

## EFFECTS OF VIOLENT-CONFLICTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN: AN ISLAMIC PANACEA

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### Abstract

Conflict among human beings is natural and it turns devastating only when it is mismanaged or when violence is introduced for its resolution. The contemporary world is replete with violent conflicts. These are caused by injustice, ravenousness and vain personal or group interests on one hand and by the necessity to resist oppression and aggression in struggle against enemies who repress the truth on the other. Women and children are the most vulnerable to the devastating effects of these conflicts which include murder, rape, (sexual) slavery, trafficking, child labour, force marriage, prostitution, displacement, poverty among other social deprivations. The effects markedly inhibit their development in the society. Islam being a comprehensive system of life provides preventive and curative measures to curb and or eradicate the escalation and effects of violent-conflicts in human society. Using descriptive and analytical methods, this paper interprets these Islamic teachings as enshrined in the Qur'an and Sunnah and explains how best they could be applied to address the effects of violent-conflicts on women and children in modern societies. It has found that peaceful coexistence, peaceful management of conflict resolution, reconciliation, pardon, protection of the ethics of war and relations with war captives, justice to all including enemies, tenderness to women and children, equality of mankind and superiority of moral values, etc., represent the Islamic tools in this regard. It concludes that these Islamic practicable tools are relevant and re-applicable to the modern situation. They should therefore be adopted and implemented without further ado. This is imperative for peaceful coexistence, unity and universal brotherhood of mankind.

**Key Words:** Conflict, Violence, Islam, Dialogue, Reconciliation

### Introduction

Allah has created mankind from a single pair and then put them on earth in different shapes, colours, languages, tribes and nations (Qur'an 4:1, 49:13). He further declared that as a sign of His glory (Qur'an 30:22). They are also variegated in physical and mental capabilities and abilities. Their interests do also conflict with those of one another. Mankind on the other hand has two paradoxical instinctive tendencies which alternately influence and overcome their actions and inactions. They are mischievous and covetous but also averse to injustice and aggression (Qur'an 33: 72, 95:4). These contending tendencies bring about peace, conflict and war as natural phenomena in the evolution of human society.

Conflict of ideas and interests among people is therefore not a problem and it does not pose any threat to peace and peaceful coexistence. It is when

conflict turned violent that it becomes the opposite of peace. Peace is paramount for the existence and development of culture, civilization, religion and community. The reassurance that one is safe as to life and property is absolutely necessary for the mind to operate in any long term or constructive manner. As much as peace is desired, legitimate uprising, self-defense and or war-fare is a necessity purposely to resist aggression and oppression, to defend against enemies and to overcome those who repress the truth (Ayanda 2006: 134).

The purpose of this paper is to identify the causes and manifestations of violent conflicts in the modern world which is characterized by unrest, uprising and wars. It also deciphers their effects on the development of women and children in the society. The paper analyses the above based on the Islamic perspective and proffers applicable ways to

curtail the violent conflicts and their effects from the Islamic heritage.

### Violent-Conflicts in Human Societies

It is pertinent to define the key concepts of the paper for better understanding of its discourse. This section therefore sheds lights on the concepts of conflict, violence and violent-conflicts. It further traces the manifestation and causes of violent-conflicts in human societies and especially in the contemporary world. Conflict is a state of opposition and disagreement between persons, ideas or interests (Wordweb Dictionary). According to Coser (cited in Joshua and Jegede 2013:38) "conflict

is a struggle over values and claims over status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals".

Violence is an act of aggression and a turbulent state resulting in injuries and destruction (Wordweb Dictionary). Joshua and Jegede (2013: 37-38) defined violence as: "the use or threat of physical act carried out by an individual(s) or a group of people within a geographical enclave against another individual(s) or a group of people and or property, with the intent to cause injury, death of person(s), or damage, or destruction to property".

Conflict therefore, may or may not be conterminous with violence. If a disagreement and opposition between people or group is not occasioned with threat or actual destruction of lives and property, it remains a normal conflict. The conflict which is destructive is the kind termed violent-conflict. Violent-Conflict is therefore any act of aggregation that results in injuries and destruction between opposing persons or groups in ideas and interests.

