



Nigeria: Southern Kaduna and
the atrocities of Hausa-Fulani
Muslim herdsmen
(May 2016 – September 2017)
VOLUME 1

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and Gloria C.



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*Nigeria: Southern Kaduna and the atrocities of
Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen
(May 2016 – September 2017)
Volume 1*



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Abstract

There is a complex history of violent conflict and other related activities carried out by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen in Southern Kaduna that has spanned decades. However, over the years, the Nigerian government both military and civilian, neglected and/or failed to bring a solution to the conflict. Various commissions of inquiry, panels of investigation as well as committees of conflict resolution have been set up over the years to make policy recommendations for ending the conflict. The need for addressing the impact on victims and ordinary people in Southern Kaduna has become particularly significant following the upsurge in violence in the last quarter of 2016. The narrative of the conflict has been generally couched in sectarian, political and opportunistic terms. However, efforts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the conflict that places the misery of the mostly Christian victims within a wider historical and political context have been limited. Importantly, the documentation of victims' personal accounts and their perspectives on ways of ending the conflict have been overlooked. Conspicuously absent too is the gender perspective to the conflict, which has led to the misery and trauma suffered by Christian women, children and the most vulnerable being mostly neglected. This report provides an historical analysis of the atrocities committed by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen against indigenous Christian farmers in Southern Kaduna in the period May 2016 to October 2017. It particularly examines the actions of the Kaduna State government and how it clearly favors the concerns of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen.

Introductory notes

Since the early 1970s, Kaduna State has experienced various forms of conflict. However, Southern Kaduna has become the threshold for violent and massive killings perpetrated especially in the years 1987, 1992, 2000 and 2011. In 1987, violence erupted in the College of Education Kafanchan where Christians were attacked by Muslims over an alleged misrepresentation and interpretation of the Quran. The violence soon extended to Zaria, Kaduna, Katsina, Ikara and other places. Hundreds of Christians were killed, churches were burnt and property worth millions destroyed. In 1992, Zangon Kataf was twice engulfed in violent clashes where indigenous Christians of Atyap community were attacked by Muslims residents over the relocation and opening of the market on the outskirts of the town in May of 1992. The market was initially located in an area dominated by the Muslim community. It was sandwiched

between private houses and not conducive for local trading. The government relocated the market to an open space favorable to everyone, but the Muslim community saw this as an affront both to their faith and businesses. They therefore attacked Christian communities in retaliation. This was followed by the Sharia crisis in 2000 and the post-presidential election violence in April 2011. The conflict spread to many cities and towns within the state including Kafanchan. The most recent violent conflict in Southern Kaduna occurred in May 2016 where Christians (mostly farmers) were attacked by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen.

In addition to attacks started mostly by the Muslim communities against Christians, the government also failed to address the situation justly and provide security for Christian majority communities. The continuous conflict and government's failure to provide justice led to cries of marginalization and social exclusion (on the part of victims). Additionally, Kaduna State has become divided along religious, ethnic and socio-cultural lines with different beliefs and traditions. On the one hand there is the northern and Islamic Hausa/Fulani ethnicity, and on the other there are the southern indigenous communities that are predominantly Christian. The northern part of Kaduna State became dominated by Hausa-Fulani Muslims and the indigenous Christian communities migrated to Southern Kaduna. Settlements based around religious affiliation and ethnic groups became replicated in major towns such as Zonkwa, Kafanchan and Kachia. Religion and ethnicity have become factors that generate identity conflict. Mutual distrust between communities and religious groups has grown so much that people place sectarian division over and above the common interest. Again, the voices of Christian victims who live with the conflict daily are stifled and unrepresented. The trauma suffered by Christian women, children, the physically challenged and the most vulnerable has mostly gone unnoticed. The combination of these factors has derailed local and official efforts to end the conflict both in the short and the long term. As with most violent conflicts in Nigeria, military deployment in a predominantly Christian territory has become the first option rather than the last resort. This is done without committed or genuine civil engagement. There are also poor levels of accountability and increased impunity by security forces deployed to keep peace in Southern Kaduna. Indigenous Christian communities accuse security forces of complicity in the conflict.

Meanwhile, the resurgence of violent conflict in Southern Kaduna towards the end of 2016 has drawn attention to the urgent need to understand the root causes and to give voice in particular to the affected Christian communities. Previously there has been a gap in research and documentation concerning the conflict between the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen and indigenous Christian farmers. Giving a voice to Christian victims and outlining the ideological factors behind this conflict is a key aim of this report. Therefore, the authors of this report acknowledge with profound gratitude the editorial support received from Open Doors International regarding this study and the work of experts who have written extensively on previous conflicts in Southern Kaduna. Specific mention of gratitude goes to all who participated in this study, especially those who offered their views on the atrocities of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen despite all threats and intimidating consequences for speaking clearly about the hostilities against Christians. It is this grass-roots perspective which, it is hoped, will make this study stand out in comparison to others. The authors would also like to thank both the research assistants for their diligence in collecting data for this study and the motorcyclist hired for conveying team members to places many considered too insecure to visit.

Throughout this study, the data collected clearly points to Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen and the negligence of the state government as being responsible for the hostilities against Christian communities in Southern Kaduna. In some areas there have been instances of reprisal attacks by indigenous Christian communities against the herdsmen. For the meantime, it is important to clarify that the phrase *Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen* is used in this study to designate those responsible for most of the attacks against Christian communities in Southern Kaduna in the period September 2016 - October 2017. However, the study is fully aware that in most reports across northern Nigeria, the term *Fulani herdsmen* is commonly used. However, the choice of *Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen* has been taken to accommodate the controversy regarding the identity of those allegedly involved in the attacks, in both formal and informal reports. It is also an effort to demonstrate that Muslim herdsmen have been fighting *jihad* and continue to participate in Islamic militancy across Africa. However, it is not intended to target one particular socio-religious or ethnic group. For security reasons, the names of those interviewed have been altered in this report. The interviews were conducted with different categories of people considered as victims, witnesses, policy makers, government officials, security personnel, religious leaders and influential community leaders in Southern Kaduna. Unfortunately, those considered as perpetrators (either suspected, arrested or in custody) mostly declined to be interviewed. In situations where it would have been possible to interview them to hear their own side of the story, security clearance was not given to the authors of this report either by the police or military staff.

Objectives of the study

In the past three years, the World Watch Research team of Open Doors International has commissioned reports to examine the violence caused by the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen against indigenous Christian communities in Nigeria's Middle Belt region, particularly in Taraba, Nasarawa and most recently in Benue State.¹ In these reports, substantial analysis was provided showing both the religious reasons for these conflicts and the effort being made by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen to dominate Christian territories politically, economically and culturally. This current report on Southern Kaduna looks at the specific nature of the violent conflict perpetrated by the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen in the area. It includes an analysis of the gender perspective of the conflict. Beside the killings and the destruction of churches, homes and farmlands belonging to Christians, women and young girls have been sexually abused in Southern Kaduna. This reports looks at the activities of Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen in 5 Local Government Areas (LGAs): Jama'a, Kaura, Kuru, Sanga and Zangon-Kataf. Unfortunately when travelling for research purposes, it was not always possible to gather data from all five LGAs, as is evident in the tables below. This was mainly due to security issues.

¹ Taraba State: <http://theanalytical.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Violent-Conflict-in-Taraba-State-2013-2015.pdf>; Nasarawa State: <http://theanalytical.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Nigeria-Investigating-common-narratives-of-violent-conflict-in-Nasarawa-State-2016.pdf>; Benue State: <http://theanalytical.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Nigeria-Benue-State-2017-WWR.pdf> (password: freedom).

Victims in these LGAs have accused Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen of having direct and indirect links with the Nigerian government. Some point out that the nature of weapons used by the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen suggests some form of international backing. While the veracity of these claims is not proven, Southern Kaduna has always been contested territorially since before and after Nigeria's independence in 1960.

The desire of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen to invade and occupy territories in the area, with the aim of spreading Islam and finding grazing grounds remains palpably strong and is corroborated by field work experience. Interviews conducted have revealed that the ultimate goal of undermining Christianity and the homeland rights of indigenous Christians has remained equally strong. This would seem to be confirmed by the increasing numbers of Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen entering the area, as well as by the sharp increase in the number of attacks against indigenous Christian communities in 5 LGAs (Jema'a, Kaura, Kuru, Sanga and Zangon Kataf).

The objectives of this study can thus be summarized as follows: i) to investigate the nature and extent of Hausa-Fulani Muslim activities against indigenous Christian (farming) communities in the area since May 2016; ii) to draw attention to the suffering and misery of the mostly Christian victims; iii) to examine the action and inaction of government, including the activities of security services and the impact on Christians; and iv) to pay particular attention to the gender aspect of the conflict, analyzing the experiences, trauma and suffering of Christian women, children and the most vulnerable (i.e. the disabled and the aged) in Southern Kaduna.

Methodology and limitations of the study

The Africa Conflict and Security Analysis Network (ACSAN) uses a mixed-methods approach as its research methodology. It is a model that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to collect data, check accuracy, verify and confirm the findings in order that the information collected is mutually corroborated.

The *qualitative aspect* of the approach includes the historical research and review and the collection of data from primary sources through interviews and focus group discussions. This approach seeks to listen to the voices of victims and local people on both sides of the conflict. The historical research provides comprehensive and historical background information to the conflict. This research looks specifically at the colonial, post-colonial and democratic periods to assess the causal factors and how these factors have changed over time.

The *quantitative element* documents the number of people affected by the conflict, using categories such as those killed or injured, including age, gender, status and location. Another important component of this methodology is the gender approach, looking at the impact of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen attacks on Christian women, children, the disabled and the aged in Southern Kaduna. At the time of the research, the conflict was ongoing and the security situation in some parts of Southern Kaduna made it impossible to reach certain areas. Some of those interviewed also nursed suspicions and were wary of giving details about the violence

experienced. It is suspected that not knowing the purpose of the research made respondents reluctant to divulge full information. Despite these limitations the study made useful discoveries and it is hoped that it is a valuable contribution to research.

Structure of paper

This paper is divided into four main chapters with appendices containing sets of data.

- Chapter 1 provides a conceptual clarification of the term “herdsmen terrorism”. It also presents a brief history of Southern Kaduna and explains why the territory came to be given that name. It also outlines the history of violent conflict against Christians in the area and examines the contending perspectives that seek to explain the factors behind this violence in Southern Kaduna.
- Chapter 2 provides comprehensive empirical data on the current conflict in Southern Kaduna, looking specifically at the period 1 May 2016 - 31 September 2017. It categorizes the data in different components such as gender and religion, looking at those killed, injured or whose property have been damaged and destroyed. (Complete sets of data are supplied in Volume 2 of this report.) It identifies the nature of the herdsmen attacks in Southern Kaduna, ranging from night raids, kidnapping, use of sophisticated weapons and outright banditry and criminality.
- Chapter 3 offers a critical evaluation of the contending narratives, justifying the need for deeper investigation that looks specifically at the religious/ideological factors. It also looks at previous Islamic expansion into Southern Kaduna and argues why the current conflict is a continuation of this Islamic war of expansion.
- Chapter 4 examines the government’s action and inaction regarding the conflict in Southern Kaduna, it analyses whether Christians have been further marginalized through government policies. The research concludes that there is a systematic targeting and persecution of Christians in Southern Kaduna which could be classified as “religious cleansing” (ethnic cleansing based on religious affiliation).

