

ISLAMIC VIEW ON PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE OF VARIOUS RELIGIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Religious harmony and social progress are essential requirements for the growth and development of any Nation or even any congregation. Without both of them, it is difficult for a nation or a group of people to progress in different fields. Development is possible only when all the citizens of a country support the progress whole-heartedly. It is unquestionably true that without harmony, there can be no peace; and without peace there can be no progress. Religious harmony is of prime importance. People of different religious faiths coexist in pluralistic society; if any clash of ideas occurs, this may lead to serious disharmony which can hamper the progress of a society, and country. Societies and countries that ridden with the problems of disharmony are terribly backward. Large-scale religious and social violence and riots have periodically occurred in Nigeria since its independence from British colonial rule 1960. There no doubt that Nigeria still experience some kind of Ethno-religious conflicts on till this moment. This research provides an Islamic view on Peaceful Co-Existence of Various Religions in a Nation with different ethnics and religious. The researcher used the analytical method as well as aqli and Naqli (revealed Knowledge and Human Science) approach in explaining the issue and suggesting solutions. This research found that Since social progress and development depend so much upon peace and harmony, the people of Nigeria must maintain them by all means; they should come forward and resolve the issues that often fuel communal riots and strike by peaceful means.

Keywords: Islamic view, Peaceful Co-Existence, Various Religions.

Introduction

The principle underlying the relationship between Muslims and non- Muslims is coexistence. Allāh commands Muslims to treat other people kindly provided they do not manifestly declare malice towards them and to think well of all of people alike. A person who thoroughly explores the verses of the noble Qur`an will find that, in its entirety, it presents an integrated Qur`anic methodology concerning the treatment of non-Muslims. It is noteworthy to mention that the variation in the manner of treating non-Muslims does not stem from a methodological inconsistency; rather, it depends on the different attitudes of the people we deal with. People are different [with respect to behavior] and thus they must not be judged alike. It is considered a methodical injustice to generalize what has been made specific or to specify what has been left general in legal texts.

Just as there are individuals who accept Muslims' beliefs, there are others who differ with them. Among this latter group, there are some who merely present their opinions or beliefs and those who go as far as to attack those who differ with them. Therefore, both groups are treated differently.

Nigeria is characterized by more ethnic groups than most other countries in Africa. There are more than two hundred different tribes, and each tribe has its own language, although Nigeria fortunate enough to have not more than three religions, they are Islam, Christianity and the traditional religion or African tradition. Three ethnic or religious conflicts have stood out of

late: the issue of Niger Delta, ethnic conflict in Edo State and the most terrible one is Boko Haram violence that continues to persist.

Human Relation

Human relations is an important part to our social life. It is defined as relations with or between people, particularly in a workplace setting (Merriam, 2012). As Human Relation is very important in workplace because a company depends on good human relations through its organizational structure, it is important also in our social life and in Nation.

According to (Abdulazeez, 2013; Yildirim, 2006) Mankind is yearning for global peace. During the twentieth century a number of international treaties were signed declaring war as illegal in the settlement of disputes like the Covenant of the League of Nations, the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War and the Charter of United Nations. Despite these conventions, there have been wars and we have not seen the peace which was intended and agreed by the nations signatory to these conventions. These conventions failed to achieve the desired goal, because these human laws lack that moral and spiritual force which is essential for achievement of comprehensive peace. Without divine guidance and revealed truth, human laws lack force of conviction. Only divine moral laws can lead to universal peace and mould human conduct for international brotherhood and love. Those moral laws can be recognized by human minds only if those minds are untarnished of all pride and prejudice.

Within this context, we shall describe the Islamic principles for unity of mankind and mutual peaceful co-existence of different cultures and faiths. Among them the most important is common origin of mankind according to which all human beings have been “created of a single soul” (*Qur’ān. Al-Nisa* 4:1), and that all descended from the same parents (*Qur’ān. Al-Hujrat* 49:13), so there should not be any discrimination based on clan, creed or race (Yildirim, 2006).

The *Qur’ān* negates distinction on the basis of racial, linguistic and national grounds and it also identifies diversity as a sign of *Allāh* and hence to be respected. Different identities are for recognition – not for pride – and hence necessary and it should not lead to any conflict. Promoting divisiveness and hatred based on religious and cultural differences is absolutely against *Islām*.

