The Youth and Socio-Religious Conflicts in Africa: The Nigerian Dynamics

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ABSTRACT: Conflicts situations generally result in enormous loss of life, massive displacement, huge economic loss, socio-economic under-development and political instability. The African continent is conflict-prone and Nigeria is not spared her share of the problem. In fact, the conflict dynamics in Nigeria includes two powerful and explosive factors – religion and the youth. Thus, whether acting as precursor or fodder, they constitute the most amorphous and intractable social phenomena in the current socio-political landscape in Nigeria because of the burgeoning youth population and the religious interpretative lens. This paper argues that uneven opportunities and inadequate social and security apparatuses in the society combine well with unbridled religious fervor to engender conflicts in the nation. The study adopted the frustration-aggression theory and the methods of data collection were largely documentary. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis. Recommendations include that a proper profiling of the youth population should be undertaken to address the peculiar challenges and needs of young people. Again, labor-oriented and beneficial projects should be set-up to tackle the high levels of poverty and unemployment among the people while adequately engaging the youth.
KEYWORDS: conflict, socio-religious conflict, youth.

Introduction

The conflicts that have plagued the African continent have been characterized by violence, civil strife and incessant killings (Afisi 2009, 59-66; Afolabi 2009, 24). These conflicts have also occasioned the wanton destruction of lives and property, massive displacement of people, huge refugee crisis, huge economic costs, and disease. Other issues emanating and/or related to these conflicts include the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, human and drug trafficking, illegal exploitation of natural resources and banditry (Afolabi 2009, 25). This largely explains why Schmidt (2016) posits that Africa evokes an image of a continent in crisis, riddled with war and corruption, and imploding from disease and starvation.

In Nigeria, there have been various conflict situations and the causes/sources have also been diverse. For instance, between 1967 and 1970 the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Nigerian people came to a head in what has become known as the Biafran civil war. In addition, Nigeria has experienced at least four military coups amidst general socio-political and economic inequalities. Other sources of conflict in the country include the alarming level of mass discontent from the high graduate unemployment, poor standard of living, marginalization of the masses, emasculation of labor and many other unresolved social ills. Besides these, the Boko Haram conflict in north-eastern Nigeria illustrates the fact that socio-religious conflicts have taken root in recent times.

In a special report of the United States Institute of Peace, Paden (2015) posits that Nigeria is by far the largest country in the world where religious identities are evenly divided between Muslims (90 million) and Christians (90 million), with a total population of just over 180 million. He also noted that Muslims in Nigeria include Sufi, women's organizations, Izala, student organizations, emirate traditions and ordinary people, as well as extremists, while Christians range from Catholic to mainstream Protestant to Evangelical to Pentecostal to African syncretism. According to official figures, the 2011 presidential election split the country along ethno- religious and regional lines, so that in the twelve far northern states, Muhammadu Buhari won with 64 per cent of the vote. In the southeast and south-south, Goodluck Jonathan won with 97 per cent. The mixed states of the Middle Belt (north central) and the southwest voted for Jonathan, but at a more modest 58 per cent. Given that the far northern states are overwhelmingly Muslim, and the southeast and south-south are just as clearly Christian; the religiously mixed states of the north-central and southwest are also politically mixed, for Paden (2015), this was enough reason for deep concerns for the 2015 election. This is because the situation raises the question of the relationship of

religious identities and voting patterns in Nigeria. Meanwhile, across the international community, the number of sophisticated reports on Boko Haram increased, and the question was raised as to whether Nigeria's religious diversity promoted tolerance or intolerance (Marc-Antoine 2014; Campbell 2014; Dowd forthcoming).

However, socio-religious conflicts in Nigeria loom larger than elections and do not necessarily require political embers to burn. According to Adah (2013), socio-religious conflict in Nigeria goes as far back as 1953, and since then it has become a recurrent decimal manifest in several ways – as protests, demonstrations, riots, wanton killings and destruction of property and an outright war. More so, there appears to be no measurable or traceable parameters for a violent conflict to erupt in Nigeria. For instance, in the 1960s, it began as a military coup; in the 1980s it was the death of Mohammed Marwa (Maitatsine) and the enrolment of Nigeria in the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC); in the 1990s, the institution of the Sharia legal system in eleven states of the federation; between 2000 and 2010 there was the Miss World contest and the prophet Mohammed cartoons. In recent times the Boko Haram insurgence continues to be the biggest source of socio-religious upheaval.