Chapter One: Conceptual clarification and historical background

1.1. Understanding the term “herdsmen terrorism”

In order to understand the meaning of “herdsmen terrorism”, it is important to explain what terrorism is in the first place. According to Walter Laqueur, “the precise definition of terrorism does not exist nor will it be found in the foreseeable future.”² This is probably because “one man’s terrorism may be another man’s patriotism.”³ However, the FBI views terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce ... any segment of the population in furtherance of political or social objectives.”⁴ Paul Pillar identifies four key elements of terrorism: It is premeditated, politically-driven and publicity-seeking, and it uses ideological or religious justification.⁵ The findings of this study on Southern Kaduna have revealed that three of Paul Pillar’s elements of terrorism are prevalent in the current conflict. The violence is premeditated, politically-driven and it uses religious ideology for its justification. Jocelyn Hollander observes that terrorists may refer to their violence as a form of resistance.⁶ Meanwhile, others see it as a struggle for liberation and social justice.⁷ The term “herdsmen terrorism” is linked to how herdsmen use terror to fulfil the religious obligation of *jihad* and to protect their way of life. Herdsmen are so often simply perceived as being people constantly in search of greener pasture for feeding their herds; they are seen as people whose life, survival and tradition is embedded in the value attached to the herds, and the capacity they retain to protect their way of life. Yet, historically, it must be taken into consideration that herdsmen in Africa have always played an important role in Islamic jihad.⁸ The role they play show that their use of terror is pre-meditated, justified by religious ideology and sometimes politically motivated, depending on the place, time and socio-political context.

“Herdsmen terrorism” in Africa always needs to be seen in the context of Uthman Dan Fodio’s war of *jihad*: “Allah prescribed the jihad upon us in order to remove us from the harm which arises from leaning towards an impure world and clinging to its things which actually amount to nothing and the only benefit from it is regret.”⁹ Radical Islam in pre-colonial Africa mainly originated in nomadic revivalist movements seeking to propagate Islam. A new brand of Sufism

² Laqueur W., *Terrorism*, London, 1977, p.7.

³ Han H.: *Terrorism and Political Violence - Limits and Possibilities of Legal Control*, New York, 1993, p.7.

⁴ Griset P. and Mahan S.: *Terrorism in Perspective*, New York, 2003, p. xiii.

⁵ Pillar P.: *What is Terrorism? CIA’s Counterterrorist Center*, 2014: <http://mrfarshtey.net/whnotes/Terrorism.pdf>, accessed 2 March 2014.

⁶ Hollander J. et al.: 2004. *Conceptualizing Resistance*, in: *Sociological Forum* (2004) 19(4), p. 533-554.

⁷ Ramsey J.: *Terrorism - The Trinity Perspective*, in: *Terrorism and Political Violence - Limits and Possibilities of Legal Control*, New York, 1993, p. 13.

⁸ Levtzion N. and Pouwels R., *The History of Islam in Africa*, Ohio University Press, 2000, p. 2. Also cf. Boyd J. and Shagari S.: *The life and legacy of Shehu Uthman Dan Fodiyo*, Macmillan Publishers, Oxford, 2003, pp. 1-13; Jubber, Nicholas, *Mali’s Nomads: Bulwark against Jihad*, 2014, <http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/fall2014/mali-nomads-against-jihad>, last accessed 2 April 2016.

⁹ Bugaje U.M.: *A Comparative Study of the Movements of Uthman Dan Fodio in Early Nineteenth Century Hausaland and Muhammad Ahmad Al-mahdi in Late Nineteenth Century Sudan*, 1981, last accessed 31 October 2017.

took the lead, whose militancy sharply contrasted with the peaceful, pious and socially reclusive attitude of classical Sufism.¹⁰ The transformation of the nomadic Sufis into guerrilla fighters, army commanders and even state leaders resulted from the ideology espoused by Ibn Taymiyya that *jihad* was not only a struggle for personal spiritual reformation but also a struggle against the degradation of the Islamic faith and those causing it, either Muslims or foreigners.

The role of nomads in Islamic jihad in Africa can be traced back to the time that Arab Islamic forces defeated the Byzantine army in middle of the 7th century and gained control over coastal North Africa, converting the nomadic Berber tribes to Islam.¹¹ It was these Berber-speaking nomads who helped to spread Islam in the region between Maghreb (North Africa) and Western Sudan (known to Arabs as Bilad al-Sudan or “Land of the Black”).¹² The spread of Islam has since been reinforced both by the migration of other nomads from across the Sahel over the centuries as well as by the rise of contemporary terrorist organizations. Today’s nomads use sophisticated weapons, and in Nigeria, there has been a resurgence of violent conflict and Islamic *jihad* perpetrated by Muslim nomads belonging to the Hausa-Fulani group. Some have settled in the Middle Belt region, particularly Southern Kaduna, and some are migratory from across the Sahel.

1.2. History and meaning of the term “Southern Kaduna”

The use of the term “Southern Kaduna” has been controversial for many years. Some authors say that it first came into regular use to refer to the southern part of Kaduna State (which officially came into being in 1987, when it was detached from Katsina Province).¹³ However, others insist that the term came into official parlance after 1907 and referred to the districts belonging to the Southern Division of Zaria Province set up by the British colonial administration.¹⁴ The decision for this administrative change was caused by the persistent revolt against Muslim-controlled Zaria by the confederation of Christian ethnic nationalities in the area, especially from 1901 onwards when British colonial forces conquered the territory.¹⁵ The intensity of ethnic resilience, couched in the context of Christian freedom from the alien Islamic-inspired forms of control from Zaria triggered a movement encouraging and bordering on separation. Consequently, “Southern Kaduna” emerged as a socio-political identity encapsulating the struggle against the Muslim Hausa-Fulani hegemony, particularly in reference to religion, politics and culture.

From the foregoing, it should be clear that the history of Southern Kaduna is a Pandora box of struggles for domination. It is full of intrigues and conspiracies laying claim to ownership of land and other natural resources, indigeneship and socio-political rights as well as rights of traditional leadership, to mention but a few of the areas of potential conflict between Hausa-Fulani

¹⁰ Karpat K.: *The Politicisation of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp.21, 23, 44.

¹¹ Levtzion N. and Pouwels R., *The History of Islam in Africa*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000, p. 2.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Gudaku B. T., *Historical background to Contemporary Violent Conflicts in Southern Kaduna and Review of past Reports on Violent Conflicts in the Area*, unpublished paper presented at a workshop organised by the The Kukah Centre (TKC) and Nigerian Social Responsibility Programme (NSRP) in Kaduna on 8 August 2017.

¹⁴ See: <http://sokadworld.com/index.php/about-southern-kaduna/15-site-pages>, last accessed 1 November 2017.

¹⁵ Madaki J. B., *Southern Kaduna*, available at sokadworld.com/index.php/about-southern-kaduna/history, last accessed 12 October 2017.

Muslims and indigenous Christians. Thus, due to the socio-political and cultural background to the history of “Southern Kaduna”, this term carries with it a whole range of undertones concerning social identity, religious affiliation, cultural heritage, economic opportunities and geographical location. It is little wonder that some therefore regard “Southern Kaduna” as a cultural area and Christian religious group. However, for others, it refers to a subordinate community, an economic and political minority zone. Due to its marginal status, it is seen as a second-class community. Again, others view “Southern Kaduna” as a geographical entity and region with a unique, large, fertile environment conducive for arable and livestock farming. Thus the natural resources available in this region cause it to be permanently under contestation.

In this connection, it is helpful to clarify that - geographically - the latitude of the territory of Southern Kaduna lies between 7⁰ and 10⁰ North and the longitude between 5⁰ and 7⁰ East.¹⁶ The territory contains a potpourri of over 30 ethnic nationalities, including: Atyap, Attachirak, Tsam, Kagoma, Fantswam, Adara, Akurmi, Ninkyop, Agbiri, Amap, Asholio and others, all of whom are predominantly Christian. Most of the ethnic nationalities in Southern Kaduna belong to the Platoid group of languages, according to Joseph Greenberg’s classification of African languages.¹⁷ The area is of historical interest due to its development over the centuries in relation to the more politically organized emirates of Zazzau and Bauchi to the north and Keffi and Kontagora to the south.¹⁸

Taking into consideration the various meanings of the term “Southern Kaduna”, it has become a concept signifying the desire of a people to liberate themselves from years of perceived marginalization, social exclusion and domination by the Hausa-Fulani Muslim hegemony. Use of the term has thus become a form of protest against the domination of one group by another. For example, before colonial and after colonial rule, the indigenous people of Southern Kaduna feel an alien system of governance was imposed upon them. In 1450-1850 it was the Saurata System in Zazzau, then came the Emirate System in 1816-1903 and the Native Authority System in 1903-1930,¹⁹ and in all these periods the indigenous people were marginalized and their land exploited.

According to Hausa history and legend, Zaria State began as one of the seven Hausa Kingdoms, which divided up production and labor activities in a form of social cooperation. Thus it was up to Zaria as the southernmost state to supply slaves for all Hausa Kingdoms.²⁰ In order to achieve this, slave stations were established in vassal states such as Lafia, Doma, Nassarawa, Jema’a-Dororo and raids were carried out on (non-Muslim) ethnic nationalities to subjugate them and enforce taxation for the benefit of the Emir of Zauzau (the older name for Zaria).²¹ Some colonial documents argue that Christianity under the British rule was only allowed to flourish in Southern

¹⁶ Gudaku B. T., *op. cit.*

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ Madaki J. B., *op. cit.*

¹⁹ Gudaku B. T., Historical background to Contemporary Violent Conflicts in Southern Kaduna and Review of past Reports on Violent Conflicts in the Area, unpublished paper presented at a workshop organised by the The Kukah Centre (TKC) and Nigerian Social Responsibility Programme (NSRP) in Kaduna on 8 August 2017.

²⁰ This was carried out long before the introduction of Islam in 1456. See: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Zaria-historical-kingdom-and-province-Nigeria>, last accessed 1 November 2017.

²¹ *ibid*

Kaduna to provide a pool for internal slave trade since it was only justifiable in Islam to enslave non-Muslims.

