

SENSATIONALIZATION AND INTERNATIONALIZATION OF CONFLICT REPORTAGE: SYNOPSIS OF RELIGION, MEDIA AND ETHNIC DIVISION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

There is no doubt that Nigeria have witnessed a plethora of conflicts that have shaken her foundation since independence. This challenge has brought about hardship, poverty and backwardness especially as the conflict we witnessed, hit hard the economic fiber of the Northern part of Nigeria. Kano and Maiduguri, have long historical connections to the Arab trans-Saharan trade, long before the 18th century to date, those two have not only been a seat of trade, but of religious strong hold of Islamic civilization and culture. The various crises of Maitatsine conflicts in the second Republic and the subsequent crisis during the military regimes of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida to date have their roots in the perceptions and wrong conception of different and diverse cultures. Added to the heterogeneous nature of Nigeria, the various reportage of the media, and their regional prejudices, and biased reporting, has accentuated those fault lines to not only sensationalize them, but internationalize the various conflicts along vertical and horizontal divisions. This paper has focused on religion, media, and ethnic divisions in Nigeria and how the heterogeneous nature of the country became a burden and liability, rather than beautiful asset and tourist haven. With the inception of democracy in 1999, one would have thought, ethnic and religious crisis will wane, contrary to that, Nigeria witnessed an avalanche of those conflicts and crisis, the media has been traditionally divided between the North and South, all reporting with prejudices often and ethnic idiosyncrasies, and cultural ethnocentrism a synopsis of this is what the paper have discussed as a development challenge. The methodology is analyzing the hang-over of colonial division that is a cog in the wheel of progress in the 21st century. Even as it is, the Crisis between the Fulani-herdsmen and the Farmers has been in the burner with devastating consequences of confused methods to solving them. While the Federal Government of Muhammadu Buhari is favouring Grazing Colonies, a fall out from the various states that have implemented the anti-grazing laws, most states in the federation have rejected such solution. This indeed has been very well criticized as failure by the former president Olusegun Obasanjo. Ironically, the RWANDAN genocide has similar trajectory in the history of ethnic cleansing and pogrom, the crisis in Bosnia at the Heart of Europe, has similar history of biased media reportage, and some other pockets of crisis in Africa and around the world. Solutions have been identified and recommendations offered.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is as old as man himself. No one is ever sure when it will end. So, it is part of human beings as political animals and will continue to be part of our human history. Conflict as part of our existence is not actually a problem or issues to worry about. The actual problem is how we manage the various features of conflict that is fuelled not only by seemingly incompatible interests and values, but also by hostilities" (Jeong 2008). The Nigerian success story of amalgamation of diverse groups in 1914 has radically shifted from a platform for peaceful coexistence to an arena of hostility, conflict and gradual disintegration. The popular explanations for this unexpected situation include colonialism, corruption, political instability and protracted ethnic and religious conflicts. The spate of these insecurity, conflicts and threats to lives and properties in Nigeria has reached alarming proportions, despite the growing democratic system (Adisa & Abdulraheen, 2012).

There has been a plethora of conflicts (that are) political, religious, ethnic and communal, that dotted the landscape of Nigeria before and since the restoration of civilian rule in May 1999. These huge numbers of conflicts are not without connection; according to some observers, to journalists who by their biased, sensational, pre-occupied with commercial gains, unpatriotic among other allegations, when reporting conflicts (Adisa & Abdul) cause more conflicts in the society. There are cases across the globe, where the media have been used as tools to inflame grievances and accelerate the escalation towards violent conflicts. Rwanda is a good example where radio was used to lay the groundwork for genocide (In 1994). In Serbia, television was manipulated to whip up ethnic tensions prior to civil war. In the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, territorial disputes were aggravated by the media (Forges: 1999) to mention just a few. This paper is an attempt to the question of sensationalization and internationalization in conflict.

CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

Sensationalization

Communication according to Ekeanyanwu August 2007 is so vital in our lives that no nation has been known to exist without it. It is the exchange of ideas, views, information, experiences and the sharing of meanings between persons, nations, societies and cultures. This necessitates the continuous study in the area of communication and how it affects different societies and people. The sensational exchange of idea, views, information etc by religious and ethnic leaders as well as media personnel (journalist) usually cause harm than the impending peaceful coexistence among humans. Sensationalization is in this paper referred to any statement, news, information, ideas, views etc that is consciously expressed by any agent(s) of communication that will result in causing intense interest, curiosity,

anxiety or emotion over a conflict situation. It is a tool used to exaggerate and frame up stories that are bias and incredible, to instigate conflict in the community.