Though conflict is an inevitable part of human life, violent-conflict is resistible and avertable. The first two incidents of violent-conflict which were occasioned by threat and actual destruction of life happened at the very beginning of human life according to Islamic tradition. The Qur'an narrates the first incident which was the violence of Satan (Iblis) against Adam thus:

We have indeed created you, and then formed you. We then said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves before Adam!" They all prostrated themselves, except for Iblis: he was not one of those who prostrated themselves. And [God] said: "What has prevented you from prostrating yourself when I commanded you?" Answered [Iblis]: "I am nobler than he: You created me out of fire, while You created him out of clay." [God] said: "Off with you hence! It is not for you to show your arrogance here. Get out, then; you will always be among the humiliated." Said he: "Grant me a respite until the Day when all will be raised [from the dead]." God replied: "You shall indeed be among those granted respite." [Iblis] said: "Since You let me fall in error, I shall indeed lurk in ambush for them all along Your straight path, and I shall most certainly fall upon them from the front and from the rear, and from their right and from their left; and You will find most of them ungrateful." (Qur'an 7: 11-17)

This anecdote reveals the rivalry, envy and antagonism of Satan against Adam which resulted in his threat to alienate him and his progeny from the right path which shall ultimately lead to their ruin. The second violent-conflict occurred between the children of Adam and it resulted to active destruction of life. The Qur'an succinctly narrates:

Relate to them in all truth the story of the two sons of Adam: how each offered a sacrifice, and it was accepted from one of them while it was not accepted from the other. [The latter] said: "I will surely kill you." [The other] replied: "God accepts only from those who are God-fearing. Even if you lay your hand on me to kill me, I shall not lay my hand on you to kill you; for I fear God, the Lord of all the worlds. I would rather you should add your sin against me to your other sins, and thus you will be destined for the Fire; since that is the just retribution of wrongdoers." His evil soul drove him to kill his brother; and he murdered him, and thus he became one of the lost. (Qur'an 5:27-30)

This was the beginning of murder in human history. The tendency of violence continued among mankind that no generation escaped it throughout the history. But the extent to which it occurs in the contemporary world is very dangerous. There have been violent- conflicts within and among different groups in different parts of the world. Sometimes the conflict is across national boundaries while sometimes they are within the same nation and often between people who have lived together for a long time. Examples of some of these conflicts include Rwanda, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Liberia, DR Congo, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic, Armenia, former Yugoslavia, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Recent Egypt uprising which engulfed so many lives, Guatemala, Northern Ireland and Ukraine etc.

Nigeria has had her fair share of the violent-conflicts ranging from the uprising in the 1960's to the civil war and rise of the ethno-religious conflicts that began in the mid 1980's and escalated between 2000-2003. These conflicts have affected the entire country whether directly or indirectly. The emergence of ethnic militias and religious bigots turned our cities into war zones. We can readily name the flash points such as Kaduna, Kano, Taraba, Benue, Kogi, Plateau, Delta, Shagamu, Adamawa, Nasarawa, Gombe, Borno and even FCT. Also warring factions such as the Jukun-Kutep, Ijaw-Itshekiri, Jukun/Tiv, Bassa/Igbira, Amuleri/ Umleri, Ife/Modakee, Urobo/Itshekiri, the Ogoni and ZangonKataf. The Niger Delta remains a festering wound. Indeed, no part of the country could be considered safe any longer. These conflicts have left not only a tale of woes among the many communities but a sour taste, hurts, retardation and underdevelopment for the survivors. Having fought, killed and wounded each other, and having created a culture of violence that increasingly pervades our neighbour-hoods, there is a serious need to embark on peace building to mend the broken fences if we have to make progress as individuals, groups and a nation (Ochekpe 2004: 16-17).

### Effects of Violent-Conflicts on Women and Children

The effects of violent-conflicts on women and children are enormous. Violence against women remained pervasive, including murder, domestic violence, rape and other forms of sexual violence by state officials and private individuals.

The consequence of sexual violence on women is ruinous. The act of rape as a weapon of war by both the soldiers and the militia has not only severely harmed the victims themselves as individuals but also their families, communities and the nation at large. The widespread systematic use of rape as a weapon of war has led to a multiple of physical, psychological, socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. The simplest and most direct way in which rape exerts control over communities is through its impacts on population demographics. Women have the role of reproduction, but are assaulted and prevented from this. They are sometimes mass-raped and beaten to death. Infection, illnesses and injuries such as HIV, hepatitis, and other sexually transmitted diseases are also some of the effects of using rape as a weapon of war. Psychologically, women who have been raped are traumatized and may become substance addicts. Socially, a woman who has been raped is victimized two times. She is sometimes considered as an adulterer in her community, and if she is not abandoned by her husband, she can be neglected or asked to pay fine in some cultures. For example socio-economic consequences of rape in the Niger Delta has contributed to the infiltration of the social and economic fabric of the communities, women are seen as "commodities" to be sold and bought which is giving another meaning to sexuality. It is a human rights violation that has a lot to do with the body politics of women (Ola 2013:16). This is seldom the situation in all war areas. Sexual violence as a tool of war has in some other occasions left hundreds of thousands of women raped, brutalized and impregnated. This has left several women with either the option of having an abortion or an illegitimate child, and this has become the reality in many countries around the world that have gone through war.