Another historical antecedent to note is that non-Muslims were used for forced labor. It is well-documented that, under British colonial rule, officials of the Native Authorities (who were Muslims) took advantage of the forced labor for their own personal gain. Between 1933 and 1936 two non-Muslim farmhands were supplied weekly to work on the farms of the District Head of Kachia and his officials, who were all Muslims. Non-Muslims also had to pay for medical treatment while Muslims were treated free of charge²². Such discrimination increasingly led to the concept of 'we' versus 'them', each regarding 'the other' as an enemy.

In the courts, the *alkalai* (judges) were all Hausa who neither spoke the language nor understood the customs of the people they were supposed to judge.²³ The different ethnic groups reacted differently to this treatment and the people longed for an end to this situation. It is also worth noting that when Sir Frederick Lugard moved the headquarters of the Northern Nigerian Protectorate from Zungeru to Kaduna in 1916, this proved to be an important threshold in history²⁴. Initial efforts for bringing about such a shift of power go back as far as 1902. Even when the colonial authorities brought the headquarters to Kaduna, the concept of *masu-sarauta* (rulers) remained tied to Hausa-Fulani Muslim identity. This created a suzerain vassal relationship between the Hausa-Fulani Muslims and the non-Muslim population in Southern Kaduna, just as in many other parts of Northern Nigeria.²⁵ These discriminatory practices imposed by the Hausa-Fulani ruling class upon the indigenous people of Southern Kaduna was contrary to the slogan of unity promoted by the Jama'a Mutanen Arewa (Northern Peoples' Congress), a political platform created by Sir Ahmadu Bello, the then Northern Premier and the Sardauna of Sokoto.²⁶ The discriminatory practices created tensions and resentment and damaged any harmonious inter-group relationships existing at that time.

Meanwhile, even though the Hausa-Fulani Muslims were a minority in Southern Kaduna, their neighborhoods and local communities became the focal point of all economic, political and administrative life.²⁷ This was based purely on political patronage.

²² *ibid*

²³ Gudaku B.T., *op. cit.*

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ Influential Muslim politician born in 1910. He was assassinated in the coup of 15 January 1966. The *Sardauna* of Sokoto was a leading Muslim figure in Nigeria. The assassination of Sir Ahmadu Bello was a factor leading to the Nigerian civil war (1967–70). See: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sokoto-state-Nigeria#ref257869>, last accessed 2 November 2017.

²⁷ *ibid*

Chapter Two: Empirical data on the recent violent conflict (May 2016 – September 2017)

2.1. The data gathered from field research

The objective of the field research was to collect data and empirical evidence on the current conflict for the period 1 May 2016 – 31 September 2017. The purpose was not to contradict any previously presented evidence but rather to use the fresh data as a platform to confirm and verify how this conflict has affected Christian communities. The data was collected by trained field workers in five LGAs: Jema'a, Kaura, Kuru, Sanga and Zangon-Kataf. The data collection process took into consideration the gender dimensions of the conflict and included categories such as the number of people killed, injured and properties destroyed. According to the findings in the period May 2016 – September 2017, an estimated 725 people have been killed (709 of them Christians), 130 injured and 12,150 properties have been damaged or destroyed, with Christians being most affected.

The data, collected in as many of the 5 LGAs of Southern Kaduna as possible, is divided into five categories:

- 1: Christians/Muslims killed
- 2: Christians injured
- 3: Christians/Muslims who lost property and whether displaced
- 4: List of Christians in IDP Camp Kafanchan
- 5: List of churches destroyed.

The data was collected over a period of five months, namely from May 2017 to September 2017. The Africa Conflict and Security Analysis Network (ACSAN) set up two teams to support the data collection. The first was made up of members of ACSAN, independent freelance journalists and local contacts with no political affiliation and representing no ethnic or religious interest. The second team included members of ACSAN, community, traditional, Christian and Muslim religious leaders as well as some representatives of religious groups, youth organizations and civil societies in Southern Kaduna. The data collected and the resultant findings provide a framework and authoritative platform for investigating the narrative about environmental degradation and resource contestation repeated by so many as being the main background for the conflict.

It was only possible for the ACSAN team to gather data from the five LGAs visited. However, if other LGAs were to be included, the estimated number of deaths would have been higher than our current findings in the report. (Most of the Muslims killed died in reprisal attacks carried out as self-defense and not revenge. For example, one community visited by ACSAN narrated how they defended themselves with sticks and stones during the attack.) About 19 churches were destroyed in the period under observation. A conservative estimate of farmlands destroyed and foodstuff burnt is estimated at 5.5 billion Naira. The data was collected by the ACSAN team but also assisted by field workers from different Peace Commissions in Southern Kaduna. Those who have provided ACSAN with this data have chosen to do so under a strict principle of anonymity.

Consequently, individuals, NGOs, security officials, researchers and policy makers who contributed to the lists in this report cannot be mentioned by name.

2.2. Summary tables of categories 1-5

2.2.1. Category 1: Christians/Muslims killed in Southern Kaduna

This category deals specifically with the estimated number of people killed, either Christians or Muslims, in Southern Kaduna. The data only covers the LGAs Jema'a, Kaura and Sanga. Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain data from the other two LGAs (Kauru and Zango Kataf), partly due to security issues. Reprisal attacks by Christians in some communities led to the death of the recorded number of Muslims during the conflict. The data was collected by a team composed of ACSAN members, independent freelance journalists and local contacts. This team interviewed over 300 people and collected data in different villages and local communities in around Southern Kaduna, where the violent conflict has been most intense. The team was led by Mr. Benjamin Gudaku. Appendix 1 lists the names of those killed.

Table 1: Numbers of Christians/Muslims killed in 3 LGAs of Southern Kaduna (May 2016-September 2017)

LGA	CHRISTIANS KILLED	MUSLIMS KILLED
Jema'a	327	1
Kaura	236	14
Sanga	146	1
TOTAL	709	16

Source: ACSAN. See Appendix 1 for full details.

2.2.2. Category 2: Christians/Muslims injured

The table in this second category indicates the number of Christians injured. In this case, the data only covers the LGAs Jema'a, Kaura and Sanga and no data was provided concerning the names and numbers of Muslims injured. Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain data from the other two LGAs (Kauru and Zango Kataf), due to security issues. ACSAN visited the selected LGAs of Southern Kaduna and the IDP camp in Kafanchan to talk to victims and survivors.

Table 2: Numbers of Christians/Muslims injured in 3 LGAs of Southern Kaduna (May 2016-September 2017)

LGA	CHRISTIANS INJURED	MUSLIMS INJURED
Jema'a	44	No data

Kaura	46	No data
Sanga	40	No data
TOTAL	<u>130</u>	-

Source: ACSAN. See Appendix 2 for full details.

2.2.3. Category 3: Numbers of Christians/Muslims who lost property (and were displaced)

The table for the third category shows the number of both Christians and Muslims who were displaced from their places of residence in the reporting period. ACSAN visited four LGAs and the IDP camp to talk to victims who lost their properties and were displaced. Due to security risks, no data could be obtained in Zango Kataf LGA.

Table 3: Numbers of Christians/Muslims in 4 LGAs of Southern Kaduna who lost property and were displaced (May 2016-September 2017)

LGA	CHRISTIANS WHO LOST PROPERTY	CHRISTIANS DISPLACED	MUSLIMS WHO LOST PROPERTY	MUSLIMS DISPLACED
Jema'a	1916	1689	120	116
Kaura	847	847	99	65
Kuru	147	146	No data	No data
Sanga	549	451	No data	No data
TOTAL	3,459	3,133	(219)	(181)

Source: ACSAN. See Appendix 3 for full details.

2.2.4. Category 4: List of displaced Christians in IDP Camp Kafanchan

The table below indicates the number of Christian men, women and children displaced at the IDP refugee camp named Kafanchan.²⁸

Table 4: Number of displaced Christians from Jema'a LGA in IDP Camp Kafanchan

LGA	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN	TOTAL
Jema'a	56	170	25	251

Source: ACSAN. See Appendix 4 for full details.

2.2.5. Category 5: Number of churches destroyed

The sixth category of the Southern Kaduna Atrocities Data gives information on the number of churches destroyed in three LGAs in Southern Kaduna in the reporting period. The ACSAN team was unable to obtain data in Kauru and Zango Kataf LGAs, mainly due to security risks.

Table 5: Number of churches destroyed in 3 LGAs in Southern Kaduna (May 2016-September 2017)

LGA	CHURCHES DESTROYED
Jema'a	2
Kaura	8
Sanga	9
TOTAL	19

Source: ACSAN. See Appendix 5 for full details with dates.

2.3. The nature of Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen attacks

2.3.1. The killing of Christians

What has characterized the intergroup-relations in Southern Kaduna is the outright killing of Christians by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen. Of all the LGAs that constitute Southern Kaduna, there is not one that has not experienced the killing of Christians by Muslim Hausa-Fulani herdsmen. Contacts in Kachia town of Kachia LGA reported that the attackers usually take their Christian targets unaware.²⁹ The timing of these attacks is varied, but most occur in the night. In killing their victims, the Muslim Hausa-Fulani herdsmen do not even spare the vulnerable such

²⁸ Listed during visit to IDP Camp Kafanchan in May 2017.

²⁹ Interviews at the local government secretariat, in Kachia, on 29 September 2017.

as the aged, women and children. (The data for the killings also includes the ages of the victims.) The weapons used for these attacks include guns, machetes, daggers and axes.³⁰

2.3.2. Kidnapping and sexual assault

Kidnapping is commonly defined as the taking of a person from one place to another against his or her will, or the confining of a person to a controlled space.³¹ In other words, kidnapping consist of an unlawful restraint of a person's liberty by force or show of force and is usually done, for instance, where the victim is taken to another location or concealed within the same location. More often than not, kidnapping is accompanied by bodily injury, sexual assault, or a demand for ransom.³² Interviews with women in Ladugga axis of Southern Kaduna, Numana in Sanga LGA as well as Godogodo in Jema'a LGA reveal that Christian women in the aforementioned locations have been kidnapped for varying periods, ranging from some days to months.³³ It was revealed that the kidnapped Christian women were often subjected to sexual assault. Some of the affected women were kidnapped by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen either on their farms or on their way to streams to fetch water in the evening. Generally, women in some of the communities visited were very shy about discussing any sexual abuse suffered. This was due to fears about possible rejection by their husbands or community. The trauma of what they experienced remains unhealed.

2.3.3. Sexual Abuse and Molestation

While gathering data in the selected Southern Kaduna LGAs, ACSAN met Christians in Ladugga in Jema'a LGA who reported how their children had been sexually molested by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen. To support the claims, some Christian girls at the Kafanchan IDP camp confessed to having been sexually attacked by suspected Muslim Hausa-Fulani herdsmen. These victims spoke with so much pain that it was clear they were traumatized and further questioning was avoided.

