade, the Arabs were doing the same in the Hinterland (Sudan). The Middle Belt region was plundered for both European and Arab slave traders. Europeans who brought Christianity and Arabs who brought Islam, both engaged in the obnoxious slave trade.

1. The Middle Belt

The bulk of the work of Christian Missions in Northern Nigeria was in this area until the early 1930s, when the Colonial Administration lifted the ban barring the Christian Mission from entering the Muslim Emirates of the Hausaland and Borno, with the exception of the Zaria and Bida areas, where the Church Missionary Society (CMS) was stationed before the consolidation of colonial rule over Northern Nigeria.

The first Christian Mission in the areas was the CMS, the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), Sudan United Mission (SUM), United Missionry Society (UMS), Dutch Reformed Mission (DRC), Church of the Brethren Mission (CBM), the Lutheran Mission, Danish and a few others. The Catholics came back to the area much later. Most of the Christian Missions in Northern Nigeria were Evangelical Faith Missions. The region experienced a rapid growth of Christianity.

2. The Far North

The Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri on the Far North have been in contact with the outside world for many centuries. For centuries, Hausaland and Brono were under the profound influence of Islamic and Arab civilizations. At the end of the 18th century, the Fulani or Fulbe moved into Hausaland in large numbers and later became the religious political rulers of the area after the Jihad of Usman dan Fodio in 1804 and later these of El Kanemi in Kanem-Bornu, which successfully overthrew the Hausa Kings.

There were some major socio-political difference between the Muslim and the Traditional groups in the North, which and important implications for both mission and colonial policies. It was also upon these two broad-based distinct societies of Northern Nigeria that the Colonial Administration imposed a colonial super-structure on 1st January, 1900. The same colonial administration was imposed over the two Protectorates of Nigeria, namely Southern and Northern Protectorates and later on 1st October, 1914 the Amalgamation of the two Protectorates as Nigeria.

VI. The Burden of Christian Missions in Nigeria

We need to state the motivating social factors that brought Christian missionaries and colonialists to Nigeria. The two major historical motivating factors were: (1) The quest to stop slave trade and slavery; and (2) The quest to stop the advance of Islam in Africa. The quest to abolish slavery was the chief impetus behind British involvement in Africa South of the Sahara, and eventually the establishment of colonies. In 1841, the British Government sent out three ships, the Albert, the Wilberforce and the Soudan, to explore the Niger River with a view of establishing trading relations with the states of the Niger territories (Northern

Nigeria) so that legitimate trade would supplant slave trade. The mission was headed by Bishop Ajayi Crowther, a freed slave trade aroused the interest of both colonialist and missionaries in the Niger territories.

In 1886 granted the Royal Niger Company a charter to trade on the Niger River and to make treaties with the states if the Niger territories. In December 1898 the charter was withdrawn and Britain brought the territories under direct colonial rule. On 1st January, 1900, at Lokoja, the flag of the Royal Niger Company was taken down and the Union Jack was hoisted in its place under the authority of Lieutenant Colonel Frederick D. Lugard, the British High Commissioner. Thus, we can see that the powerful motivating social factors that brought colonialist and missionaries to Nigeria were the twin sentiments: Anti slavery and anti-Islam.

Christian Missions began their work in Southern Nigeria around the early 1940s, while in Northern Nigeria in the early 1900s. Christian Missions were very powerful instruments and agents of transformation and development of African Societies and peoples. This was achieved through certain important mission activities which impacted profoundly African peoples and societies.

VII. Islam and Christianity in Northern Nigeria

Islam arrived first in Bornoland in the 10th Century and Hausaland in the 13th century. The surge of Islam in both areas came under the Jihads of Usman dan Fodio and El Kanemi in the 19th century. Christians missions arrived at the eve of 19th century.

Both Islam and Christianity are foreign religions in Northern Nigeria. Arabs and Europeans or their disciples brought their religions to the peoples of Northern Nigeria. African traditionalists could have rejected these two religions, but somehow they embraced them by whatever means. No religion of these two could claim indignity or originality. The foolishness of Africans who embraced these two religions is evident in their attitudes towards each in their corrupted intolerance, discrimination, marginalization, violence and killings. One cannot deny the other the right to existed as its foreignness is writ large. Muslims or Christians who are deeply ignorant of the foreignness of their religions in Africa are the ones that create crises, conflicts, violence or killings in the name of these foreign religions.