Acts of violence against women and children happen even in communities and countries where there is no war and the consequences remain the same. Poor women and children are sold into sexual slavery; some are abducted by gunmen and kidnapped. They are raped and psychologically intimidated into submission. Mostly all over the world, female are normally the trafficking victims, but men also (especially boys) whether voluntarily or through poverty, are caught up in the sex market place. Child labour, force marriage and abuse or violence against girl child has become common features in the society. Sheik (2012: 205-206) has this to say on the issue of the flourishing business:

Few corners of the earth are immune to the flourishing sex trade. When the Iron Curtain disintegrated, few would have guessed that in less than a decade it would lead to an exodus of poverty-stricken East European women, desperate to sell themselves for what rarely turns out to be the good life. From Eastern Europe to the Himalayas, from Tokyo to Beijing, from London to Los Angeles and from Turkey to Dubai, this transaction has created a multibillion-dollar sex trade. Its effect is more devastating on an individual level. Poor women and children (as young as 12 years old) are traded as commodities on the street, products bartered, smuggled and sold as pawns against hunger or as an easy access to profits.

Other general effects that affect every individual whether male, female or children include: loss of lives and property; displacement of victims; Poverty among the displaced persons increase since they lost all they worked for; deprivations such as deprived educational and health facilities leading to high rates of illiteracy and sickness. Others include denial of rights to employment and ancestral homes; loss of trust among communities who had lived together thus undermining development; increased social problems and crime rates; increased burden on women and children most of whom are widows and or orphans who suffer lost; physical and psychological

trauma; destruction of creativity and initiative; dislocation and retardation of progress (Ochekpe 2004:18-19).

### Islamic Panacea to Violent-Conflicts

Contrary to stereotypes of Islam, Islam advocates numerous nonviolent and peace- building values which Muslims are instructed to live by them. These values are supported by the Qur'an and the Hadith (the Prophet's tradition). One of these values is the duty to pursue justice (Qur'an 5:8). Another is the necessity of doing good by struggling against oppression and helping those who are in need. A third such value is that all humans are God's creation, have sacred lives, and thus are all equal (Qur'an 4:1). Islam grants no special privileges based on race, ethnicity or tribal affiliation. Moreover, all Muslims are to respect and preserve human life (Qur'an 5:32). Islam also calls for the quest for peace, which is a state of physical, mental, spiritual, and social harmony (Qur'an 4:114, 49:9-10). Other verses stress the importance of tolerance and kindness to other people thus:

God enjoins justice, kindness [to all], and generosity to one's kindred; and He forbids all that is shameful, all reprehensible conduct and aggression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed. (Qur'an 16:90)

Looking at the life of the Prophet, one notes his use of non-violent methods to resist those who persecuted him; the Prophet never resorted to violence or force (USIP). We can see the practical applications of the Islamic principles pertaining to peaceful co-existence when we look at the constitution of Madinah during the life-time of the Prophet (SAW) and how it was faithfully implemented. The two Arab tribes of Aws and Khazraj and the three Jewish tribes of Banu Qaynuqa, Banu Qurayza and Banu Nadir all lived a life of peace and harmony as one people under the leadership of the Prophet (SAW). Peace reigned and lasted until the Jews breached the terms of the constitution. (Gwandu 2006:5)

We can also cite the example of the treaty of Hudaibiyyah to show how peace-loving Muslims were and will continue to be as long as they follow the teachings of Islam. Here was the Prophet (SAW) leading thousands of his followers from al-Madinah on their way to Makkah to perform purely religious rites. They carried no weapons apart from what was traditionally allowed to be carried by a traveller. But they were prevented from entering Makkah by the Makkan aristocracy. A treaty was subsequently signed, the terms of which speaks volumes for the peaceful nature of Islam. Under the treaty, it was agreed that if any Makkan left Makkah to join the Prophet (SAW) without the approval of his guardian, he should be rejected by the Prophet but the reverse was not the case. Some of the terms of the treaty look so humiliating that the followers of the Prophet initially refused to accept it, until the Prophet (SAW) stamped his foot and resisted the pressure to reject them. All this goes to show the commitment of Islam as a religion, to peace, peaceful co-existence and peaceful resolution of conflict. Add to this fact that even in proselytization Islam does not allow the use of force or compulsion (Gwandu 2006:5). For example the Qur'an is very specific that: "there should be no compulsion in religion." (2: 256)

Peacemaking and negotiation are considered more effective than aggression and violent confrontation. In fact, the Arabic meaning of the word Islam itself connotes peace. Another virtue in Islam is forgiveness (Qur'an 23:96). Muslims are urged to live in harmony and peace with all fellow humans.