Internationalization

Conflict is the bread and butter of journalism. This is expected because conflict sells, and as a result leads to internationalization. Take any newspapers, listen to any news broadcast, and watch documentaries on television and one is confronted by stories with potentials to spark conflict.

The situation is not different in Nigeria, example the yet to be found missing Chibok girls, prior to the unfortunate abduction of the girls, not too many people are aware of the existence of Chibok as a community. This phenomenon has made Chibok to be internationally known through powerful news of the media (i.e CNN, BBC, Aljazeera etc) with its vast international reach. This news worthy event has drawn the attention of world leaders. Ethno – religious violence has bedeviled Nigeria as a sovereign and independent country since its return to democracy in 1999. The Boko Haram insurgency has continued to pose a serious threat to the country's security system and corporate political entity (Zenn, 2014). Since the violence re-emergence of the Boko Haram in 2010 the attacks and suicide bombing carried out by the group was increasing beyond the national boundary. It is evident that Boko Haram's activities had reach beyond the national borders of Nigeria, expanding international network that enables it to recruit and train members from the countries of the Sahara – Sahel region. The United Nation report was quoted to have linked Boko Haram with al-Qaeda in the land of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (Onuoha, 2014). The attack of a large prison in Bauchi in 2010 which freed more than 700 inmates, including the sect members by the Boko Haram shows how capable the group Boko Haram is in undermining the security of the country and exposes its weakness to the international community (VOA, 2012). The suicide bombing attack of the Boko Haram on United Nations headquarters in Abuja in 2011 in which twenty people were killed and more than sixty were injured (Nossiter, 2011) drew the attention of the international community about the threats of the sect that is new beyond the national issue.

Conflict

Conflict is actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. According to Brahm (2003), conflict can be interpersonal (internal or within oneself), interpersonal (two or more people) or prevalent conflict (affecting many people). Conflict is the result of many aspects of social life such as social disagreement, conflicts of interests, and fights between individuals, groups or organizations. In a broad sense, the concept of conflict has been stretched and molded to describe any

discord resulting from almost every aspect of social situations. Conflict can therefore occur between two individuals and groups of friends, within a family and between families within an ethnic group and between some ethnic groups, within an organization and between organizations, within a state and between states (Adisa and Abdulraheem 2012). Zartman (1991) sees conflict as the “violent exhibition or expression of incompatibility”. However, Ho-Won (2008) claims that conflict dates from the beginning of human history and will probably never end.

Religion

The etymology of religion is as old as man itself, but religion has variously been conceived in the variants of those who attempt a definition of the concept. Clifford (1973), view religion as a collection of cultural systems, belief systems, and world view that establishes symbols that relate to humanity to spirituality and sometimes, the moral values. The word religion, many a time, has been interchangeably used as faith or belief system. However, the growth of religion has assumed various forms in different environments or cultures. In some climes, emphasis is placed on belief system as it concerns the religion, while in other environments emphasis is largely placed on religious practice. There are various theories that explain the origin of religion. Greg M. Epstein (2010) P. 109 a humanist chaplain at Harvard University, in his statement, belief that all world’s major religions were founded on the principle that divine beings or forces can promise a level of justice in a supernatural realm that cannot be perceived in this natural one. Some anthropologists like John Monaghan and Peter Just in (2000) held the view that many of the world religions appear to have begun as revitalization movements of some sort, as the vision of a charismatic prophet forces the imaginations of people seeking a more comprehensive answer to their problems than they feel is provided by everyday beliefs. Charismatic individual have emerged at many times and places in the world. It seems that the key to long – term success and many movements come and go with little long – term effect – has relatively little to do with the prophets, who appear with surprising regularity, but more to do with the development of a group of supporters who are able to institutionalize the movement.

Back home, Nigeria pride itself with variants of religions that equally vary regionally. The above goes to explain the regional and ethnic divisions that have produced sectarian conflicts among the Nigeria people. Osita (2004) maintained that, even though Nigeria is apparently divided between Islam and Christianity, between the North and South respectively, it is glaringly evident that there is a wide spread belief, albeit suppressed for political reason, in traditional religious practices.