Common conflicts in Nigeria

Although there are five main causes of conflict among the people, they are: information conflicts, values conflicts, interest conflicts, relationship conflicts, and structural conflicts (Valender, 2020), all conflict, violence and riots of Nigeria originated from one or two of the mentioned source of social conflict.

There are two common conflict in Nigeria, they are Social conflict and Religious violence.

First. Social conflict or Ethnic conflict is very common in Nigeria, it normally arises if ethnic groups compete for the same goal—notably power, access to resources, or territory. The interests of a society's elite class play an important role in mobilizing ethnic groups to engage in ethnic conflicts. Ethnic conflict is thus similar to other political interest conflicts.

Inter-communal land conflict occurs when at least two communities lay claim to the same piece of land or the use and ownership of land resources along their common border. Otiye and Albert (1999) report that the right to own and use land underlies most inter-communal land conflicts in Nigeria.

Second. Religious Violence. Coexistence is the pillar that sustains many aspects of human life. As highly sociable creatures, achieving a peaceful, effective, and harmonious coexistence not only helps to guarantee our survival as a group, but also helps to promote well-being and progress. Upon some isolated Religious Violence in Nigeria, Peaceful coexistence in Nigeria has consistently been proven possible. According to Alao (2019) “Religious violence is a term

that describes a phenomenon where religion is either the subject or object of violent behavior. Religious violence is, specifically, violence that is motivated by or in reaction to religious precepts, texts, or doctrines”. It involves all forms of violence against religious institutions, persons, objects, or when the violence is motivated to some degree by some religious aspect of the target or precepts of the attacker. This phenomenon does not only refer to violent acts committed by religious groups, but it also includes acts committed by secular group against groups. Thus, it is pluralistic in its incidence”.

Peaceful Co-Existence in the light of *Qur’ān*

The Holy *Qur’ān* makes it clear leaving no room for any doubt that the Muslims have to regard the Torah, Psalms and the Gospel as book of *Allāh* revealed to Moses, David and Jesus (may *Allāh* send His blessings on them) respectively and should believe in these and in all books of *Allāh* without any exception. They should believe in all prophets like Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Holy Quran refers repeatedly to the previous scriptures, Torah and the Gospels, and claims that its message does not differ from them. Instead, it claims to confirm and clarify the messages delivered through earlier prophets, and to correct misinterpretations of those messages made by the followers of the prophets who delivered them (Yildirim, 2006).

The same *dīn*(religion), the monotheistic religion, therefore, was accurately revealed before, the *Qur’ān* affirms, but those communities who received messages prior to the time of Muhammad became “doubtful and disconcerted”. Allah says:

“He prescribed for you the same religion He enjoined upon Noah, and what We inspired to you, and what We enjoined upon Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus: “You shall uphold the religion, and be not divided therein.(*Qur’ān. shurā* 42: 13).

Some deliberately ignored or abandoned the *dīn* (religion), others distorted it. The confirmation and the clarification of divine message was the mission of the prophet Muhammad(SAW). So Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not bring a new *dīn* but came to reestablish and confirm the prototype of Abraham religion, monotheism. Many Quranic verses and sayings of the prophet Muhammad are quoted to authenticate that fact (al-Aayed, 2016; Yahya, 2003).

“And who turns away from the religion of Abraham, except him who befools himself? Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous”. (*Qur’ān. Baqarah* 2:130).

Values and Beliefs shared by the People of the Book and Muslims

Besides Abraham as the common ancestor of all believers and among prophets respected by all, there are many beliefs and values which are common in Muslims and the People of the Book (*Ahli Kitab*). In the *Qur’ān*, God enjoins Muslims to say to the people of the Book:

“And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in the best manner possible...”29: 46).

All the true followers of these great religions believe that Allah has created the entire universe out of nothing and that He dominates all that exists with His omnipotence; believe that Allah is the originator and creator of man and all living things and that man posses a spirit infused by Allah; believe in the life -after-death, heavens and hell and angels ; and that God has created humans with certain destiny and purpose; believe that besides Jesus, Moses or Muhammad , Allah sent many prophets and messengers as Noah, Abraham, Joseph, David, Salmon throughout history and they love all these prophets. In many verses of the *Qur’an* , Muslims are advised not to make any division or distinction among prophets (Ibn Ishāq, 1987):
“Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes,

and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered” (al-Baqarah 2: 136).