The frustration-aggression hypothesis also known as the frustration-aggression displacement theory attempts to give an explanation as to the cause of violence in the society. The theory developed in phases by Dollard, Miller, et al. (1939), Miller et al. (1941) and Berkowitz (1969) asserts that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression; and aggression is the result of blocking, or frustrating, a person's efforts to attain a goal. In other words, when frustration builds up, it causes aggression; and if the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. For instance, if a man is disrespected and humiliated at his work, but cannot respond to this for fear of losing his job, he may go home and take out his anger and frustration on his family. This theory is also used to explain riots, social dysfunction/deviance as well as revolutions. They are caused by the less privileged and often poorer and more deprived sections of society who may express their bottled-up frustration and anger through violence, either voluntarily or by inducement with cash, drugs amongst others.

With particular respect to the youth in Nigeria, the frustration is coming from seeing the abundance of human and mineral resources in the country and yet living and growing up in lack and abject poverty. The health, education, power, and other social infrastructures are all operating at a dismal rate, and the young people are either secondary school drop-outs or struggling to afford the increasingly expensive education. When they eventually graduate, there are no jobs for them and employers generally refer to them as being unemployable because they do not possess the

requisite skills. They are equally unable to find jobs either because the right jobs don't exist or they lack the cognate experience to be gainfully employed and positively engaged. In the midst of all of these socio-economic problems and depravations facing the youth, Dorward (2012) posits that a Nigerian senator's annual salary is $173,000,00 (N64,010,000.00) with allowances of $1.4m (N518,000,000.00). The 2012 appropriation budget for the state house, the President's official residence, is $107m, but in the same year, 70 per cent of Nigerians are classified as poor, with 35 per cent living in absolute poverty. The situation continues to be compounded by population growth, climate change, corruption and government mismanagement. Where once Nigeria was an agricultural exporting nation, it now imports food and up to 80 per cent of the people in rural areas live below the poverty line. In addition, the once proud peasant farmer, who sustained his family and exported surplus, is now an urban unemployed school leaver and ready fodder for social mischief.

Clarification of Terms

Conflict: scholars do not agree that conflicts are generally disruptive. In fact, Simmel (1903, 490-525) affirms that conflict has some sociological significance, inasmuch as it either produces or modifies communities of interest. He also views it as a form of socialization since every reaction among humans is socialization. Hence, he views the causes of conflict – hatred, envy, want and desire, as the actually dissociating elements. On the other hand, violent conflict refers to a situation or condition of interruption in any interactional process. Three main planks that determine the extent to which violent conflict can stretch are: the intensity and salience of the issue at stake, the status and legitimacy of the parties and the clustering of interests and coincidence of cleavages within a community. With particular reference to Nigeria, Otite (1999) argues that most conflicts are premised on land space and resource competition; disputed jurisdiction of traditional rulers; creation and location of local government council headquarters; scarce political and economic resources; micro and macro social structures of Nigeria; population growth and disregard for cultural symbols. Otite apparently forgot that some of the most devastating conflicts in Nigeria have had nothing to do with these reasons; rather, they took their life from the singular fact that Nigeria is a multi-religious society in which deep-sited fundamentalism takes center stage at various intervals. This means that even when there is nothing at stake – no struggle for resource control, no disputed land spaces, indeed no justified or unjustified provocation whatsoever; just the mere fact that people do not share

the same religious faith with others often ignite violent conflicts in Nigeria. In this paper, socio-religious conflict is conceived as the type of conflict between groups with different ideologically positions along religious lines within a multicultural setting with each striving for economic and political relevance.

Youth: In the Nigerian context, the youth refers to people between 18 and 35 years. They constitute "all young males and females aged 18–35 which are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria" (National Youth Policy of Nigeria, 2001, p.4). Following this definition, the youth constitute about 60 per cent of the more than 160 million people in Nigeria. While this definition may do justice to the age specification of the youth in Nigeria, it is, however, grossly inadequate with respect to the social character of young people in Nigeria. Using this criterion, some of the important youth categories that deserve mention are the street youth, college youth, school drop-outs and unemployed youth. The importance of delineating these categories is that it is one of the reasons why government policies targeted at young people often fail in Nigeria. Young people and youth are used interchangeably in this paper.