As a matter of fact, Islam considers war lawful only after exhausting all avenues to promote peace, only in three ways (Ayanda 2006:134-135) namely:

- a. Self-defence i.e. a defence of one's body, family, community, nation or country against all forms of imperialist, expansionist, extortionist, aggressive and oppressive intro-moral and external incursions. The Qur'an in this regard remarks: "And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors." (Qur'an 2:190)

- b. Wars fought to save people from injustice and oppression in a situation whereby the oppressed are weak and helplessly ill-treated. The Qur'an emphatically encourages this kind of war in plain language thus:

And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help." (Qur'an 4:75)

- c. Defence of religion against triflers, and fighting against those who try to stand in the way of conveying divine message and law of Islam. The universality of Islam is expressed in the conveyance of the message to the living people on the surface of earth. Any attempt to resist this, must be vigorously fought. The Qur'an has this to say in this regard:

Verily, those who put into trial the believing men and believing women (by torturing them and burning them), and then do not turn in repentance, (to Allah), will have the torment of Hell, and they will have the punishment of the burning Fire. (Qur'an 85:10)

Islam considers all life forms as sacred. However, the sanctity of human life is accorded a special place and the Qur'an says: "...take not life, which god hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom." (Qur'an 6:151).

The first and the foremost basic right of a human being is the right to live. The Qur'an states: "...if any one slew a person-unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land- it would be as if he slew the whole world people: and if any one saved a life it would be as if he saved the life of the whole

inhabitants.” (Qur'an 5:32).

Such is the value of a single human life that the Quran equates the taking of even one human life unjustly, with killing all the humanity. Thus, the Quran prohibits homicide in clear terms. The taking of criminal's life by the state order to administer justice is required to uphold the rule of law, and the peace and security of the society. Only a proper and a competent court can decide whether an individual has forfeited his right to life by disregarding the right to life and peace of other humans.

Even in a state of war, Islam enjoins that one deals with the enemy nobly on the battle field. Islam has drawn a clear line of distinction between the combatants and the non-combatants of the enemy country. As far as the non-combatants population is concerned such as women, children, the old and infirm, etc...

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) used to prohibit soldiers from killing women and children and he would advise them: "...Do not mutilate, do not betray, do not be excessive, and do not kill a newborn child." Also, the Prophet Muhammad has forbidden punishment with fire. Thus, non-combatants are guaranteed security of life even if their state is at war with an Islamic state ([www.islamic-message.net](http://www.islamic-message.net)).

The Qur'an also declares adjustable intervention in marital dispute. It distinguishes between situations of marital disagreement (shiqaq) versus situations of deviance (nushuz) by one spouse. In the former situation, the Qur'an orders intervention by two third parties representing each spouse. In the latter situation the Qur'an orders definite processes to be followed by the man, and another to be followed by the woman (Qur'an 4:34-35, 4:128-130) (Abdalla 2006: 149). As such Islam does not condone domestic violence and wife battery of any form. If these principles and theories will be adhered to, peace will definitely reign in the Muslim families.

Furthermore, the textual sources of Islam are replete with instructions on taking care of widows and orphans. When a woman lost her husband due to war, accident or any other kind of crisis, she finds herself automatically vulnerable especially those that are not working and cannot fend for themselves. At this point in time, it is the responsibility of the Muslim Ummah and the Islamic state to cater for those women by getting them married and or by maintaining them out of charity, the government treasury or war-booties. Most of the women the Prophet (SAW) married are widows, and the Prophet was reported as saying: "One who makes efforts to help the widow or a poor person is like a mujahid (warrior) in the part of Allah, or like one who stands up for prayers in the night and fast in the day." (Al-Bukhari 1997, 7:175).