According to Onuegbu (2012) statistics from world religious survey indicates

that 50.4% of Nigeria's population was Muslim, 50.8% were Christians (15% protestant, 13.7% Catholic, and 19.6% other Christians, and followers of other religious faiths were 1.4%, BBC News (2007) in the core Northern Nigeria, they are largely Moslem faithful. In the middle belt, there are good number of both Muslims and Christians. In the Yoruba land (Western Nigeria), there is even distribution of the population between the Christian and Muslim faiths. However, the South – East is predominantly Christians with great beliefs in the Christian – religious practices, Anglicanism, Methodists, Catholicism and very few trado – beliefs. But the region of Niger Delta is mainly Christian dominated. Good proportions of Muslims in Nigeria are Sunni, but a fair share of Shiite and Sufi also exist alongside a minority of Almadiya. Aside the major Islamic and Christian faiths in Nigeria, other minority spiritual and religions groupings in Nigeria are: Hinduism, Judaism, the Bahai faith. Christian (Syncretic merger of Christianity and Islam, McLaughlin (2006).

Ethnicity

Ethnicity as a concept is an immensely complete phenomenon that portrays different perceptions. Even a search through the literature has revealed that ethnicity is a relatively new concept and it made its first appearance in the literature less than half a century ago. According to Osaghale (1992), ethnicity refers to a social formation resting upon culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and cosmology. A belief in common organs and a broadly agreed common history provide and inheritance of symbols heroes, values and hierarchies, and conform social identities of both insiders and outsiders. Ethnic culture is one of the important ways people conceive of themselves and culture and identity are closely intertwined. As a social construct, ethnicity can be regarded as the employment of ethnic identity and differences to gain advantage in situations of competition, conflict and cooperation (Osaghale, 1995). In his own conception of what ethnicity is, Despress (1975) defined it as largely a subjective process of status identification. Hence ethnic groups are formed to the extent that the actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and other for the purpose of interaction or relationship that exist among people of different ethnic groups who decides to base their relationship on the difference, such exist when two or more ethnic groups normally brings about competition on issues like power or wealth. The concise oxford dictionary defines ethnicity as how the aspirations and interest of ethnic groups are pursued in relation to their groups. To help it off, someone can say ethnicity is the contextual discrimination by members of one ethnic against the others in the process of competition for national resources.

Media

This is simply referred to as communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media includes every broadcasting and narrow casting medium such as newspapers, magazines, TV, Radio, Billboards, direct mail telephone, fax, and internet (Business Dictionary.com). The media is the main ways that large numbers of people receive information and entertainment (Oxford Dictionaries), e.g. the television, radio, newspapers and the internet. The media many a times are being accuse of influencing the ethno-religion conflicts across the globe as is the case here in Nigeria through their news coverage and reporting of conflicts. There reports on conflicts most often are to the extreme which can escalate conflicts. According to Muzna Shakeel, Karachi, (undated) the role of media has become one way of trading and marketing of products and prejudices. The media claimed to be governed by righteousness and equity. But greed and self – aggrandizement has poisoned its virtues. Media is in charge of

- Information
- Education
- Entertainment
- Advertising
- Correlation of parts of society.

Media has had a bad effect on a generation, mainly because; youth are strongly influenced by media. Teenagers and children wish to follow the people who get recognized and do what they do to get noticed. Sometimes, they focus on bad part of the media and strive to be part of it. However, many are not succumbed to a life of crime. The media affects people's perspective. It can be considered as watch dog of political democracy. If the media identifies its responsibility and work sincerely and honestly, then it can serve as a great force in building the nation.

The Synopsis of Religion, Media and Ethnic Division in Nigeria

Mischievous and irresponsible reportage of comments from certain sections of the press on religious issues actually heighten or promote religious conflict or crisis in Nigeria. This prompted Momoh et al (1987) to state that the press reports on the Kafanchan riots were highly exaggerated. Many a time, the statements made by religious leaders on religious issues and quoted of context. This kind of press reports and comments inflame passions and promote religious ill-feeling and intolerance.