Special respect and reverence has been shown in the Qur’an for righteous people of the Book : **“They are not all alike. Among the People of the Book there is an upright community who recites the revelation of God during the night and fall prostrate before Him.” (3:113-115)**

Muslims love Jesus, believe in all his miracles and noble morality and believe in his ascension, and have faith that he will come back to the world again to save humanity . The Qur’an is definite in its ascertainment that Jesus is alive and that he will come back again to this world. Prophet Mohammed (SAW), announced in great detail that Jesus would come back to the earth miraculously in the last days and bring peace, justice and happiness by uniting Christians and Muslims in a common religion and morality. This is God’s great and wonderful promise and no doubt it will be fulfilled (Abdulazeez, 2013).

This fact is also stated several times in the New Testament that Jesus will return to earth.

“So Christ ...will appear a second time... to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.” (Heb. 9: 28).

The Qur’an instructs Muslims to respect Jewish and Christian places of worship, monasteries, churches and synagogues,

“if God had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where God’s name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. God will certainly help those who help Him – God is All-Strong, Almighty.” (al-Hajj 22:40).

As the People of the Book have moral sense and know what is lawful and what is not. For this reason, meals prepared by the people of book are lawful for Muslims to eat. In the same way, permission has been given to Muslims to marry women of People of the Book. On this subject Qur’an says:

“Today all good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of those given the Book is also lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. So are chaste women from among the believers and chaste women among the People of the Book, once you have given them their dowries in marriage...” (al-Maidah 5: 5).

Mutual Coexistence: A Salient Feature of Islam

Islamic history shows that Muslims and non-Muslims existed in peace in Madinah (first Islamic State) and in the successive states. Many treaties and pacts were signed between Muslims and non-Muslims. Two treaties are very important in the earlier history of *Islām* that show tolerance and respect to other religions.

In Madinah, the Constitution of Madinah was prepared under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad in 622 AD, to meet the needs of people of different beliefs, and was put into practice as a written legal contract. Different communities belonged to different religions (Judaism, Christianity, and *Islām*) and races that had enmity towards one another for more than 100 years became parties to this pact and ultimately could actually live side by side (al-Aayed, 2016; Yildirim, 2006).

According to the Constitution of Madinah, everyone was free to adhere to any belief or religion or to make any political or philosophical choice. People sharing the same views could come together and form a community. Everyone was free to exercise his own justice system. However, anyone who committed a crime would be protected by no-one. The parties to the contract would engage in co-operation with one another, provide support for each other, and would remain under the protection of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Conflicts between the parties would be brought before the Messenger of God. This contract was in force from 622 to 632 AD. Through this document, the tribal structures which had formerly been based on blood and kinship were abolished, and people of different cultural, ethnical and geographical backgrounds came together and formed a social unity. The Constitution of Madinah is an excellent example of peaceful coexistence among peoples of different religions (Ibn Ishāq, 1987).

Similarly the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) gave full freedom to the Christians of Najran to offer prayers in their own way in the Mosque – *Masjid-i- Nabawi* in Madinah.

The noblest monument of enlightened tolerance is the charter which the prophet Muhammad granted to the monks of the monastery of St.Catherine , near mount Sinai and to all Christians .This remarkable document , which has been faithfully preserved by the annalists of *Islām* , displays a marvelous breadth of view and liberality of conception. By it, the Prophet secured to the Christians privileges and immunities which they did possess even under sovereigns of their own creed; and declared that any Muslim violating and abusing what was therein ordered, should be regarded as a violators of God’s testament, a transgressor of His Commandments, and a slighter of His faith. He undertook himself, and enjoined on his followers, to protect the Christians, to defend their churches, the residences of their priests, and to guard them from all injuries. They were not to be unfairly taxed, no bishop was to be driven out of his bishopric, no Christians was to be forced to reject his religion; no monk was to be expelled from his monastery ; no pilgrim was to be detained from his pilgrimage. Nor were the Christians churches to be pulled down for the sake of building mosque or houses for the Muslims. Christians women married to Muslims were to enjoy their own religion, and not to subjected to compulsion or annoyance of any kind on that account. If Christians should stand in need of assistance for the repair of their churches or monasteries ,or any matter pertaining to their religion , the Muslims were to assist them. If the Muslims be engaged in hostilities with outside Christians, no Christians resident among Muslims be treated with contempt on account of his creed. Any Muslim so treating a Christian be accounted recalcitrant to the prophet (Abdulazeez, 2013; Ibn Ishāq, 1987).