2.3.4. Night Raids

Since 2015, one of the dominant features of attacks in Southern Kaduna has been night raids on Christians and Christian communities by the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen. The attackers invade villages, kill, maim and set houses ablaze when the victims are asleep; women and children are not spared. These are well-coordinated attacks that exploit the spatial vulnerability of the targeted Christian farming communities in Southern Kaduna. Even though the evidence obtained did not indicate the number of Christians killed in these covert night raids, it is reasonable to assume that many Christians would have been killed. Together with other data

³⁰ Interviews in Kwo, Jabba Local Government Area on 26 September 2017.

³¹ "Overview of U.S. Kidnapping Laws". Retrieved from <http://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-charges/kidnapping.html?version=2#>, accessed on 14/10/2017.

³² Retrieved from <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/kidnapping>, accessed on 12 October 2017.

³³ Interview with Christian Women in Ladugga, Numana and Godogodo on 12 August, 7 and 9 September 2017 in that order.

presented in this report, it would seem certain that the primary motivation for the raids is to eliminate Christians, i.e. ethnic cleansing based on religious affiliation.

Chapter Three: Understanding the ideological factors behind the Southern Kaduna conflict

3.1. Factors to be considered for understanding the conflict

There are conflicting ideological perspectives on the nature of violent conflict against Christians in Southern Kaduna. For instance, many perspectives lay emphasis on environment, ethnicity, political contestation, population and/or economic competition as being the basis for the violent conflict. There is no denying the fact that several of these factors are applicable, however they do not explain the true depth of the problem.

For instance, the desertification of the northern ecological belt is linked to the population explosion (caused by the influx of migrant farmers/pastoralists) and so both factors help create a situation of land scarcity and hunger. Indigenization of herding communities' correlates with the legalization of farming-grazing rights to engender land tenure (ownership) disputes.³⁴ All these factors interact and contribute to the increasing wave of contestation between the farming and herding communities.

Other perspectives blame politicians for their manipulation of power.³⁵ Politicians ride on the back of ethnic, religious and regional identity to get to office, encouraging division and hence violent conflict. The way politicians employ democratic principles to come to office only to turn their backs on democracy and promote an Islamic agenda is a clear case of manipulation of political power. Experience has shown that this Islamic agenda has been a breeding ground for violence against ethnic groups that are predominantly Christian. These are targeted and excluded from political power-sharing. In fact, the Christians are forced to live as second class citizens and government policies are deliberately implemented to suppress them.

However, to conceive of the conflict simply in terms of being a clash of political, economic and social interests is, at best, reductionist. Important insights can also be gained by studying the conflict's socio-ecological underpinnings. The politicization of farmer/herder relations has complicated the situation through subtle mobilization of clan, ethnic, religious and other sentiments,³⁶ and has added a dangerous twist to the conflict's dynamics. This tendency has been succinctly described by Suleiman Nchi: "The parties in a conflict may be carrying or expressing different religious identities. A simple argument between a Fulani-herdsman and a farmer from a community that is predominantly Christian over land, for example, may take on the tenor of a sectarian crisis since the Fulani herdsman is almost always a Muslim."³⁷

Thus farmers (who are predominantly Christian) consider Fulani herders (who are largely Muslim) as religious and political enemies - and vice versa. The religious factor has mostly been downplayed by other writers. The authors of this paper, however, point to evidence which suggests that the conflict in Southern Kaduna is linked to the Islamic war of expansion,

³⁴ Okoli, A. C and Atelhe G. A. "Nomads against Natives: A Political Ecology of Herder/Farmer Conflicts in Nasarawa State, Nigeria" *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* Vol. 4 No. 2, 2014.

³⁵ Nchi, S.I., *Religion and Politics in Nigeria: The Constitutional Issues*. Jos: Greenworld, 2013, p. 229.

³⁶ Nchi S.I., *op.cit.*

³⁷ *ibid*

domination and supremacy. It is therefore necessary to explore this historical aspect further in the next section.

3.2. Historical precedence of Islamic expansion - links to Southern Kaduna

The violence perpetrated by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen against Christians in Southern Kaduna has links with jihad and Islamic expansionist tendencies. This is why Christians have been killed, injured and displaced. Christians have seen their villages, farms and houses taken over by the Muslim herdsmen. As referenced in the Nasarawa report, a Hausa-Fulani Muslim nomad is reported to have argued: “*Komai na Allah ne. Ko wane fili na Allah ne, ba naku ba, ba na kafirai ba, na Allah ne*”.³⁸ (Translation: Everything belongs to Allah. Every piece of land belongs to Allah and not you, it is not for you infidels but for Allah.) The sovereignty of Allah is thereby understood as being the foundation for all socio-political and economic systems, and society must be governed in accordance with the Quran and *Sunna*. This means that human beings must, individually and collectively, surrender all rights of lordship, legislation and authority over others. No person, class or group can lay claim to sovereignty. Allah is the real law-giver and absolute legislation rests in him.³⁹ Consequently, when a Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsman claims that every piece of land belongs to Allah, it means, the land belongs to the Muslim-God and by right to the Muslims. The Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsman therefore understands that he has a right not only to the land, but a religious obligation to ensure that Islam reigns supreme over that land. It is this understanding of Allah that is at the basis of the distinction between *darul Islam*, the house of Islam, and *darul al-harb*, the house of war. The former is composed of the Muslim faithful, while the latter is a reference to those within the realm of the infidels.⁴⁰ Over time, *jihad* has come to mean the struggle against the devil or one’s own desires (*nafs*), as well as fighting those of non-Islamic faith.⁴¹ This includes waging war against unbelievers to convert them to Islam and encourages a biased outlook and the view that conquering non-Muslim territories for Allah is a religious duty.

This same ideology motivated the historical role of Muslim herdsmen in Islamic *jihad* in Africa. This can be traced back to the time when Arab Islamic forces defeated the Byzantine army in the middle of the 7th century and gained control over coastal North Africa, converting the nomadic Berber tribes to Islam.⁴² It was these Berber herdsmen who helped to spread Islam between Maghreb (North Africa) and Western Sudan (known to Arabs as Bilad al-Sudan, land of the black). The Berber herdsmen helped spread Islam through Islamic *jihad* into the band of countries dividing White and Black Africa, a band which cuts through Mauritania, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Sudan and Eritrea.

The most prominent nomadic pre-colonial radical Islamic movement in Africa was the jihad led by Askia Muhammad I, the ruler of Songhay Empire (1492-1528). His predecessor had captured Timbuktu in Mali and other territories along the River Niger. He hoped to extend his radical jihad

³⁸ Interview Islamic Scholar and a Hausa-Fulani Muslim nomad, Nasarawa Eggon, Nasarawa State, 3 July 2015.

³⁹ Mawdūdi, Abu Ala, Political theory of Islam, in: Islam in Transition; Muslim Perspectives, edited by Donohue, John J. and Esposito, John L., Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 263-264.

⁴⁰ Fergusson, John, War and Peace in the World’s Religions, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 31.

⁴¹ Churchill, Paul, Interpreting the Jihad: Militarism Versus Muslim Pacifism, The Acorn, 1991, p.20.

⁴² Levtzion N. and Pouwels R.: The History of Islam in Africa, Ohio University Press, 2000, p.2.

to the Mossi Empire, present day Burkina Faso.⁴³ Askia then invaded the country, destroyed towns and took prisoners who were forced to convert to Islam. However, Mossi was not subjugated till Moroccan rule invaded Songhay Empire in 1591.⁴⁴ Another radical Islamic movement led by a nomadic Fulani was the conquest of Ethiopia (Abyssinia) in 1527. The movement was led by Ahmad Gran (the left handed). He was of Somali origin, and secured the control of Adal in Somalia, converted it to an Ottoman satellite state. The effort of the Portuguese to enter into an alliance with the ruling Christian dynasty of Abyssinia was interpreted as a threat to Ottoman power and Gran was selected to launch a *jihad* in accordance with Islamic law. The Abyssinians suffered a crushing defeat in 1529. For over a decade the Muslim army ravaged the kingdom of Abyssinia. At least 50 of the principal churches and monasteries were sacked in the course of this *jihad*. The churches were looted and then set on fire.

Additionally, itinerant Muslim scholars, accompanied by Berber herdsmen, and other tribal nomads from the Sahel, moved among rural communities to conquer and convert them to Islam. At this time, most Islamic *jihads* came from the countryside and not from commercial or capital towns.⁴⁵ The Fulbe and the Somali herdsmen provided the main fighting forces for Islamic *jihads* that were staged in 17th and 18th century Africa. For instance, in the 1670s, Nasir al-Din, a Berber herdsman and Islamic scholar, organized a *jihad* against local communities in Mauritania, forcefully occupying their land and converting many to Islam. Uthman Dan Fodio, the founder of the Sokoto caliphate in northern Nigeria, was himself a descendant of the Fulani herdsmen who promoted Islamic *jihad*. Dan Fodio was born in Maratta, Sokoto State, but belonged to the clan of Fulani herdsmen known as the Toronkawa. He was brought up in Degel, a little village whose inhabitants had mostly migrated from Futa Toro in Senegal, which is why they are called Toronkawa, literally, the people of Toro.⁴⁶ It is good to note that the process of sedentarization of these nomads before and after British colonization never extinguished the need to conquer more territories for Islam. This reality exists among both nomads who are now settled and those who remain herdsmen. Today, leaders of terrorist organizations across Africa have nomadic backgrounds: Iyad Ag Ghaly, the so-called “Lion of the Desert” and chief of Ansaru al-Dine, and Mokhtar Belmokhtar, the one-eyed former commander of AQIM (Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb), are both former nomads.⁴⁷ It is this Islamic principle of seeking to expand *darul Islam* that has now entered Southern Kaduna and has become an existential threat to the Christian communities there. A look at the history of violent conflict in Southern Kaduna will help explain this point.

⁴³ Nehemia Levtzion, 1968. Muslims and Chiefs in West Africa. A Study of Islam in the Middle Volta basin in the pre-colonial Period, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 164.

⁴⁴ Holt P. M et al, 1970. The Cambridge History of Islam, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. ii, 359.

⁴⁵ *ibid*.

⁴⁶ Boyd J. and Shagari S., The life and legacy of Shehu Uthman Dan Fodiyo, Macmillan Publishers, Oxford, 2003, pp. 1-13.

⁴⁷ Jubber, Nicholas, Mali's Nomads: Bulwark against Jihad, 2014, <http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/fall2014/mali-nomads-against-jihad>, accessed 2 April 2016.

3.3. The History of violent conflict against non-Muslims in Southern Kaduna

Over the years, there has been a perpetual targeting of Christians and the destruction of their farms and means of livelihood. The government provides no security for Christians and no policy solution to the violence. Some of these violent conflicts are enumerated below.