Socio-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: A Cursory Look at the Causes and Effects

Socio-religious conflicts are not natural disasters or naturally occurring events. Usually, a number of human and/or social factors serve as the underlying causes. In the case of Nigeria, it has been pointed out that there is a historical legacy of mistrust between rival ethnic groups. The settlement patterns along language, religious and ethnic lines do not help matters. Notably, this mutual hatred and the ensuing conflicts are not biologically transmitted but exist as an offshoot of socialization and bad leadership. The unhealthy competition for ethnic supremacy, political and economic power is another cause of violent conflicts in Nigeria. The reason for this is not far-fetched because the essence of seeking to maintain or gain control of state power is to use state institutions to distribute economic and political benefits preferentially to one's ethnic enclave while discriminating against perceived subordinate group members (Owutu 2013). This leads to unhealthy rivalry among competing interests often leading to violent conflicts.

The frustration-aggression theory provides another motivation for violent conflicts in Nigeria. Having been deprived of the essentials of life, sometimes frustrated people take out their frustration on other members of the society, especially when the source of the frustration is the government whose policies continue to entrench

unemployment, poverty, inequality, and deprivation. The indigene-settler debate is another major factor that causes conflict because, in Nigeria, a citizen is not a citizen if he/she is not an indigene.

Generally, conflicts create a situation where thousands of people suddenly become refugees either as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) or beyond the shores of their country. This carries the added implication of severe dislocation of families as a result of unplanned and sudden migration. It also affects the education of children and the means of livelihood of the families involved. More so, property and assets are lost as people are displaced. Given that refugee camp conditions are usually appalling in terms of camp structure, security, food, health and service delivery, the consequences of these are often high death rates due to diseases and starvation.

Other effects of violent conflict include that it has had devastating effects on inter-group relationships and created rifts in human relations among the parties involved. For instance, apart from the loss of lives and property, it has had a profound influence on residential relationships, leading to new trends in the polarisation of communities in a multi-ethnic, cultural and religious setting like Nigeria. This is evident in the set-up of mono-religious areas in various parts of the country, with Christians and Muslims living in religious clusters. It also leads to the wanton loss and destruction of lives and property resulting in various forms of stagnation, retrogression and underdevelopment. For instance, Owutu (2012, 7-8) posits that since the transition to civilian rule in May 1999, no less than 10,000 lives have been lost to religious-based violence, while Akowonjo (2011, 8), contends that "it may be correct to say that over 15,000 Nigerians, including women and children, have been killed since 1999 as a result of unabated ethno-religious violence". He further stated that conflicts have the tendency of creating crisis over the question of citizenship, hostility between indigenes and settlers, an atmosphere of political insecurity and instability, dehumanization of women and children, rape, child abuse, and child neglect. It deepens hunger in the society and creates declining confidence in the political leadership and apprehension within the system.

Another essential tangent to the picture – some salutary effects of conflict – is succinctly presented by the former National Security Adviser to the President, Mohammed Sambo Dasuki. In early August 2014, he presented a paper titled "Challenges of Governance in [the] Era of Insurgency" at Harvard University's Nigeria Security Summit. Amongst other points, he noted that:

> …The ongoing antics of the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Liddaawati Wal Jihad, commonly known as Boko Haram, is threatening our very democratic

foundations. They strive not only to dismantle democratic structures but to prevent the provision of state services, such as health, education, commerce, and security…Terrorism (violent conflict) has come with both challenges and opportunities. It has enabled us to change our laws, rebuild our institutions, and create platforms for greater coordination and cooperation within and across agencies tasked with security. Additionally, we have developed avenues that allow us to synergize our efforts and work more collaboratively with the civil society. In short, we have devised a national security model that is inclusive, premised on the provision of peace, security and development, through a whole of society approach.

The Youth and Socio-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

Religion is a salient social institution that generally inculcates moral principles and values. However, over the years the Nigerian social space is littered with disturbing episodes of violent conflicts owing to the influence of religion which intermittently becomes negative and destructive. In his book, when religion becomes evil, Kimball (2003) argues this happens when religion becomes corrupted in any of the following five ways: (a) when it makes absolute truth claims; (b) when it demands blind obedience; (c) when it sets an ideal time; (d) when it teaches that the end justifies the means; and (e) when it declares holy war. By extension, Kimball's position is that religion is only implicated in violent conflict, if and when it is adulterated by teachings termed to be alien to its tenets. If that is true, then the high level of socio-religious conflicts in Nigeria implicates the corruption of religion as well as religious beliefs and practices. Since Kimball does not specify any particular religion, I find grounds to disagree with him because history shows that there are religious groups whose basic tenet requires that all "infidels" must either be converted or slaughtered and this has everything to do with their central function as religious institutions in the social space. This position is based on the premise that waves and waves of fundamentalist groups spring up over the years and even after they are long defeated and dismantled, new groups spring up in their place; yet, not as peripheral, breakaway planks within these religions. Be that as it may, it is because a lot of western scholars like Kimball hold onto views like this that many countries in Europe are currently experiencing socio-religious attacks.