Unity Within Diversity

The term used for diversity or difference in the Qur'an is *ikhtilaf*. Overall, the concept is seen positively in Islam. Differences of language and race between human beings are seen in the Qur'an as a sign of God (*Ayat Allah*), just as differences between the heavens.

Islam recognizes great diversity within human beings. We come from different backgrounds and traditions. Unity Within Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

The Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet (Sunna) clearly give enough evidence that Islam considers diversity as a sign of the divine creation and supports equality of human beings without any form of discrimination be it gender, race, cultural, or other forms of diversity.

According to Takim (2021) The term used for diversity or difference in the Qur'an is *ikhtilaf*. Overall, the concept is seen positively in Islam. Differences of language and race between human beings are seen in the Qur'an as a sign of God (*Ayat Allah*), just as differences between the heavens and the earth and between night and day are also signs of God. The implication is that such differences are signs of God's overwhelming powers of creation. Allah says “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous¹ of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Aware”. (Qur'an 49:13).

This verse of Qur'an indicates that human beings are created in different tribes and nations so that they may know and understand each other. Thus, human beings are not to fight or quarrel based on their differences.

The Prophet of Islām (SAW) has emphasized on the issue of religious coexistence with the followers of different divine religions. The following are some examples of the Prophetic treatment with them.

1. “Whoever annoys a Dhimmii (a Jew or Christian living in an Islamic state) then I am his enemy and whoever I am his enemy I will be his enemy in hereafter”.(Abu Da’ud: 3052).

2. “Whoever Muslim acts unjustly with a confederate or diminishes his right or overburden him or takes away something from him out of his desire, then I will be his enemy in the Hereafter.” (Abu Da’ud: 2926:).

This diverse and colourful Islamic world community is flourishing as never before, despite widespread attack. What may look threatening may in fact be creating allies for the Ummah, allies we have never considered before.

Islām and Religious Coexistence

Shaykh Mansour Leghaei (n.d) said: “Although the idea of religious liberty and tolerance is a new issue in the West initiated with philosophers of the 18th century like John Locke and M. Voltaire, it has always been a simple fact for Muslims, clearly declared in their religion”.

A glance at Islamic literature fully supports the idea of religious coexistence. *Islām* not only respects other divine religions and acknowledges their rights, but also prohibits any forms of contempt towards them. Any Islamic state is also obliged by Shari’ah to provide welfare and support to the followers of other divine religions equal to the Muslims.

Islamic Principles to Achieve Religious Coexistence

In order to establish a peaceful religious coexistence in society, *Islām* has suggested four principles:

1. No Compulsion in Religion

No doubt, there are different factors involved in forming people’s opinions and faiths. The physical structure and the organic compounds, time, place, diet, education and so many other factors have inevitable effects on people’s faiths. Thus, the healthy way to change their opinion is to encounter them from their origins. Utilizing force and compulsion not only cannot change the hearts of people, but it may in many instances increase hatred and animosity(al-Aayed, 2016; Yahya, 2003).

To this end, the Holy Qur’an clearly denounces the use of the force in terms of religion. It is ultimately the right of people to choose any religion they are happy with, and the duty of the Prophets is not more than educating people and reminding them of the right path. They have never been authorized to force people to the Truth (Ibn Ishāq, 1987).

The following Ayat are the examples of many:

1: “There shall be no compulsion in religion; the right way has become distinct from the wrong way.” (al-Baqarah 2:256)

2: “Had your Lord willed, everyone on earth would have believed. Will you compel people to become believers?!” (Yunus 10:99).

2. Logical Debate and Discussion

Islām whilst respecting other religions and beliefs may disagree with some of their teachings, finding them illogical, and hence invites their adherents to open discussion and debate in a peaceful and logical manner far from any type of fanaticism and prejudice.