3.3.1. The Kasuwan Magani crisis of 1980

This violent conflict was caused by land acquisition and the dominance of the Hausa Muslim settlers over the native Christian Kadara and Gbagyi ethnic groups. For instance, the village head was Hausa; the *Sarkin Kasuwa* (Leader of the market) was also Hausa, who treated the natives with disdain. This created a tense relationship between the Hausa Muslims on one hand and the Kadara and Gbagyi population on the other. The immediate cause of the violent conflict was the attempt by the natives to reclaim the land, which the Hausa Fulani Muslim forcefully took from them.⁴⁸ According to sources, the reclaiming of the land was necessary due to increase in population of the natives and the need to engage in commercial agriculture in order to supply enough food stuff to the growing demand from Kaduna metropolis.⁴⁹

The immediate cause of the violent conflict was that - in the process of reclaiming his land – the Christian, Hassan Apalaka, was killed by the Hausa on 11 January 1980 at Kujama.⁵⁰ This caused the Kadara and Gbagyi to make ready for battle. In a matter of hours, Kasuwan Magani was engulfed in flames as the native Christian population and the Hausa Muslims fought each other, causing much death and destruction. In the conflict that ensued, religious identity was the key factor for targeting attacks. Another clear factor was that the Hausa-Fulani alliance was fighting against other groups not bearing Hausa-Fulani ethnic identity. It can therefore be deduced that the conflict was ethno-religious. Ordinarily land dispute should concern itself with issues of economy. However, even though not completely absent, the economic factor was not as central to the conflict as religion and ethnicity.

3.3.2. The Gure-Kahugu disturbances of 1984

There was an existing feud between the Christian-dominated Gure ethnic group and Muslim Kahugu over land. As a result a demarcation was fixed, but the Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Nuhu Yahay, led Zaria emirate officials to move the demarcation pillars on two occasions onto what the Gure considered to be their heartland. This act was interpreted by the Gure to mean that the emirate council was against them, ostensibly because they had embraced Christian missionaries.⁵¹ On 5 June 1984 violent conflict broke out at a drinking place. Aloto Pari, a Kahugu man, purportedly made anti-Gure remarks to Gombe Galadima. This was in addition to snatching Galadima's calabash of Burukutu (local beer). Aloto was knocked down. This ordinary event degenerated into violent conflict that claimed many lives. From available details, it can be seen that the

⁴⁸ Oral interview with Audu Dantsoho, aged 79, in Kachia on 22 April 2017

⁴⁹ This view was canvassed at Open Group Discussion (OGD) in Kachia on 22 April 2017

⁵⁰ Simon, Y. op.cit, p. 42

⁵¹ *ibid* p.133

conflict was generally religious. First, this is evident in the dominant role played by the far-away Islamic Zaria emirate in the activities of neighboring ethnic group that embraced Islam. Secondly, it is no coincidence that the Zaria emirate identified with the ethnic group that embraced Islam instead of the one that embraced Christianity. This was done to promote the identity of the Muslim *Umma* over non-Muslim groups.

3.3.3. The Kafanchan conflict of 1987

In 1987, a wave of violent conflict left Kafanchan in ruins. Findings have indicated that on 10 February 1987 the fellowship of Christian students (FCS) of the Kafanchan College of Education applied to hold a revival week and approval was granted on 24 February 1987. When banners for the event were printed with the words “Welcome to Jesus Campus”, Muslim students protested and removed the banners, even though they had earlier organized “Danfodio Week” that was pure Islamic affairs. On 6 March 1987, which was the day of the Christian meeting, the guest speaker and convert from Islam, Reverend Abubakar Bako, was accused of allegedly blaspheming against Islam. A Muslim student named Aisha Garba was so provoked by Abubakar’s sermon that she jumped onto the platform, seized the microphone and called on all Muslims to rise in defense of Islam. On Sunday 8 March 1987, some Muslims mobilized and attacked Christian worshipers at an ECWA church in connection with the alleged blasphemy by Abubakar.⁵² The Kaduna State Governor, Abubakar Umar, suddenly announced on state-controlled media that mosques and copies of Quran had been burnt in Kafanchan, the headquarters of Jema’a LGA.⁵³ What followed was wanton destruction of lives and properties in Kafanchan and environs. The violence also spread into Kaduna, Daura, Funtua and Ikara⁵⁴, where Christians were attacked and killed and their properties destroyed.

According to official estimates, “the Kafanchan crisis claimed nineteen lives and resulted in the destruction of 169 hotels, 152 churches, 5 mosques and 95 vehicles.”⁵⁵ Apart from the relatively heavy toll on lives and property, three other features of the Kafanchan crisis need deeper analysis. First, the sheer magnitude of the crisis induced the intervention not only of the State government but also of the Federal Authorities. The army was called in to contain the riots, and subsequently a judicial tribunal was set up to try rioters apprehended by law enforcement and security agents. Secondly, The Kafanchan crisis brought about a recognition of the Christian groups in Southern Kaduna which resulted into a federal-wide, inter-regional and inter-religious struggle involving both the Northerners and Southerners, and Christians and Muslims. The tension between majority and minority communities in Kaduna State had now acquired national character, with serious implications for the safety of Southerners living in the north and for the relation between Christian and Muslims throughout the Federation. Thirdly, the conflict in Kafanchan served as a portent of a whole new wave of ethno-religious turbulence and violence in northern Nigeria as epitomized in subsequent violent conflict in Adamawa, Taraba and Bauchi States.⁵⁶ Little was done to provide either justice or reconciliation.

⁵² *ibid*

⁵³ Interview with Stephen Ayuwa, aged 65, in Kafanchan on 16/04/2017

⁵⁴ See Simon Y., p. 144

⁵⁵ *New Nigeria*, April 17, 1987, p. 9

⁵⁶ Rotimi T. S., *Ethnic Minority and Political Turbulence in Kaduna State*, Institute Français de recherche en Afrique. Ibadan, 1996.

3.3.4. The Zangon Kataf violent conflict of February 1992

An outburst of ethno-religious conflict that was far more severe than the Kafanchan crisis took place in February 1992 in Zango, a town in the Zangon Kataf LGA of Kaduna State. A complex mixture of historical, political, cultural and economic factors were at play in this eruption of communal violence, which later took on a religious dimension. The basic details may be briefly described as follows:

In January 1992, the Zangon Kataf Local Government Council under the leadership of an ethnic Kataf announced the impending relocation of the Zango weekly market from the Hausa-dominated town-center to a new site on the outskirts of Zango town. Reasons for this move included the congestion in the old market center, with little or no space for accommodating new traders; poor hygienic conditions of the old market; the unsuitable location of the market surrounded by residential houses belonging to the Hausa; and the need to reduce Hausa commercial domination and expand opportunities for emergent Kataf traders in Zango.⁵⁷ Analysts argue that the Hausa community in Zango resisted the repositioning of the market, claiming that the proposed new site was a part of the Muslim annual Eid praying ground. It also argued that the relocation bid was a vindictive design to hurt its economic position. Consequently, the Hausa community sought and obtained a court injunction, with accompanying police protection, restraining the relocation.⁵⁸ The conflicting Kataf and Hausa positions and actions over the market relocation issue escalated into violent confrontations on 6 February 1992, the date on which the new market site was expected to commence. Eyewitnesses say that the devastation caused by the violent conflict was unimaginable.⁵⁹ According to official estimates, 95 persons were killed (mostly Hausa), 252 were injured and 133 houses and 26 farms destroyed.⁶⁰

Judging by the proceeding tense inter-group relationship in Southern Kaduna, it would seem that the market relocation issue merely provided a convenient outlet for Kataf resentment towards Hausa-Fulani domination of cultural, political and economic life in Zangon Katab. Specifically, the Kataf resented their continued incorporation within the Zaria emirate, the alleged appropriation of land around Zango by the Emir of Zaria and the Hausa farmers, the derogatory references to the Kataf as *arna* (pagans) by the Hausa population, as well as other forms of unequal socio-cultural exchange between the two communities.⁶¹

Meanwhile, the presentation made to the Cudjoe Commission (a commission set up to inquire into the crisis) by the Kataf following the violence of February 1992 focused on the claim that the land belonged to the Kataf who had accommodated Hausa immigrants on generous terms.⁶² It was argued that, by the traditional system of land holding, such land in principle should revert to the original owners. However, this historical claim of indigeneity was contradicted by the

⁵⁷ Citizen, 17 February 1992, p. 23-24

⁵⁸ Mahmood Y., Human Rights and Zangon Kataf Riots, Citizen, 1993, pp.36-39.

⁵⁹ Open Group Discussion in Zangon Kataf town on 18 April 2017.

⁶⁰ See Rotimi, op. cit.

⁶¹ Mahmood, op. cit., pp.36-37.

⁶² Kutar I., Farouq B. and Sadeqee A. "Ethnicity and the Crisis of Citizenship in Post-Colonial Nigeria: An Impediment to Development", International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention, 2(2), 2015, P. 1027.

Hausa community who claimed centuries of effective residency. What is not clear as to the practicality and the applicability of the claim of the Hausa is why the Hausa-Fulani Muslims have failed to grant indigeneity to non-Hausa groups in Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, etc. despite centuries of effective residency.