Oghenekavwe (2004: p. 89) in a research carried out on "the influence of media coverage of religious crisis in Nigeria clearly reveals the extent to which press media in Nigeria have been accused as having contributed to the ethno-religious conflicts in the past. The 1998 – 1999 crises that rocked the city of Warri is an

example of the influence of media coverage of religious crisis in Nigeria. Oghenekevwe (2004) found that the coverage of the reports by vanguard newspaper, owned by an Urhobo man, actually sensationalized its stories in favour of the Ijaws against the Itsekiris in Warri. Such sensational coverage, the researcher concluded actually exacerbated the crisis that claimed so many lives and properties worth billions of naira were lost. This finding from Oghenekevwe's research therefore corroborates the many arguments in many quarters that the media reports have been of the causes of ethnic and religious crises in Nigeria over the years.

Omenugha (2013) observes that "crisis situations, headlines are sensationalized to make sales in the Nigerian media". The author exemplifies thus: Boko Haram strikes Kano, killing two Igbo businessmen" "How Christian youths killed by driver – Dr. Zainab Kwanu", to mention a few. Galadima cited in Asemah (2011) notes that journalists need to be aware of the fact that reports of crises have the tendencies to either escalate or diminish crises. The reports of crisis generate reactions from different people within and outside the place where the crises are taking place. According to Galadima, during the year 2000 crisis in Kaduna, the media reported that virtually all the Igbo in Kaduna have been killed and this made the Igbo in Aba and Onitsha to begin to attack all the Northerners in an attempt to revenge. The reporting of any conflict can influence the situation in many ways. Gardener (2001) cited in Ochagwu (2011) affirms that media coverage can strongly influence how the parties, both inside and outside relate to conflict and the "players" within it by the choice of stories that are covered or omitted, the sources used and the stand that is taken toward ethical reporting.

Findings by Kurawa (2000) and Pate (2003) cited in Doki (undated) reveal how the Nigeria media escalate tensions and promote diversity along ethno-religious lines in the country, through their reports. They illustrate thus: "... for the first since 1966, the Jihadists will be confronted by a determined southern army to teach the northern troublemakers a lesson once and for all" (Reuben Abat, the Guardian, March 31, 2000). "Kaduna boils again, three churches burnt", (the Guardian, October 7, 2001). "Plateau is the only predominantly Christian state in the north and they are not happy about this" (Punch, September 10, 2001) "Wild, Wild North: Bin Laden's men unleash terror in Kano", (The news, Vol. 17, October 29, 2001). e.g. "Head of State and governor behind Jos mayhem" (the Sunday Tribune, September, 2001). "... Whether they like it or not, we will not allow any Muslim to be president of Nigeria again. I am declaring this as president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)". Religious differences alone are not the basis for these violent conflict, the media and parties in the conflict use religion as rallying point for tribal

solidarity and propaganda purposes to attract support and assistance from other countries and across boundaries here in Nigeria. Yusuf (2002) illuminates that two months after the Jos riots, *tribune* newspaper in its conflict promoting style of reporting carried a front – page story attributing the riot to Christian girls forced to marry Muslims”. However, the reporter did not cite a single incident of such a forced marriage. In a front page story, the *guardian* of October 7, 2001 screamed: Kaduna boils again: Three churches burnt”, the news magazine Vol. 17 No. 8, August 27, 2001, in its coverage of the Tafawa Balewa crisis, made unsubstantiated claims that Muslims who had been killed and several driven out of Tafawa Balewa had deployed foreign mercenaries to fight on their side. It reported that “each foreign jihadist was paid N8, 000.00 to help execute the war”. From Yusuf’s illustrations of media reports it is evident that the media really instigate and sustain violent conflicts in Nigeria. In the same vein, Ahmed (2002) clarifies that “as ethno-religious conflicts engulfed the city of Jos in September 2001, this day newspaper reportedly carried a report that triggered a reprisal/attack on Hausa Fulani in the South – Eastern States in its edition of September 10, 2001”.

The (Nigerian) state is directly immersed in the contradictions of a society, which are defined largely, in terms of regional, ethnic and religious cleavages, which creates severe constraints for its institutionalization... the consequence is that bourgeois state formation is impaired by the internalization of ethnic (as well as religious) demands and pressure.