The following *Āyāt* are the examples of this approach:

1: **“And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in the best manner possible, except those who do wrong among them. And say, “We believe in what was revealed to us, and in what was revealed to you; and our God and your God is One; and to Him we are submissive.”** (al-Ankabut 29:46)

2: **“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good advice, and debate with them in the most dignified manner. Your Lord is aware of those who stray from His path, and He is aware of those who are guided.”** (an-Nahl 16:125).

3. Divine Religions, Grades of one School

Judaism, Christianity and Islām have a great deal in common: they are all based on monotheism and are committed to increase justice in the world, and the accountability before God. Their historic roots go back to Prophet Abraham and, as such, they are often described as ‘Abrahamic Faith’. They are also the basis of great world civilizations (al-Aayed, 2016; Yahya, 2003).

Therefore, despite the followers of other religions who consider themselves the chosen nation and the only saved ones, Islām considers all of the divine religions as different grades of the one school. From the Islamic point of view each new divine religion has been the upgraded version of the previous one, prescribed to complete its teachings (Yahya, 2003).

All of the Prophets are the teachers of one school, teaching different grades according to the requirements of the people of their age. Hence, if hypothetically all of them descend to earth they were to live together peacefully and each will acknowledge his successor and the one who has come after him.

The following Ayat are vividly revealing this idea.

“...Say, “We believe in God; and in what was revealed to us; and in what was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Patriarchs; and in what was given to Moses and Jesus; and in what was given to the prophets—from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we surrender.” (al-Baqarah 2:135-136).

“Those who believe, and those who are Jewish, and the Christians, and the Sabaeans—any who believe in God and the Last Day, and act righteously—will have their reward with their Lord; they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve..” (al-Baqarah 2:62).

4. The Principle of Righteousness and Justice

The last suggestion prescribed by *Islām*, to achieve living in harmony among people of different cultures and religions, is that *Islām* has always advocated for the principle of justice and righteousness within humankind. Muslims are encouraged to deal kindly and justly with all people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike with the exception of those who are fighting Muslims. The Holy *Qur’an* revealing the above fact utters:

“As for those who have not fought against you for your religion, nor expelled you from your homes, God does not prohibit you from dealing with them kindly and equitably. God loves the equitable.” (al-Mutma’innah 60:8).

Historical Cases

1: The Treaty of Sinai: In the year 2 A.H. the Prophet of Islam (SAW) signed a treaty with the Christians of Sinai Land which was written by Imam Ali (RA). A part of that treaty reads: “I (Prophet Muhammad) promise that I will not change their priests and monks nor do I expel them from their worshipping places. I do not prohibit their pilgrims from their travels, nor do I destroy their churches. I do not convert any churches to mosques and whichever Muslim

does so has violated God's covenant... Muslims should not force them to anything. They must be kind to them and respect them all... Should their churches require any repair, Muslims should help them as much as they can and they should allow Christians practice their rituals..."

2: The Treaty of Najran: Najran was a village in the border of Yemen. The following treaty was signed between the Prophet and the Christians of Najran in the year 9 A.H. in a situation that Muslims with no doubt had an upper hand over the Christians, and yet the Prophet did not take advantage of their miserable situation.

A part of the treaty reads: "No priest or monk should be expelled from his church or its surroundings. No Muslim has the right to humiliate them. Our army shall not occupy their lands..."

It is interesting to note that according to the authority of Halabi when the delegate of the Christians of Najran came to Medina to negotiate the treaty it was the time of their prayer. They asked the Prophet of Islām if they could pray beforehand. The Prophet gave them the permission to pray in the Mosque, where they all prayed facing the east (al-Aayed, 2016).

3: Respecting a dead Jew: It is quoted from the authority of Jabir Ibn Abdullah that: "A Jewish funeral was passing where the Prophet and we were sitting. The Prophet in respect of the dead body stood up. We surprisingly asked: 'O Messenger of Allah! Isn't he a Jew?!' The Prophet replied: 'was he not a soul'"(Bukhari: 1313).