Instead of engaging in warfare, we need to educate one another of our common human ancestry and creation and the foolishness of humanity in allowing greed and lust to blind them into killing each other. Where human values are superior to that of God, is a reflection of human corruption of religious ideals. Human beings are capable of invention of religion without. They are capable of inventing laws that go contrary to the true nature and attributes of God and impose such on ignorant human beings.

VIII. Conflicts Between Colonialists and Missionaries

There was a serious early conflict between the Hausa Mission and Lugard which led the Colonial Office in London to take the following measures as proposed by Lugard:

1. *That the prohibition of religious propaganda in Northern Nigeria would for the present be beneficial;*
2. *That he would assist the Hausa Mission (CMS) if it would transfer its personnel to some non-Muslim district in the south of the Protectorate; and*
3. *That the position of the Colonial Administration would be of religious non-interference. (Sonia: 41)*

In his own words, Lugard stated:

I am myself of opinion that it is unwise and unjust to force missions upon Mohammedan population, for it must be remembered that without the moral support of Government those missions would not be tolerated. In effect, therefore, the mission obtains the footing on the support of British bayonets, and if they are established by order of Government the people have some cause to disbelieve the emphatic pledges I have given that their religion shall in no way be interfered with. I have, however, held out every encouragement to establish missions in pagan centres, which appear to me to need the influence of civilization and religion at least as much as the Mohammedans ***(Annual Reports of Northern Nigeria (ARNN): 135).***

In conclusion, the political and the religious stand of the colonial administration during its early occupation of Northern Nigeria were as follows:

1. *It promised political support, protection and the preservation of the native institutions of the Muslim Emirates;*
2. *It promised religious non-interferences to the Muslim rulers of the Emirates;*
3. *It developed a policy of excluding Christians missions from the Emirates, but allowed them to operate in the Non-Muslim areas.*

Based upon this colonial policy, Christian missions were barred from entering Muslim Emirates until the early 1930s. The embargo was lifted due to missionary pressure and the menace of epidemics of diseases in the North generally, such as, scabies, yaws, leprosy, blindness, petrifying sores and ulcers, guinea worm, bilharzias, etc.

The Middle Belt of Nigeria was abandoned to Christian missions by British religious and social policies. The bulk of educational, medical, literature and social development activities in the Middle Belt, would have been abandoned to ravaging, domineering and enslaving socio-political and religious forces of the say, mainly of Muslim Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri rulers under British colonialism.

Christian missions did by far more to develop the area than the colonial masters. Some peoples of the Middle Belt were enslaved, plundered, subjugated, dehumanized and denied their basic human rights under both Caliphate and British colonial rule. Christian missions came as their liberators.

The conflicts between the colonialists and missionaries were quite revealing in the annual reports of the British residents in the provinces. They registered their displeasure with the activities of Christians missions. They saw Christianity as subversive and dangerous to

British-Muslim rule in the Middle Belt. The attitudes of the British and Muslims rulers towards Christians and Christianity were institutionalized into government policy, administrative practice and attitudes, which in most cases, worked against the interests of Christians in the North.

Some major colonial polices towards Christian Missions can be listed as:

1. *Christians Missions were banned from the Muslim emirates until the early 1930*
2. *Colonial regulatory policy on missionary activities in the North;*
3. *Colonial views on education, social change and Christianity.*

Between the 1910s and the late 1950s, the British Colonial Administration promulgated several regulatory policies to control the activities of Christian missions ostensibly in defense of the principle of religious non-interference. These policies found their full expression in 1955 in the Missionary permit, which compelled individual missionaries to apply to the Government of Northern for a license to operate as missionaries. It is important to note the conditions under which missionaries could operate:

1. *In towns or villages or quarters of towns or villages which are Mohammedan or predominantly Mohammedan, not to preach at all in the vicinity of mosques , or in the markets, or other places to which the public particularly resort, and not to preach in or near other public place except in so far as the Native Authority may through the Resident give his consent thereto.*
2. *Not to carry out house-to-house visiting among Mohammedan residents for purpose of missionary propaganda except in compounds at which a previous indication has been given that such house –to-house visiting would be welcomed generally by the people of the compound.*
3. *Not to distribute or attempt to distribute Christian literature to Mohammedans unless there has been a spontaneous request from an adult individual.*
4. *To conduct yourself and to encourage all members and followers of your mission to behave in such a way as will not offend the religious beliefs and observance of any section of the community, whether Moslem or non-Moslem.*
5. *To refrain from and discourage any action which might be detrimental to the approved system of administration or lead to inter-tribal discord.*

These and many more conditions inhibited any real understanding between the missionaries and the colonial administration, because both had much at stake. After Lugard's departure in 1906, his successors intensified the controversy. These post Lugardians, such as Giruard, Temple and Palmer, had been powerful residents of the Muslim emirates. Their conception of indirect rule led them to believe very strongly that indigenous administration, particularly in the Muslim areas, should be protected from the subversive influence of Western civilization. They viewed the Christian missionary as disruptive, and this perception intensified their fears and suspicions. In their attempts to control Christian missionaries, the Colonial Administration sent out memoranda and government circulars to all the residents and district officers in Northern Nigeria on how to check their activities. Colonial regulations were imposed on itinerancy, evangelism,

visitation, preaching, church planting, mission stations, religious instruction and schools, and relations with Africans.

The negative impact of these regulations on the status of African Christian converts and of Christianity itself endured into post-colonial Nigeria. When Christian missions faced the problems imposed by the regulatory polices, they often reacted by making charges against the Colonial Administration. These charges reveal the status of African Christian converts and Christianity relative to that of the Muslims and Islam. Some of these charges were:

1. *That the Colonial Administration prohibited missionary work in the Muslim areas contrary to the British common law of religious freedom and toleration;*
2. *That the Administration aided the advancement of Islam into the non-Muslim area and that Muslim missionaries and traders were allowed propagate their Muslim faith anywhere;*
3. *That British colonisation of Northern Nigeria gave impetus to the rapid spread of Islam beyond the confines of the Muslim areas;*
4. *That the quarter-mile rule and the Township Ordinance were means of keeping missionaries out of urban centres and that his hindered relationship between the missionaries and their converts;*
5. *That the Colonial Administration had prevented Christian Missions from preaching publicly and that it was often very difficult to obtain permission to plant churches and build new mission stations and schools.*
6. *That the Administration favoured Muslims over African Christian converts and that sometimes Christian converts were persecuted by the colonial officers.*
7. *That the Administration was anti-Christian, but pro-Muslim;*
8. *That Lugard was friendly with the missionaries and that he never opposed missionary work, but rather encouraged it;*
9. *That post-Lugardians did not understand Lugard's policies; instead they promulgated anti-Christian policies;*
10. *That Muslim Emirs were friendly to the Christian Missions and would have allowed missionaries in their territories, but for the opposition of British colonial officers (Turaki, 199a: 215-216)*

Colonial views, policies administrative practices and attitudes towards Christian missions became a precedent for Northern Government and the subsequent ones on how to treat Christian

Missions, Christians converts and Christianity. Christianity and Islam were treated differentially.

IX. How Christian Missions and Christianity Transformed Northern Nigeria

Christian Missions pioneered education, medical work and services, literature work and literacy and human development in Northern Nigeria. Christians Missions and Christianity could not be failed in laying down an enviable foundation for modern development of Northern Nigeria. Not only human beings were developed and transformed, but also the northern society. The North cannot of today bite the finger fed it into modern stream of

civilization, of which we should all be very grateful. What Christian Missions did and how they did it, is what brought civilization to all northern peoples. All that was done in obedience to the mission and mandate which the Lord gave His Church. There is a need of giving a brief outline of some of the outcomes of some major mission activities that has a profound impact upon the Northern social environment and Nigeria at large (Turaki in Taylor 2000: 273-275)

1. Stationing and Planting of Mission Stations

The Colonial Administration neglected some peoples and areas of the North and abandoned them to Christians Missions, on account of their ethnicity and religion. This very primordial social factor is still at play in the Northern States of Nigeria.