3.3.5. The Zangon-Kataf violence of May 1992

It is obvious that the clash between the Hausa and the Kataf people goes beyond the disagreement over the site of their market. Between them, there has been a protracted misinterpretation over land ownership. The Kataf are of the view that the land, which the Hausa live on, was theirs, and that the Hausa are only settlers. These struggles have continued in various forms resulting in very bloody clashes in Zango-Kataf in 1992.⁶³ Factually, “the violence, which erupted on 15th May 1992, had antecedents of a long standing feud over the perceived domination of the majority Kataf, who claimed to be the original settlers of the area, by the minority Zango Hausa-Fulani.”⁶⁴ Furthermore, the Kataf always hated the way they were systematically treated by the Hausa-Fulani district heads in the Emirate Council. There were complaints of indiscriminate tax consideration, perceived injustice at the Magistrate Courts concerning cases that involved indigenes, and lack of access to other opportunities for indigenes. In most instances violent clashes between the two rival people developed. Seen in this context, the May 1992 clash was an expression of Kataf frustration towards the Emirate Council and the Hausas, whom they viewed as an obstacle to their quest for self-determination and self-reliance. It would appear that the oppressive activities of the Hausa-Fulani, over the centuries since they first came to settle in Zangon-Kataf, led to the continued agitation and reactions from the Kataf in a bid to attain autonomy.⁶⁵

However, the immediate cause of the violence of May 1992 was a disagreement between the Hausa-Fulani and the Kataf over where the market should be set up. In the ensuing battle, in which many people were killed, mosques and churches were the prime targets.⁶⁶ The violence took on an even clearer religious dimension when the bodies of the killed Muslim men were brought to Kaduna from the crisis area, which incited Muslim communities inside and outside the State. This action led to serious outbreaks of violence in the Tudun-Wada Area in Kaduna, where Christians were said to be at the receiving end. In reaction, Christians in Sabon-Tasha, Kaduna, where the Christian population is high, retaliated by attacking Muslims. The crisis therefore developed into Muslim-Christian violence.⁶⁷ It is important to put this Zango Kataf incident into its proper perspective, since it is often interpreted to be more of an ethnic than

⁶³ S.Tokunbo Osinubi, and Oladipupo Sunday Osinubi, *Ethnic Conflicts in Contemporary Africa: The Nigerian Experience*, <http://www.krepublishers.com/02Journals/JSS/JSS-12-0-000-000-2006-Web/JSS-12-2-083-158-2006-Abst-Text/JSS-12-2-083-158-2006-Web/JSS-12-2-101-114-2006-165-Osinubi-T-S/JSS-12-2-101-114-2006-165-Osinubi-T-S-Text.pdf> (accessed 23April 2017)

⁶⁴ Sanusi, A. “Religious-Based Violence and National Security in Nigeria: Case Studies of Kaduna State and Taliban Activities in Borno State”, Being a Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the USA Army Command and General Staff College in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master of Military Art and Science Degree, 2009, P.61.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Eghosa E. Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*, http://books.google.com/books?id=JxaBkN3z28cC&dq=Eghosa+E.+Osaghae,+Crippled+Giant:+Nigeria+Since+Independence&printsec=frontcover&source=bl&ots=vn7Git_iDp&sig=VWslT8KorSJ6ZAlnPtqcqLibYBK4&hl=en&ei=AiLR SbGXHo2usQOj_K2gAw&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result (accessed 21april 2017).

⁶⁷ See Sanusi, op.cit.

religious conflict. Certain factors, however, suggest that the conflict was more religious than ethnic. The unpublished report by the Justice Rahila Cudjoe Commission of Inquiry that investigated the conflict shows very clearly this had developed into an ethno-religious crisis.

The Zangon Kataf crisis was devastating and caused the death of more than a thousand people and damage to properties worth millions of Naira.⁶⁸ The crisis stalled the economic and social life of the community. The detailed toll of the crisis as recorded by the police and the state security service (SSS) included over a thousand people killed; 5 houses/business premises/hotels destroyed; 7 churches and 2 mosques burnt down; 8 vehicles destroyed; 2 policemen killed; 15 civilians and policemen wounded; and 500 people displaced.⁶⁹

On a general note, the Zango Kataf conflicts share similarities with many other conflicts in Southern Kaduna. As such, it requires special analysis, more-so that it happened at a time when Nigeria was preparing to transfer from military to democratic rule. Thus, it carries with it some uncommon dynamics that need to be properly interpreted. Meanwhile there is no denying the fact that poverty occasioned by unemployment was believed to have aggravated the violence of Zangon Kataf to a certain extent. This is because most of the destruction that took place, especially within Kaduna metropolis, was carried out by the unemployed, often referred to as 'Area Boys'. These are people who anxiously await any opportunity to seize and cause destruction and looting of shops and other public property. In this particular case, this factor was not the main cause even though its presence fueled the following destruction considerably.⁷⁰

Religious disharmony is believed to be responsible for the Zangon Kataf violence of 1992. This could be seen from the way minor issues that could have been averted, degenerated to what later became an uncontrollable situation. However, judging from how the situation degenerated as the violence unfolded, an ethno-religious factor began to manifest itself more clearly. With mosques and churches being destroyed, it was very obvious that ethno-religious factors began to assume center stage during the violence. At the start of the violence in Zangon Kataf, before it spread outside the town, the violence was basically a Hausa-Fulani and Kataf affair.⁷¹ But when the violence escalated, it was seen that Muslims and Christians fought on opposing sides. It is clear that the violence, like many other cases in Southern Kaduna, had its background in long-standing discontent and mistrust that existed between the two ethnic groups.

3.3.6. The Kaduna violence of 21 February 2000

Tension started building up when the Sharia bill was sent to the State House of Assembly in January 2000 by the Kaduna State Government and a committee was set up to look at the desirability or otherwise of practicing Sharia law in the state.⁷² The tension came to a climax when Christians observed that Muslims were conducting solidarity rallies in support of the

⁶⁸ *ibid*, p.62

⁶⁹ Police Investigation Report, Kaduna State, 2001.

⁷⁰ Sanusi, *op.cit.*

⁷¹ *ibid*, p.64

⁷² See Sanusi A., *op. cit.* p.76

proposed Sharia bill in different parts of the State. The Christians, who had generally opposed the passage of the bill at different debates, decided to carry out a peaceful demonstration on 21 February 2000 at the State House of Assembly and Government House to register their objection and dissatisfaction over the bill and implementation of Sharia in the State. Christian protesters mobilized in their thousands from various parts of the metropolis and neighboring villages and moved en masse to Kaduna State House of Assembly - through the major highways carrying placards expressing their disapproval of the bill – delivering a letter of protest.⁷³

In answer to their letter, the Clerk enjoined them to be calm and law abiding. They proceeded from the House of Assembly to the Government House where a similar letter was submitted to the Acting Governor of the State, Stephen Shekari, as the Governor of the State, Alhaji Ahmed Makarfi, was out of the country. The Acting Governor received the leaders and their petition after which he informed them that their petition would be given speedy attention by the Kaduna State Government. From the Government House, the protesters left to return to their homes. Violence erupted when the Christian protesters were stoned by Muslim youths who disapproved of their actions. The situation quickly became violent and spread throughout the Kaduna metropolis. The hitherto peaceful demonstrators now became hostile and uncontrollable. This protest was not expected to cause any immediate crisis and the demonstrators were monitored by police escort numbering only about 100 officers.⁷⁴ The demonstration degenerated into violence due to inbuilt grievances which had existed over decades. Table 7 below shows some data of the destruction of lives and property that followed as a result of the conflict.

Table 6: Data on killings, damage and displacement during the Kaduna violence in February and May 2000.⁷⁵

Estimated number of persons killed	Over 2,000	Mostly Christians. They were killed during a four day span in February and a five day span in May 2000.
Estimated number of persons injured	About 10,000	Health infrastructure was unable to meet the emergency demands. This led to the unfortunate turning away of people who were in need of help, some in dire conditions.
Estimated number of properties destroyed	Up to 21,000	Among the buildings destroyed were many churches and some mosques
Estimated number of	60,000-65,000	Mostly women and children.

⁷³ Police Investigation Report on Kaduna Sharia Religious Crisis of February 2000.

⁷⁴ *ibid*

⁷⁵ It is not possible to get the exact figures of the destruction of lives and properties that took place. However, these figures give a bird's eye view into what transpired.

persons displaced		
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Source: Compiled from the white paper of Judicial Commission of Inquiry, BBC African Report (26 February and 20-30 May 2000), Nigerian Tell Magazine (May 2000) and Human Rights Watch Report, 2000.

At this stage, some background information on the introduction of Sharia in democratic Nigeria may be useful. During the Nigerian Inauguration of Civil Rule in May 1999, a creation and merging of States and the rise of religious associations were given new consideration. The quest for Sharia can be located in the context of these new institutional demands and associational contestation. Overt agitation for the introduction of Sharia started in Zamfara State by the Executive State Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Sani. The 1999 Sharia controversy went much deeper than the debates in 1978. While the debates of 1978 dealt with the establishment of Federal level Court of Appeals, individual states then moved to introduce Sharia into existing legal codes. 1999 was the first time a State House Assembly legislated to introduce Sharia into the body of criminal law. While the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) condemned the Zamfara State government for the implementation of Sharia, the government received massive support from Islamic organizations such as Jamatu Nasril Islam (JNI) and the Muslim Public Affairs Centre (MPAC). Following the example of Zamfara, other states in northern Nigeria also began to introduce Sharia. Amidst this controversy, the ratification of Sharia moved to Kaduna State. This indicated a fresh challenge, since now the introduction of Sharia was being discussed not only for states with a clear Muslim majority (like Zamfara, Niger and Kano) but also for states with numerically strong Christian populations, like Kaduna.

The killings and destruction that occurred in Kaduna State took place both in Kaduna City as well as in Birnin Gwari, Kachia, Kajuru and Zaria (among others). In all cases, non-Muslim groups living in Muslim dominated places were the targets.

As regards the data in Table 7 above, a number of facts call for deeper reflection and analysis. For instance, the level of destruction suggests that poverty occasioned by unemployment, though not a cause per se, did play a significant role in aggravating the violence. The level of destruction caused during the violence was worsened by the action of looters. Most of the destruction, especially in the business areas, was perpetrated by those engulfed by poverty and those who were unemployed. Furthermore, ethnicity played a minor role compared to religion. As can be observed from the killings and destruction it is more appropriate to tag the violence as being caused by religious intolerance. Although the laxity of the police was partly to blame, the circumstances surrounding the escalation of the violence demonstrated a lack of tolerance on the part of both sides, with the actions of both Muslim and Christian youths leaving much to be desired.⁷⁶

Even though deprivation and marginalization are persistent and traditional fault-lines that have always had a negative impact on inter-group relations in Kaduna, such social factors cannot be directly linked to the conflict. Rather, it was ignorance and lack of proper education on religious tolerance which fueled the conflict. However, at the stage when the violence broke out, the

⁷⁶ Sanisu A. *op.cit*

government did little to calm the situation because the Sharia law issue was still being deliberated at the State House of Assembly. Nevertheless, the Christians pre-empted the verdict and presumed that if Sharia law was to be implemented, it would have serious consequences on their way of life. In the end, Sharia law was not implemented in Kaduna State.

3.3.7. The Gwantu religious crisis of November 2001

Many factors contributed to the crisis at Gwantu, the main factor being the religious divide between Muslims and Christians. However, other important factors were: First, the change of name of the Numana Chiefdom from Chief of Numana to Chief of Gwantu; secondly, the location of the permanent site of the local government secretariat; and thirdly, the renaming of the Customary Court in Gwantu as a Sharia Court by the State government. These factors caused sharp disagreement between the Christian Chairman of Sanga LGA (where Gwantu is located) and the Muslim Chief of Numana. These two personalities opposed each other on any issue that affected the well-being of the Sanga people.