Islam also enjoins kind treatment to orphans as the death of their father places them in a state of crisis and unrest. They are entitled to kindness and good care and they should be well protected. This can be done by individuals, their next of kin or the Islamic government. Islam strongly forbids misappropriation of the property of an orphan and considers it a serious crime.

In (to) this worldly life and in the Hereafter. And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers. And Allah knows him who means mischief (e.g. to swallow their property) from him who means good (e.g. to save their property). And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties. Truly, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. (Qur'an 2:220)

## 5.0 Recommendations

### 5.1 Role of Ulama:

The Ulama (Muslim scholars) have serious role to play in controlling the spate of violence in their various communities. Ulama must first of all ensure that they enlighten Muslims about the true meaning of Islam. Emphasis must be given by the Ulama to the teaching of Tawhid. Without proper understanding of Islam and Tawhid, many Muslims

turn out to be nominal Muslims who are more concerned with the culture of Islam and traditional local customs associated with Islam than with true Islam. As opined by Gwandu, such people, some of whom often refer to themselves as the progressive or the modernist, have no qualms selling their "Islam" for a pittance (Gwandu 2006:7). The scholars among them study the Qur'anic and Hadith sciences as well as Islamic Law and Jurisprudence not out of conviction but because they see it as any other means of earning a livelihood. As for the ordinary people, they are born of Muslim parents and perhaps grow up in an environment that is predominantly Muslim, they pray and fast and perform pilgrimage not out of conviction, but because that is the norm in their locality. They may not even know the rules and regulations governing these acts of worship. Such so called "scholars" and "Muslims" who sometimes engage in un-Islamic activities that give Islam a bad name, while infact Islam has nothing to do with it. These nominal scholars and Muslims are also dangerous from another angle. They are willing tools in the hands of the enemies of Islam and are used to wreck havoc and create confusion in their interpretation of Islam and among Muslims (Gwandu 2006:7).

It is likewise the duty of the Ulama to explain the pure teachings of Islam relating particularly to human relations (in peace and war), brotherhood of man, unity of mankind, social relations etc.

They should also teach and preach to the Muslims the messages of justice, equality and freedom as described in the Qur'an in several verses (Qur'an 5:9, 9:71, 16:90).

Ulama must project the wonderful image as the religion of peace. They must project its image as the religion of common brotherhood of mankind where all men are equal, the best being the most pious. In the Islamic scheme of things all are equal before the law. No one enjoys immunity from the just rule of Islamic law. Under that scheme the wealth of a nation belongs to all its citizens. Everybody gets his/her due share. Even the weak and the displaced who cannot work to earn are provided for through the institution of zakat. Ulama must demonstrate the teaching of Islam through their social and

private life. One of the greatest disservices to Islam is committed by Muslim scholars who preach one thing and yet do the opposite (Gwandu 2006:8).

Another area that the Ulama must preach against is confrontational preaching. This has serious effect both in inter-religious and intra-religious relations. We have witnessed situations where the IZALA/IZALA, IZALA/Sufi, and the Sunni/Shi'ite scholars are engaged in serious confrontational preaching. Again, the missionary nature of both Islam and Christianity in inviting people to belief and worship of the Almighty Allah (SWT) is highly influential in guiding humankind to lead a spiritually structured life. This noble task is regarded as an obligatory duty in all monotheistic religions. In Islam, the invitation is called Da'wah, which is known as evangelism in Christianity. But the way some preachers from both sides go about this noble duty usually create serious problems in the society. In other words, some Muslim and Christian preachers are guilty of this "theological crime". Such a provocative act of preaching is usually carried out by 'half-baked' religious personnel who do not weigh the gravity and consequences of their actions. This phenomenon is common to come by on public buses, bus and train stations, public places and school campuses. Some preachers even go to the extent of name calling. If a 'Christian preacher', for example, sees a "Muslim-looking" person within his vicinity, he may immediately resort to unpalatable words such as; "Muhammad cannot take you to heaven, Jesus Christ is the only saviour", "Praying five times a day is a waste of time and energy", "Jesus Christ has shed his blood, you don't need to slaughter any ram as our Lord doesn't drink blood", etc. On the other hand, if a Muslim preacher of such calibre senses that there are non-Muslims around, he may also start a verbal attack on them by saying some words such as: "Allah is one, not 3 in one", "Jesus is not the son of God", "Jesus has not carried away your sins", etc. As earlier mentioned, those who engage in confrontational preaching may not have proper knowledge of the religion they profess, or they deliberately do so to provoke others (Shittu 2013:6).