The Colonial Administration and Christian Missions regulated the stationing and planting of mission stations, out-stations, churches and institutions. No two missions were allowed to operate side by side or be present in a given ethnic, or geographical area. Thus, Christian Missions operated along regional, tribal/ethnic lines. The Churches that emerged took after the historical pattern of ethnic, regional or denominational lines. Christian Missions that were non-denominational or international in outlook, in the end, set up churches or denominations that can be called "tribal" churches or denominations. Social factors, such as, tribalism/ethnicity, denominationalism and regionalism emerged reflecting diverse church forms, structures, organizations, polity, mode of worship, conduct and practice. These new emerging, but diversified social formations make any moves towards Church unity, cooperation, working together, or fellowship very difficult. The theory and practice of Christian Missions did influence and shape the emergent church structures, administration, policies, polities, practices and all forms of Christian expressions. The current politics of creating dioceses, districts and their headquarters, church offices and officers and titles of the clergy drew extensively from this missionary legacy (Turaki in Taylor 2000:273). These new social formations were passed on from the missionaries to African Christians.

From the foregoing and also by observation, the Christianity today, which inherited this missionary legacy spends much time, energy and resources on some serious issues such as, schisms, crises, conflicts and tensions caused by some emerging social and spiritual formations and issues. If churches, denominations and Christian ministries are to cooperate with each other and work together, they may have to address effectively some of the negative outcomes of some missionary legacies. It is this historical factor of lack of unity that causes the weakness of Christianity and Christians in the face of Muslims affront and challenge. The Church in Northern Nigeria needs to overcome the inherited barriers of "tribal" churches and denominations. Diversity of churches in terms of denominations, structures and institutions, polity and organization, is no hindrance to unity and working together, except for the fact that this diversity has been corrupted by human vices. These divisive human voices are what the Church in the North needs to seriously addressed. These negative social and spiritual values are the dross that dissolves in the melting pot of Christianity as rooted in the cross of Christ which dissolves barriers and walls of divisions (Eph. 2: 11-16)

The current general activities of Christians, churches, denominations and Christian ministries have created a sub-standard or local diversity that is not universal, nor transcends church or denominations boundaries, but reflect deeply the particularly or the locality of churches or denominations. Such diversities are heavily corrupted by the primordial social factors that are prevalent in our society. The task for Christians in Northern Nigeria is to identify what social factors corrupt the diversity of the Church and hinders it unity.

2. Educational Activities

Christian Missions pioneered and introduced European to Africans. Mission education programmers included literacy, classes of religious instruction, Sunday school and catechism, elementary and primary education, secondary education, evangelism and church planting, theological training, pastoral training and teacher training. Education was the most powerful tool for transforming African societies and also the most effective tool for evangelism. More Africans became Christians through the mean s of education than through any other means. Much later in Nigeria, Government took-over missions schools and institutions under the pretext that they were Christian propaganda tools in 1972. This fact was a very serious set-back to mission education, evangelization and maintenance of educational standards. Today as we look back at the take-over of mission schools by the Christianity in the North. Christianity in Northern Nigeria is currently paying dearly for its lack of spiritual discernment and wisdom. Christianity is a religion of the book and there is a very strong correlation between Christianity and education. If the Church cannot control the education of its children, in future they are doomed to ignorance and backwardness. The head start of education in Christian areas has given way to backwardness and a return to *jahiliya* period.

At the inception of mission education a dichotomous dimension of education as both "secular" and "sacred" became a problem between some conservative missionaries and some African progressive. Approaches to education became divergent, divisive and conflictual between the missionaries and Africans, especially those who needed more and advanced education. The contemporary challenge of education is more acute today than during the missions' era. Given the state of prevalent and pervasive moral and spiritual decadence and social indiscipline, the call to Christian united efforts at tackling the challenges of education cannot be overemphasized. The most effective and impact forms of education is when human beings are trained and developed to reach their full potentials in skills acquisition. A human being needs to acquire moral and spiritual skills, physical labour skills, intellectual, scientific, technological and reasoning skills that can be used to transform both human beings and societies. These are the social and spiritual causes that require Christian unity and working together in order to salvage the death of education in Northern Nigeria. Christian unity and combined efforts at tackling the challenges of education is hardly pursued as each church or denomination seeks to do that alone or does not care.