According to the police, Muslim and Christian youths who had opposing views (particularly on the issue of the Sharia Court) took to the street immediately after the Muslim Friday prayers on 2 November 2001. These youths attacked each other and took to wanton burning of houses and vehicles, which resulted in loss of lives and property worth millions of Naira.⁷⁷ An inquiry into the violence revealed that 1295 people were killed and over 1944 houses were destroyed, including business premises and hotels.⁷⁸

The immediate causes of the crisis on 2 November 2001 can be traced to the following:

1) The manner in which the Chief of Numana briefed the representatives of CAN and Jamatul Nasirul Islam (JNI) on 31 October 2001. Instead of explaining to the Christians that the establishment of Sharia and Customary Courts respectively would not affect their ways of life and religious beliefs, the Chief brusquely gave the impression that the (unconstitutional) Sharia issue was final and non-negotiable.⁷⁹

2) Both the Chief and the Chairman of Sanga LGA were alleged to be instrumental in causing the Gwantu violence of November 2001. Christian youth claimed that the Chief had said he was not there to ask their opinion, but to simply inform them of the Sharia Court decision and that Sharia has come to stay. He allegedly advised the CAN and JNI representatives, who were not satisfied, to channel their grievances to the LGA Chairman for solution. The Chairman was alleged to have aggravated the situation by leading them to believe that he had nothing to do with Sharia but that it was the Chief of Numana who had voted for Sharia and was instrumental in its implementation in Gwantu. The different interpretations by the two principal actors caused the

⁷⁷ Police Investigation Report on Gwantu Religious Crisis of November 2001.

⁷⁸ Kaduna State Government (2001): White paper on the Report of Judiciary Commission of Inquiry into Kaduna State Religious Disturbances of Feb. 2000. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/24024206/Ethno-religious_Crisis_in_Northern_Nigeria, last accessed 30 November 2017.

⁷⁹ Ibid

two sides to threaten each other with weapons, which eventually created panic and the mass exodus of non-indigenes out of Gwantu.

The Chairman of the Local Government, contrary to the directives of the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, did not stay to monitor the situation but abandoned his LGA before the crisis escalated. This action further fueled the crisis as there was now no government official to enter into dialogue with the people and bring calm.⁸⁰ Violence eventually broke out and police reports confirmed that 11 people were killed, 30 houses destroyed and 7 vehicles set on fire. It was also recorded that the Chief of Numana's palace and his official car were also set on fire.⁸¹ All indications show that the cause of the conflict was religious, ethnical and political in nature. However, some factors appear more critical in causing the violence than others. For instance, it was found that poverty due unemployment appeared not to have any significant presence in the Gwantu violence. However, the ethno-religious factor in the area was significant, with the Muslims being basically Hausa by tribe while all the Gwantu people were predominantly Christians.⁸² So, it is safe to assert that there was an ethno-religious dimension to the whole situation.

Although the conflict was more religious in nature, ethnicity also played its part. Therefore, religious disharmony and the combination of ethnicity and religion are both considered to have played a dominant role during the violence. In addition, as earlier mentioned, the renaming of the Numana Chiefdom from Chief of Numana to Chief of Gwantu was offensive to the Gwantu Christian majority. The Christians perceived this action as an insult and a plot by the State government to marginalize them by eventually subjecting them to the direct control of the Muslim chief; they therefore objected to it. Thus, the violence, to a great extent, was a result of the perceived deprivation and marginalization felt by the Gwantu Christian majority. Ignorance and illiteracy was another factor which played a role in the Gwantu crisis because the two sides were not accurately informed about the situation (i.e. about the renaming of the Numana Chiefdom) before they acted the way they did. Another reason for the violence was the attempt to establish the Customary Court and the Sharia Court. This was aggravated by the Chief's manner on 31 October 2001 who gave the impression that Sharia had come to stay. This single act greatly influenced the violence. Hence, the attempt to establish Sharia law is considered the most influential of all the factors for this crisis.

A popular view canvassed during field work concerns (former President) Goodluck Jonathan's presidential contest against a core northern Fulani Muslim (retired General Muhammadu Buhari), who is known to have promoted Hausa-Fulani hegemony in the past. Northern Muslims not only opposed Goodluck Jonathan's candidature but also made sure those who were his supporters were made to have "a feel of hell on earth"⁸³. With this background proceeding the 2011 general elections, it is no surprise that Goodluck Jonathan's eventual victory at the polls sparked widespread violence, especially in northern Nigeria, including Southern Kaduna and Kaduna State at large. Unknown to anyone at the time, this violence occasioned by the 2011

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Sanusi A. *op.cit.* p.72

⁸³ Open Group Discussion (OGD) in Madakiya on 19 April 2017.

general election was heralding many other violent activities targeting non-Muslim communities, particularly in northern Nigeria. Thus, between 2011 and 2015, non-Muslim groups in northern Nigeria experienced much destruction of lives and properties.

3.4. Understanding the current Southern Kaduna conflict

In an attempt to interpret the data above (Tables 1-6), during field work⁸⁴, the consensus view was that even though the killing of non-Muslim groups in Southern Kaduna started within the context of contests for the 2011 general elections, it subsequently became obvious that the violent conflict was not about politics (since it was not based on political party affiliation or allegiance) but on faith and ethnic identity. An informant observed that irrespective of one's political persuasion and affiliation on one hand and ethnic identity on the other, once you are identified as a non-Muslim you become a potential target.⁸⁵ She went on to argue that this is the reason why many non-Muslim has been killed and displaced from their communities in Southern Kaduna and beyond. To further show that the violent conflict in Southern Kaduna is religiously motivated (as is the case in many other parts of Nigeria's Middle Belt), the Hausa-Fulani Muslim Herdsmen predominately attack Christians. Further confirmation that the violent conflict in Southern Kaduna is religiously based can be seen in the attacks on churches as indicated in Table 6 above.

Leading up to the general elections of 2015, there was widespread killing of Christians in Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba, as well as Kaduna states. In Kaduna, verifiable evidence⁸⁶ indicates that the attacks were mostly in the Southern Kaduna axis of the state, where the Christians are the dominant group. Some communities were so devastated that they could not even participate in the general election. One would have expected that the disfranchisement of these citizens would have been an issue of national interest, since their fundamental rights were being violated. However, no one stood up to speak on their behalf. To add salt to the wound, their land and only source of livelihood was taken over by the Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen. What makes this development disturbing is the fact that the non-Muslim groups in Southern Kaduna enjoy virtually no political patronage from both the Federal and the State governments neither are there automatic beneficiaries of any government policy that is deliberately meant to empower them. Therefore, farming and agro-allied activities are the only option available for sustenance. One informant suggests that the way Hausa-Fulani herdsmen have been taking control of land portends danger of unimaginable magnitude for all non-Muslim groups in Southern Kaduna.⁸⁷ In this connection, views from field work⁸⁸ in Kachia and Zango Kataf reject the recent attempts by the administration under Governor Mallam El-Rufa'i' to extend the size of the Ladduga grazing reserves for use by Hausa-Fulani Muslims, including foreigners. They see this as an attempt to rob non-Muslim groups of their inheritance and birthright. Again, the attacks within the period of May 2016 to September 2017 are not different from any other ones in the preceding period. There are indications that the attacks are religiously motivated. For

⁸⁴ This view was popular during an Open Group Discussion (OGD) in Kagoro on 22 April 2017.

⁸⁵ Interview with Dorothy Amos (not real name) in Kagoma on 20/04/2017

⁸⁶ Roll-call of Fulani herdsmen attacks in Kaduna state as compiled by Bajju Development Association and the Catholic Diocese of Kafanchan.

⁸⁷ Interview with Ladi James (not real name) in Kwoi, Jaba LGA on 24/04/2017.

⁸⁸ Open Group Discussion in Kachia and Zango-Kataf on 23/04/2017 and 25/04/2017 respectively.

instance, Asso was attacked when Christians were in church celebrating Easter in March 2016; over 12 Christians were reported killed. This is just one of many such attacks on worshipping Christians. In comparison, Muslims in Southern Kaduna have never protested publicly against the wanton destruction of lives and property by Hausa-Fulani herdsmen. This shows some level of tacit or implicit support since they have not condemned the atrocities against Christian communities.

The Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen make up a substantial number of the fighters belonging to Islamic groups in Mali, Niger, Chad and other parts of Africa. The number of Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen attacking Christian communities in Southern Kaduna appear to be reinforced by the migration of other herdsmen from across the Sahel region. This has also added to the rise in the activities of terrorist organizations. In Southern Kaduna, there is a resurgence of violent conflict and Islamic *jihad* perpetrated by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen. Attempts to claim that these herdsmen have nothing to do with Islamic *jihad* is incorrect, and has the potential to derail government policy for countering them. It is important to observe that herdsmen in Nigeria have access to increased volumes of arms, many of which enter the country via Islamic mercenaries and trans-national criminal networks spread across Africa's volatile Sahel region, especially Mali, Niger and Chad.⁸⁹ Interviews conducted on victims of the conflict revealed that many of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim nomads killing Christians in Southern Kaduna are well armed with sophisticated weapons and AK-47 rifles, like the ones seen in battles in Libya, Sudan and Mali. This makes the *jihad* for the expansion of Islam easier, and Christians more vulnerable.

⁸⁹Onouha, Freedom, 'Porous Borders and Boko Haram's Arms Smuggling Operations in Nigeria, 2013, http://studies.aljazeera.net/mritems/Documents/2013/9/8/20139810737330580Porous%20Borders_bokoharam.pdf, accessed 27 April 2016. Cf. also Omitola, Bolaji, Between Boko Haram and Fulani Herdsmen: Organised Crime and Insecurity in Nigeria - 2014, 2016. <https://www.issafrica.org/uploads/5th-Crime-Conf-2014/X002-Bolaji-Omitola.pdf>, accessed 22 April 2016.

Chapter Four: Government action and inaction

This chapter examines the actions and inaction of the State government over the years to end the conflict in Southern Kaduna. It also demonstrates how the actions of the government further marginalizes Christians and leaves them vulnerable and unprotected against Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen attacks. Over the years, the government has set up different commissions and committees of inquiry, either judicial or humanitarian in order to evaluate the causes of the conflicts and proffer policy solutions.⁹⁰ This includes all federal, state and local commissions of inquiry, reports from local organizations, technical and international reports etc. The review identifies the recommendations made in these reports, and highlights the similarities and dissimilarities in the various recommendations. It also studies whether these recommendations have been implemented, the impact of the non-implementation of these reports, and makes a proposal for the way forward.

In 2016 the Federal government deployed a special security task force, codenamed “Operation Harbin Kunnama” (OHK).⁹¹ Among its objectives, the task force was mandated to enforce law and order and to restore peace to the area. There is an increase in the number of Nigerian army personnel, police and other security agencies in the area. However, communities remain apprehensive of unforeseen attacks, which have continued to occur in spite of the increased security. The spate of kidnapping too has suddenly increased. Communities are worried that the current security strategy is not working. The funds used in maintaining this security presence could have been used to respond to the dire humanitarian need of the victims and survivors. Furthermore, security services are alleged to be compromised and are increasingly becoming part of the conflict.