Ulama must preach assiduously against the

incidences of domestic violence, wife battery and child abuse. Unfortunately today, as it is evidence in most of our families in Nigeria, the act of violence against women has sneaked into Muslim families either consciously or unconsciously. Thus, face slaps, curses, lashings and other forms of physical abuse are strictly forbidden and opposed to the spirit and the letter of the divine law. Divorce has become rampant with no respect for the Islamic regulations on divorce (Qur'an 4: 35). Women get routinely thrown out of their matrimonial homes (with their children in some cases) and are exposed to danger and hardship. They go through terrible times; they have no money to eat and cannot just resume their normal lives without the help of the society. This constitutes a serious crisis situation for women and children and it runs contrary to the teachings of Islam. Bahz bin Hakim said that Mu'awiyah bin Hayday Al-Qushayri related that his grandfather said; "O Messenger of Allah! What is the right the wife one of us has?" The Prophet (SAW) said: "To feed her when you eat, buy her clothes when you buy for yourself and refrain from striking her on the face, cursing her or staying away from her except in the house." (Abu Dawud 2008, 2:550).

Ulama belonging to different Islamic organisations like Izala, Tijaniyya, FOMWAN, NATAIS, JNI, NASFAT, Ansarudeen and Nurudeen, among others, must come together under the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs to speak with one voice to the Nigerian government to provide non-interest loans to the Muslim populace. Islam has outlined basic principles for business transactions including loans. It is lack of proper plans to secure a non-interest loan to the unemployed Muslim youths and the Muslim women especially, that so many government credit scheme such as SURE-P, Agric loans, CAP FUND, U-WIN and so many more are now available to help Nigerians develop themselves independently, but the Muslims are not taking part in this because of the interest involved. These loans are meant to reduce the rate of poverty in the country. The root of violence among the youth can be located in the unprecedented poverty as well as the massive unemployment hunger and deprivation among the youths thus providing avenue for their involvement in the different types of conflicts and unrest across

the country. As taking interest (riba) is a sin in Islam, the Muslims are losing out here.

### Women's Role:

The solutions to the problem of violent-conflicts in our societies and the world at large depends on the needs to reflect on the values goals and processes as reflected and described in Islamic theory. The model most also respond to the specific needs and circumstances of the Muslim communities. In this respect, the role of women must equally not be ignored. The role of women will thus include.

- a. Women as mothers have a great role to play. They are entrusted with the responsibility of child bearing, nurturing and upbringing. They should inculcate good Islamic moral values in the heart of their children. This bearing in mind that peace and security must start from home. A woman as a wife, a sister or a mother has serious influence on the life of a man who is her husband, son or brother as such she can influence their thoughts and actions for better.
- b. Women must act as ambassadors of peace both at home and in their respective societies just like we have seen in the example of the women companions. The marriage of the Prophet (SAW) to Umm Habibah Ramlah bint Abu Sufyan (RA) according to Abdullahi bin Abbas, has influenced important chieftains and prominent leaders like Abu Sufyan, Mu'awiyah and Yazid bin Abu Sufyan to understand Islam and to join the ranks of the Prophet. While his marriage with the daughter of the head of Banu Mutalaq by name Juwairiya, lead to the release of about six hundred (600) prisoners of war from the Banu Mustalaq. They were captured during the fight of Muraisi'i (Liman 4).
- c. The various Muslim women organizations should network together and also build alliance with and between grassroots, national, regional and international women's group. Through this they can build partnerships for information sharing, and campaign on conflict prevention.
- d. Women should utilize advocacy to reduce as



much as possible tension in the country, by paying visits to leaders in government, district heads, community leaders, important stakeholders and urging them to engage in peaceful coexistence.

- e. They should evolve better practices to curb poverty through skill acquisition, agriculture, business ventures and other ways too.
- f. In order to achieve better results in conflict management, there is need for women in various positions/organizations to sharpen their skills by embarking on relevant training which will improve their capacity in applying mediation processes in conflict situation and to enhance their communication skills for negotiation and mediation.

### Conclusion

The article has examined the effects of unrest, conflict and violence on women and children. From the foregoing, it can be seen that conflict and violence affects women and children more than the men. The article discusses the Islamic provisions on peace, thus, only adhering to these provisions will bring peace in the Muslim homes and Muslim societies as well. Applying these principles will cure the problem of corruption in Nigeria. It will restore the values of peace, justice, freedom and equality in the Muslim communities.

And the duty of restoring peace in the society rests on every individual including the leader, the led, the youths, the ulama, women, children and the husbands among others.

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