The contemporary efforts of churches and denominations at establishing schools lack one very important thing, the Christian Education Philosophy. Instead of providing a cheaper functional alternative education, most churches adopted wholesale the outmoded and capital intensive and enlist system of education. The church in the North missing a God-given opportunity of charting a new course of efficient and effective system of education. Can the present Northern Church re-pioneer education as the pioneering missions did?

3. Medical Services

Medical services formed the second most important auxiliary tool of evangelization. Missionaries built health clinics, dispensaries, maternity homes, and hospitals. They also built eye-clinics and hospitals and as well as leper colonies. Christian missions contributed immensely towards the development of health and social well-being of Northerners. Just as in the case of education, Government took-over of some medical work of Christian Missions, which brought a serious set-back to Church health ministry. Both educational and medical services have drastically fallen and are in a very bad state. The challenges encountered in these two areas cannot be addressed by a single effort of a church or a denomination, but by a united front and effort of all churches and denominations. There seems to be no united Christian efforts at tackling the medical and health issues that are prevalent in Northern Nigeria. Christian missionaries were not well educated, command wealth and power as Christians have in the North today, yet they invested in education and medical work. The primacy of Christianity in these two areas has been lost to mediocrity and lack of a vision for a human being and society.

4. Literature Ministry

Literature and translation ministry was undertaken by Christian Missions which helped reduce African languages into writing. Bible translation, printing, and production of Christian literature helped in developing and raising the literacy levels of Africans. The Hausa language and many others were developed by Christian Missions. Yet , in this wise, Christian Missions approached mass and social media with great ambivalence as their main pre-occupation was with what is “sacred” and not “secular”. This fact left out a big chunk of social, cultural, political, and economic issues that needed the inputs of missions and the Church. How should the Church address these socio-political and economic issues that pose a great challenge to a unified approach by churches, denominations and organizations? The Church has to develop a Christian worldview of culture, religion, politics, economics, ethnicity/race/tribalism, etc.; otherwise, the church would have no prophetic vision and voice in Northern society. Social and spiritual ills, such as, the downward trends of moral and decay abound everywhere in the North, especially in the areas dominated by Christians. The do-it alone and variegated and ineffective approaches by churches, denominations and organizations to the many challenges of social issues make creating a unified and a common ground approach very difficult. The gospel of Jesus Christ redeems not only humanity but liberation (Eph. 1:10; Rom. 8:16-25). The church has the role of redeeming and reforming humanity and creation by word and deed as the mandate of the gospel. But all these require a united front from all churches, denominations and Christian ministries.

5. General Social Formations and Transformations

We can state boldly that Christian Missions have done more to bring about social, political, economic, religious and human development and change than any other human agent in Northern Nigeria. Christian Missions were pioneers and great social reforms. What is currently lacking in the Northern church is this spirit of pioneering and reforming both humanity and creation. If the Northern Church is to be relevant in the 21st century, the Northern Church must have to address the current issues that require the use of the pioneering and reforming spirit of the mission legacy and mission activities.

Diversity of church activities as alluded to above and during the mission era by churches, denominations and organizations is no hindrance to Christian unity and working together. It becomes a problem when this diversity of churches and their activities have been corrupted by tribalism, ethnicity, culture and idolatry. What motivates Christian activities and unites all Christian efforts is the mandate of the church in both word and deed. When diverse Christian activities become competitive, and divisive, they have in reality lost the values of love, co-operation and working together. The obstacles to co-operation and working together are the subtle corruption of the posture of being different or unique. We tend to over emphasize our differences and uniqueness as reflected by ethnicity, tribe, culture, and idolatry, rather than emphasizing our commonality, oneness and unity in Christ, His Body, the church. These negative social and spiritual values are the dross that can be dissolved in the Christian melting pot, the Church. In Christ, all barriers and walls of divisions are annulled and abolished. In conclusion, we can state that churches, denominations, and Christian ministries have continued the missionary legacy of mission activities, but not in a united effort. Northern churches, denominations and Christian ministries are far from forging a united front that can effectively address social, political, economic, and spiritual issues raised by the Northern social environment.