Islam's message of civilisational coexistence

According to Nasharudin Mat Isa (2017) Islam, in its proper form, is the message of civilisational coexistence, the confident navigation of the perils and tribulations that life affords mankind, in that fellow Muslims are brothers in faith while non-Muslims are brothers in humanity. It is the message of the pursuit of justice and peace.

He also said " Wasatiyyah implies the pursuit of excellence, and of Islam as a holistic way of life through practices of moderation, excellence and justice. Staying upon the path of wasatiyyah requires the pursuit of knowledge and excellence, in order to dispense justice while acting in moderation and thus combating extremism"(Nasharudin Mat Isa, 2017).

Muhammad taught his companions to treat everyone, regardless of belief and background, with equality, respect, and tolerance. A neighbour, he said, has rights over you, and this extended to mean an entire community. One of Muhammad's first acts in Medina was to establish an agreement with the Jews which would protect them, respect their beliefs and give them equal rights. Later, when Christians arrived in the city Muhammad arranged for them to stay in the mosque where they held their religious services alongside Muslims who prayed in the same space (al-Aayed, 2016).

Diversity and pluralism is integral to the message of the Qur'ān, "God made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one other (not that ye may despise each other)" (Al-Hujrat 49:13). Islamic civilisation is testament to this principle of coexistence and it took pride in combining the geniuses of all races, faiths and backgrounds to shape its success. Christians, Jews, Muslims and those of other faiths and backgrounds worked side by side in hospitals, schools and other public institutions. Caliph Harun al Rashid who ruled in the eighth century appointed a Christian as Director of Public Instruction who oversaw all schools and colleges. In Andalusian Spain, Jews were sent by the Muslim ruler as ambassadors to other parts of Europe. Islamic civilisation attracted people from all over the world to join in this freedom and coexistence (Yahya, 2003).

In today's climate of hostility and prejudice, Muhammad's words are ever more relevant: "Do you want me to point out to you something that will enable you love each other? Spread peace amongst yourselves."

Principles of Peaceful Co-existence in Nigeria

The researcher suggest the following principles for the Peaceful Co-existence in Nigeria.

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. we have to promote inter-state relations based on justice, mutual respect and good neighbourliness to ensure National peace, security and harmony.
2. Mutual non-aggression between the followers of various religion. There should be a mutual effort to promote confidence and encourage friendly relations, mutual respect and cooperation between all Nigerians irrespective of different religion and tribes.
3. Equality, Justice and mutual benefit, means to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, rule of law, democracy and accountability in all Nigerian States in accordance with their constitutional and legal systems.
4. Returning Islamic studies to public schools. This is very important to solve the multi problem that we have in Nigeria. the purpose of education in Islam is to associate and balance physical and spiritual development of humankind.
5. Promote proper Islamic teaching to Nigeria. The Nigerian Muslims should disseminate, promote and preserve the Islamic teachings and values based on moderation and tolerance, promote Islamic culture and safeguard Islamic heritage, they should protect and defend the true image of Islam, to combat defamation of Islam and encourage dialogue among civilisations and religions.

Conclusion

Islamic teachings guarantee peace in every sphere of life. They contain many injunctions for settling disputes between people and nations with the aim of establishing peace . The highest goal of *Islām* is to lead the soul to the “Abode of Peace” by guiding to live a virtuous life and to establish inner harmony with the help of Heaven. *Islām* has been reminding its followers over the ages that there is no possibility of peace on earth without peace with Heaven, and today it is called upon to also assert that peace with Heaven requires, as never before, peace between messages that , through divine Wisdom, have descended from heaven over the ages. Since social progress and development depend so much upon peace and harmony, the people of Nigeria must maintain them by all means; they should come forward and resolve the issues that often fuel communal riots and strike by peaceful means. Nigerian is a democratic country where all issues can be resolved through dialogues. So in place of using violence they must use dialogue to settle the issues.

The Nigeria Government along with the people, must formulate a nationalistic policy aimed at promoting national integration and harmony, and implement this policy strictly. Education policy, foreign policy, and all the other policies must aim at promoting national interest. Nation must be supreme; all the rest must be subservient to it.

Any person or element that harms or undermines national integration must be strictly dealt with. Schools can play a great role. The children must be repeatedly told the important of Peaceful Co-Existence of Various Religions in Nigeria. Religious leaders can play a very crucial role in this regard.

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