Additionally, the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria set up an Ad-hoc Committee on Peace and Reconciliation to deal with the crisis in Southern Kaduna and in other parts of the country. So far, an interim report by the committee has been published but is yet to be made public. The findings of the report have been rejected by the Senate, citing poor recommendations.⁹² There are also broader issues concerning the politicization of the conflict. Some of these broader issues have to do with the fact that the government is using the conflict to award contracts to close associates. For example, the chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee claimed that Kaduna State has so far invested 15.61 billion Naira on internal security, and yet the conflict remains unresolved. Again, it was recommended that the Kaduna State government publishes previous white paper reports on the conflict and follow the recommendations made there. Additionally, Senator Kabiru Gaya alleged that over 70% of the police officers deployed in Southern Kaduna were indigenes of the place, making it likely for such officers to take sides. The recommendation was

⁹⁰ For example, report of the Kaduna state Peace and Reconciliation Committee 2011; Committee to Stamp Out attacks on Southern Kaduna Communities, Feb. 2016; Reconciliation Committee on Ninte Sarki Crisis, Godogodo Chiefdom, Jama’ a LGA (2016); The Kafanchan Peace Declaration: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2016; Interim Report of the Judicial Commission of Enquiry in the Disturbances of Nov. 2001 in Gwantu Town; Judicial Commission of Enquiry into the Zangon Kataf Market Riots, June 1992.

⁹¹ Vanguard News, 2017. Army Launches Operation Harbin Kunama II in Southern Kaduna. <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/04/army-launches-operation-harbin-kunama-ii-southern-kaduna/>

⁹² Vanguard News, 2017. Southern Kaduna Killings, Senate Rejects Panel Report, <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/04/southern-kaduna-killings-senate-rejects-panel-report/>.

that all security agents who are indigenes be withdrawn. This means that most of the indigenous Christians who are members of the security services and are from Southern Kaduna will be withdrawn. The implication is that the security services will be dominated by Hausa-Fulani Muslims, who are already seen as being compromised and are likely to aid the attackers in committing more atrocities. This raises questions about the integrity of the security services and will exacerbate the conflict along religious and ethnic lines.

Furthermore, the State government has strongly resolved to punish perpetrators of violence in any part of the state. This has been said publically many times by the State Governor, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai, during media engagements. However, most of the rhetoric coming from the governor so far has been vitriolic and divisive and has failed to heal wounds or rebuild community relationships.

The State government has also set up various committees, since 2016, with different mandates to provide policy recommendations that will bring stability and peace to the region. They include the Committee to Stamp out Attacks in Southern Kaduna communities, Feb. 2016; Reconciliation Committee on Ninte-Sarki Crisis, in Godogodo District, 2016. This committee was set up by the Jama'a LG Council with the support of the State government, comprising Gwong Chieftdom, Jama'a Emirate Council, Kaninkon Chieftdom, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Jama'atul Nasril Islam (JNI), Jama'a LG Council, and the Social Welfare Department of the LG Council. Unfortunately, most of the members of these committees simply repeat the recommendations of past conflict reports, receive their attendance allowances and then disappear. The members of the committees hardly ever visit the local communities, victims and survivors. It would appear that some of the committees are simply set up to reward political associates, and to establish a channel for stealing public funds.

While the government has made some efforts in the above areas, it has also, at all levels, failed to provide compensation for the victims who are mostly indigenous Christian farmers. This compensation could range from rebuilding of houses and communities, provision of fertilizer and farming implements as well as major relief materials.

The government has also failed to provide comprehensive rehabilitation and trauma counselling schemes particularly for Christian women, children and young girls affected by the conflict in Southern Kaduna. The government has also failed to rebuild hospitals, schools, churches and provide adequate medical care.

Instead of re-opening schools and providing a multi-stakeholder security framework, the government decided to close all primary, secondary and tertiary schools in Southern Kaduna. The government has used the atrocities and the violent conflict perpetrated by Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen to close schools where the majority of pupils are Christian. These Christian school-children are innocent victims and are likely to find it more difficult to obtain admission to other schools in Northern Kaduna than their Muslim counterparts. Again, most of the teachers from these schools are Christian. The closure of the schools also means the stoppage of salaries. This provides a perfect scenario for reprisal attacks. However, the government then uses such attacks to extend the period of the school closure. This has gravely affected the

education of Christian children and has left many on the street and at the IDP camp. Schools in Borno State remained open despite the insurgency while in Kaduna State the government shut down all schools during the crisis and in the following months.

The State government recently concluded plans to make 21,780 teachers of Kaduna State redundant for failing primary 4 exams. Investigations revealed that the test which had a 75% pass mark was not the first test given to the teachers, but the second one. (A second test was conducted due to the fact that - in the governor's opinion - too many people passed the first test.) Again, out of the 21,780 teachers who "failed" the second test, 1,557 are from Northern Kaduna, 4,567 are from Central Kaduna, while 17,865 are from Southern Kaduna. Approximately 82% of those to be made redundant are from Southern Kaduna.⁹³ While Sokoto and Kwara States conducted specialized on-the-job training for those teachers who failed the tests, Kaduna State failed to do same for their teachers. The implication of this forced unemployment is that there will be a huge number of indigenous Christians leaving the public sector and entering the labor market. In other words, it means that there will be more unemployed non-Muslims flooding the streets of Kaduna in search of a job. It is important to note that some of these teachers are victims of the recent conflict who are gradually recuperating from violent attacks.

The government has failed to arrest, prosecute and make perpetrators accountable for their crimes. Instead, those responsible for attacks in Southern Kaduna have been allowed to behave with impunity. The government has also failed to provide adequate security. In Christian communities where security services are deployed, many of them are Muslims and are perceived as being compromised. In some instances, the government has refused to engage with local communities or seek their opinions in the provision of security. It is expected that the owners of the communities who know the landscape, speak the language and have a clear geographical understanding of the context would be allowed to assist security services in arresting perpetrators. However, in most instances, the government simply ignores Christian communities.

⁹³ Bishop Simon Peters Mutum & Bishop Joseph Danlami Bagobiri, Southern Kaduna Christian Leaders Association, SKCLA, Press Statement on the Sacking of Teachers in Southern Kaduna. Pastoral Centre of the Catholic Secretariat Madakiya yesterday, 16 November 2017.

5. Conclusion

This study has examined the atrocities that have been committed against indigenous Christian communities in Southern Kaduna, particularly in the period May 2016 – October 2017. It has clearly outlined the different categories of atrocities committed, ranging from those killed, injured, displaced and those who have lost homes and livelihood. For a long time, the reasons for the Southern Kaduna conflict have been reduced to issues of political contestation, environmental degradation, competition over land and agricultural space as well as population explosion. However, most scholars and political analysts have avoided talking about the ideological principles that drive the Islamic war of expansion, and for which Southern Kaduna has been a classic victim over so many years. The empirical evidence collected in this research shows that many of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim nomads killing Christians in Southern Kaduna are well-armed, often with sophisticated weapons (such as AK-47 rifles) as also used in battles in Libya, Sudan and Mali. Many Christian communities in Southern Kaduna have been left to defend themselves with sticks and stones since any Christian caught with fire-arms is arrested.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that there is an Islamic agenda to drive the indigenous Christian communities out of Southern Kaduna, to ensure that Hausa-Fulani Muslims occupy the area and dominate all religious, political and socio-economic issues. Consequently, the grievances in Southern Kaduna are mostly linked to indigenous Christian communities who have suffered much perceived injustice at the hands of various political administrations. Such injustices include the establishment of Federal government institutions being located mostly in Northern Kaduna and the appointment of key government officials favoring Northern Kaduna over the southern part. Additionally, there are growing indigene-settler contestations over land distribution, access to power and privileges, and political manipulation of ethnic and religious differences by Hausa-Fulani leadership. In other words, political opportunism plays an important role in the conflict. Traditional, political, and religious leaders often manipulate public sentiments and encourage violence for political expediency.⁹⁴

Another element of the conflict is the widespread impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of violence in Southern Kaduna. To date, Hausa-Fulani Muslim herdsmen have never been arrested, prosecuted and punished in Southern Kaduna, and victims have not been adequately compensated. Additionally, violent gangs have taken advantage of the situation to instigate violence, rustle cattle (belonging to some Christians) for personal gain and to conduct criminal activities against innocent citizens. The combination of these factors has given rise to non-Muslims protesting about their perceived social exclusion. Historical injustices and a sense of victimhood across all communities have made Southern Kaduna a fertile ground for violence to fester. Importantly, recommendations set out in white papers and reports commissioned by the previous administrations to investigate and resolve the issues have mostly been neglected or not implemented satisfactorily.⁹⁵ This failure has not only widened the gap between communities and between farmers and herders, it has also sustained the mutual distrust that triggers conflict and violence.

⁹⁴Assessment Report of Jema'a Local Government 18-19 April 2011, Post Presidential Election Crisis in Kafachan.

⁹⁵ Zangon Kataf (Market) Riots and Subsequent Riots Judicial Commission of Inquiry Report, September 1992.

Furthermore, many of the displaced Christians have been forced to live in the Kafanchan IDP camp or with relatives and families in Kafanchan, Kagoro or Kaduna and are in need of aid. Humanitarian support for the Kafanchan IDP camp aid is not supplied by the government and it has to rely on NGOs, humanitarian services and churches to provide some assistance in the form of clothing and food. Houses have been destroyed, farmlands affected and commercial trees cut down. Occasionally, there have been night raids by militants, reprisal attacks and also attacks specifically directed against women.⁹⁶ The reason for this vulnerability is that most of these villages are isolated, and the number of security staff are too small to cover the entire area. Also, the lack of electricity means that the attackers have the cover of darkness to operate without being identified. The reprisal attacks are also deemed necessary because many of the victims feel the security services are compromised and can no longer protect them. As such, they feel it is necessary to defend themselves on the principle that “attack is the best form of defense”.⁹⁷ Women are particularly vulnerable because going out alone to fetch water and firewood from nearby forests and streams makes them easy targets.

One of the features of the Southern Kaduna conflict is the failure of the government to listen to the voices of Christian victims and ordinary people in policy formulation. The government has failed to sustain inter-community engagement and dialogue as a necessary process to attaining peace and stability. If the government remains biased, there is every likelihood that the conflict will continue and that Christians will be forced to leave the area and relocate - an example of “religious cleansing” (i.e. ethnic cleansing based on religious affiliation).

⁹⁶ For example, an attack was launched in Bakin Kogi on 9 April 2017, around 8pm, barely two hours after a research team had left the village following three hours of community engagement.

⁹⁷ ACSAN Team Interview, D. Musa (not real name), resident of Bakin Kogi, 9 April, 2017.