X. The Religious and Ethnic Divide in Northern Nigeria

Northern Nigeria is more divide along religious and ethnic lines today than ever. The era if Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Premier of the Northern Region of Nigeria and Sardauna of Sokoto, had passed with his vision of Northern Nigeria, his brand of Islam and his, style of Christian-Muslim relations. Soon after his death on the 15th of January, 1966, the northern political class and soldiers that took over from him, began a gradual and systemic development of policies of dividing northerners along religious and ethnic lines. Sardauna had sent both Muslims and Christians to institutions of Higher Learning both within and outside of Nigeria with the goal of building a united and indivisible North. His policies of religious tolerance and ethnic harmony were gradually set aside by the very fellows who were course mates and classmates of their Children brothers and turned to religious, cultural, and ethnic discrimination and marginalization of their Christian colleagues.

The soldiers under General Yakubu Gowon and many other Northern Army officers developed a policy of national integration and nation-building based upon national human values of all Nigerians. States and Local Government were created with the human value that they can all live together harmoniously. Unfortunately, in the North, the implementers of these national and integrative policies failed to do so, but turned to religion and ethnicity

as the foundations and determining factors of political and economic development in the North. Their political and religious agenda were very clear to them and they pursued them with diligence and craft. General Gowon, General T.Y. Danjuma and many other Northern Senior and older Military Officers can only observe with regret how their national ideals of building and ethnic bigots. If I am given the right to ask them, I would put it this way, "How can they as Fathers of the North bring back the good old days when Christians and Muslims lived as under one father and mother?" Are there obstacles hindering a harmonious and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims in the North?

In spite of this historical misnomer, we can still appeal to the human goodwill and decency in calling for a re-think and about the state of Christianity in the Northern States. Christians ought to do better by re-instating the status of Christianity and bettering the position of Christians in the Northern States. Christians who share an elitist status with their Muslim counterparts have by and large been timid and quiet by not raising issues with their political and military colleagues. Silence means that all is well with Christians of Northern origin. This has been the bane of Christian elites of Northern Nigeria. In order to reverse the fortunes of Christians, Christian elites in the North must stand-up and seek redress at all cost. They cannot continue to be complacent and unconcern about what holds their brothers and sisters in chains.

During the Saudauna era, Christian elites were in the lead in almost al spheres of endeavours in the North. Similarly, during the early Military Regimes, they controlled the military machinery, but somewhat could use this advantage to better the well-being and emancipation of their brothers and sisters, in contrast to what their Muslim counterparts did. As I said earlier, they were driven by Christian and democratic values of equality of all peoples regardless of religion or ethnicity. They were only short-changed by their ill motivated colleagues. The Muslim military class restricted Nigeria to the advantage of their kith and kin as it is of today. The reversals of Christian presence in Government in states like Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Nassarawa, Niger, Kogi, Kwara, Kebbi, katsina and Kaduna, are clear signs of the diminishing influence and status of Christianity in the Northern states. The menace and harassment of Boko Haram and Fulani Herdsmen in the Northern States are signs for the foreclosure of Christianity in the Northern States. Christians have always trusted the Government of the Northern States to protect them, but the outcomes have always been total neglect. If the State Governments cannot protect Christians within their States, as the case is, Christian political elites must find a solution.

In closing, I call upon all Christian and political leaders to hold as olemn assembly on the state of Christianity in the Northern States of Nigeria and proffer solutions to their predicament in the Northern States of Nigeria. The cause of our people and religion must not be sacrificed at the altar political silence and simpleton.

XI. Conclusion, suggestions and R commendations

I would like to conclude with the following suggestions and recommendations for Christians in the Northern States of Nigeria:

1. **Consult widely**
2. **Identify the challenges, problems and needs of Christians in the Northern States.**
3. **Do a thorough research on discrimination, marginalization, persecution and document them accurately for discussions with the State Governments; traditional rulers and politicians and religious leaders.**
4. **Monitor human and religious rights anywhere in the North.**
5. **Seek to create various meetings with religious leaders to discuss problems posed by the religious and cultural practices that violate citizenship rights.**

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