The above quotation is Egwu. S’ statement in his “state and class in Nigeria cited in N. Bagudu and Dakas (Eds) (2001). It goes to explain how ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria have produced dysfunctional effects on social integration and inter group relations in Nigerian nation building process. Religious conflict reinforces division in the Nigeria State. “This is often the case where such conflicts involve the so-called indigenous’ population who are Christians, Muslims or Traditionalists on one side and the so-called ‘non-indigenous’ population, as it is conceived of the Hausa – Fulani, who are in the main, Muslims, on the other, or even between ‘indigenous’ population versus settler’s who share same religious affiliation (institute of peace and conflict resolution strategic conflicts assessment consolidated and zonal reports in Nigeria, Abuja: 2003 p. 148).

Consequently, it has been shown that as a result of incessant conflicts in Kaduna, there have been demographic shifts from the so-called perceived “unsafe areas” to safe areas”, where boundaries are demarcated across religious divides. This tendency has negative repercussion for inter-religious and ethnic relations of the

moment and the future. For example, after the 2000 Shariah related conflicts in Kaduna, Muslims areas became "Mecca" with concentrations in Tudun – Wada, KawoDosa, AngwanSarki, AngwanMuazu, Rigasa and AngwanBadarawa. The Christian areas tagged "Jerusalem and Tel-Aviva" included Sabon Tasha, AngwanRimi, Nasarawa, Goningora, Narayi, parts of Makera and Kakuri (Gand, 2003) similarly, after 2001 crisis in Jos, the following changes took place. Muslim areas evolved as "Zamfara", and "Bin Ladin's Zone", to include; Bauchi Road, AngwanRogo, AngwanRimi and Gangare. Christian areas tagged "new Jerusalem" include; JentaAdamu, Gadabiyu, Kabong, Kufang, Gigiring, Apata, Chorbe, AngwanRukuba, Agwan Soya and Tudun Wada (Je'adayibe, G.D undated cited in Ani, Kelechi Johnmary 2012) The introduction of the sharia legal codes in some states of the country promoted religious intolerance that is still witnessed till date in Nigeria. Religious intolerance has manifested itself as a deliberate and violent move to stamp out what the members of a given religion believes to be an error in the religious thought and practices of the adherents of other religions within their Geo-religious environment. It is the blind refusal to study and observe as well as respect the views and tenants of other religions. It is a blind and fixated mental and psychologically negative attitude towards religious beliefs and practices that are contrary to one's cherished beliefs and practices (Ekwunife, A. cited in R.D, Abubakar et al (Eds) 1993). The introduction and re-introduction of sharia legal system in states like Kaduna, Niger, Zamfara, Borno, Bauchi, Kano etc led to the intensification of religious divide and heightened animosity in those areas, which were truce able to religious differences. It is worthy of note that some of the 'victims' of the implementation of these sharia legal codes were found in the three dominant religions of Nigerians. The fact that the sharia legal code became the basis of analysis of all aspect of life in those states, made the some of the non adherent of the Islamic religion, potential escape goats that must be slaughtered by the merciless hands of those that must easily find them to have engaged in behaviour, generally perceived as haram.

The activities of the men who fan the embers of religious violence have led to increasing cases of human insecurity in Nigeria. Following the activities of the Maitasine religious onslaught on northern parts of the country, thousands of lives were lost. Ethno-religious violence has created large scale physical displacement and forced relocation of individuals, families and groups. Religious conflicts have made many Nigerians to become "exiles in their own home". Even the 5 to 8 years Fulani headsmen clashes around states like Kaduna, Plateau, Benue, Zamfara, Adamawa, Taraba, Ekiti states all have their roots in ethnocentrism, prejudices, and stereotypes. The demonization and stigmatization of the Fulani tribe by especially

the ignorant western Nigerian Media that enjoy mass readership across the federation, has made matters worse. The headlines always are the Fulani Attack against the innocent Farmers. The story has always been the headsmen incursion into the Farmer's farms and subsequent attacks, any defence or reprisals, is met with even greater counter attack by the Fulani's, and the fear of their solidarity as a monolithic group from African countries. Today 2018, most states have enacted anti-grazing laws from their parliaments as the only legitimate means of warding off the unnecessary incursions of headers into farmer's territory, and to contain them in a particular place. This sparked off yet more resistance and conflict moiré than the laws can address. Scores of herd of cows have been killed, and lives destroyed from the headers and the local communities' first, in Zamfara, Adamawa, since 2017, then Nasarawa, and Plateau and to the Benue to Southern Kaduna. As religion always play the divisive role, in a statement carried by the media and the papers, Christian Association of Nigeria has issued warnings of the attack that seems they said to be one sided, citing the farmers as victims of the senseless killings of the Fulani headers. This went very viral with different opinions in the social media sending signals of serious divisions between the Christians and the Muslims. The Federal and State Governments have been at lost as to create buffer zones for the pastoralists of feeder areas of cattle colonies. All have their different approaches, methodologies, conveniences, and disadvantages. All have been criticised and seems that the fulanis rejected the approach due to the their basic cultural norms and cultural behaviours as nomadic by nature, and shifting grazing actually depends on the nature of the weather and the climatic conditions of the Tropical African Climate. Farooq Kperogi, describe the criminalisation and demonization of the Fulani's by the Nigerian Media as the culprit to the mass killings, hate and burning of 7 Fulani's in Benue. He described the Nigerian Media's sensationalization and stigmatization of 'Fulani Herdsmen' generalisation as unfair, just as the reality can be the fact that, amongst them, criminals can perpetrate their activities very different from the groups so demonised and stigmatized, which give grounds for wrong perception of the Fulani's as bad generally and the hate and attacks that usually follow by communities on citing the Fulani's anywhere. He contended that, the Fulanis have since been an integral part of the North and Nigeria doing what they are doing today (pastoral life) and living peacefully for hundreds of years. Besides, it is the fulanis that are the single source of meat and nutrition to the larger population of Nigeria.

With the recent arraignment of some newspapers in the court of jurisdiction to try them for unprofessional practices by the Presidency, little need to argue that, responsible, objective and analytical reporting by especially the print and broadcast

media leaves little to argue on the ethics and morals of the mirror of society as the fourth realm of the estate in Nigeria's democratic project. Reasons why the press enjoy the freedom it abuse have always been anchored on the constitutional provisions of free press, fundamental human rights and freedom of individual expressions, without a responsible media however, the headlines we read (Expect more Bloodshed in Benue) after bloody clashes and ethnic like cleansing in the Benue and the roasting of human beings as reprisal from a local community in a motor park such as displayed by some newspapers, or the biased columnists calling a Seating Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces a murderer, will surely be a guaranteed road to perdition.

CONCLUSION

Looking at the roles play in conflict situation the power of journalists is clearly apparent. As much as they start conflict, they can also play an important role in defusing tension, reducing and containing conflicts. It can do so by being deeply aware of the fragility of the Nigeria's social fabric, of the efforts being expended at unifying a country's polarized and ethicized and more importantly by objectively reporting conflict incidences as unfold (Adisa and Abdulraheem 2012). Media does not set out deliberately to end conflict (as this may not be within its powers), but through accurate and impartial news reporting, media contributes greatly to reducing conflicts (Howard, 2003). Through the media reports the parties in the conflict are provided an avenue for communication, which can be beginning point for meaningful dialogue among parties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Nigerian journalist need to use the freedom of information law, a legal instrument that empowers and enables to have access to official information during crisis situations and in the coverage of conflicts.
- The government, through its relevant agencies, should regularly brief the public whenever the nation is involved in a conflict situation.
- Government and media owners should support NUJ in the retraining of journalist background in journalism. Also, it should be made mandatory for practicing journalists to attend refresher courses especially in conflict reporting. As the practice in other countries, Nigerian journalists should be allowed to embed with security forces in conflict areas. This will allow for first hand, factual, and reliable information that can stimulate policy makers in taking action to end the conflict.
- Journalists should not allow their personal views and emotions as well as ethnic, religious, political and ideological sentiment to influence their reports on

conflicts as such may call to question the credibility of the report and put their lives at risk. In all cases the principle of fairness and accuracy should be apply.

- Journalists should have adequate knowledge of the history, politics, geography, etc, of the state, local government area or tribe, religion etc. of where they are covering conflicts.
- Newspapers and magazines should avoid undue sensationalism in casting headlines of conflict news. Journalists should be sensitive and cautious in reporting events that are capable of inflaming passions.
- Specialized Courts of ethics, morals and professionalism must address the abuse of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press with the professional body of journalist sanitizing their professions and NOT law out rightly proscribing them. An in house cleansing and professional applications of punitive measures by the body of esteem journalists by Nigerian Union of Journalists.
- NUJ to regulate the practice strictly to professionals with adequate qualifications, trainings and registration.

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