Taking off from another tangent, the source(s) of funding for most of the violent conflicts in Nigeria's public space remain debateable. Notably, a range of socio-religious

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groups, terrorist cells, public and opinion leaders, including politicians, religious and even military leaders and governments have been implicated. For instance, the report of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRP 2015) posits that Boko Haram fighters are often better armed and equipped than the government's forces because wealthy politicians and businessmen funded the group in the past; and even when they lost control of it, Boko Haram's political ties have allegedly continued. Alozieuwa (2012) also argues that in "the Nigerian political system, notorious for its prebendalism, patronage system and cronism, the stakes for the control of political power can be quite high". More so, the quest for central power could prompt "highly placed, highly disgruntled, and thus highly motivated individuals" or group towards bringing the country "under a specific kind of fundamentalist strain," even if illegally and violently (Joseph 1991; Sklar 1998).

In view of this, an unmistakeable strand in the entire melee is the role of the youth. According to Omeje (2005, 1), the youth are at the heart of 90-95 per cent of violent conflicts in Nigeria. More so, students and youth as members of religious groups such as the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) and the Muslim Students Society, were often used to ignite violent clashes in various higher institutions and communities across the nation. According to Siegel (2003, 8), what is even more depressing about the Muslim-Christian conflict in Nigeria is the level of violence that surrounds it, where even "little children growing up in Nigeria witness violent acts every day and soon become accustomed to it". He further asserts that this is as a result of the increasing militant brands of Islam that have been propagated by a proliferation of Islamic schools, where billions of dollars are being spent to help spread the Islamic cause throughout Africa and the world (Siegel 2003, 1). This is also why more Muslims believe Islamic rule and Sharia law should take precedent over state law. Hence, when situations are tense people believe that the only option they have to resolve the issue is through the use of force. This is why political leaders in Nigeria and other nation's facing similar problems speak of the "radicalization of Muslim youth" (Siegel, 2003, 1), lending weight to the idea that one's surroundings help shape the individual as is evident in the case of Nigerian youths. Lending her voice to the argument, Ibrahim (2012, 190) contends that:

> The youths who are victims of crisis-ridden economy…are easy prey readily available in crises situation (sic) as a way of venting their anger on the society through what can be termed as transferred aggression on non-Muslims and non-indigenes in the name of avenging the killings of Muslims in Yelwan-Shendam in Plateau State.

Amongst the reasons for this development is the very high level of youth unemployment, youth dysfunction and the resulting youth criminalization in Nigeria (Ononogbu and Ononogbu 2012, 173,176). In fact, Adebayo (2013, 350) posits that despite the abundant human and natural resources available in the country, chronic youth unemployment is evident in Nigeria leading to a situation where every year, "thousands of graduates are produced but there are no jobs for majority of them". Okafor (2011) buttresses the point with the observation that Nigerian streets are littered with youth hawkers who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some enterprise. Hence, the youths who are unemployed, under-employed and even unengaged are more than enough to undermine Nigeria's democratic process if they are recruited as willing fodder for violent conflicts in the nation. They, therefore, constitute a serious threat if engaged by the political class for clandestine and criminal activities (Adepegba 2011; Ibrahim 2011; Lartey 2011; Olatunji and Abioye 2011; Okafor 2011).

It is therefore, glaring that the unfortunate resort to a culture of violence by the youth is a direct result of the example of hostility and pessimism that have characterized the comportment of the state. Many young men and women have grown up under an atmosphere of state-sponsored violence and necessarily operate under the logic that might is right and violence is the answer to all problems. On this note, it is important to interpose that fundamentalist groups like the Boko Haram are an effect and not a cause; they are essentially a symptom of decades of failed government and elite delinquency finally ripening into social chaos.

Another thrust in this direction is that following the end of the civil war that raged between 1967 and 1970, the political leadership introduced the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). This was in a bid to reconstruct, reconcile and rebuild the country through the social integration of young people in the country. Through this scheme, graduates from universities and polytechnics are involved in the development of the country by taking part in the National Youth Service Corps programme for one year known as the national service year. The NYSC scheme, which was created by Decree No. 24 of 22nd May 1973 stated that the NYSC is being established "with a view to the proper encouragement and development of common ties among the youths of Nigeria and the promotion of national unity". The NYSC Decree No. 24 has now been repealed and replaced by Decree 51 of 16th June 1993. However, where once the society and her youths believed in the ideals of national rebirth and reconstruction, these have been met with disappointment, frustration and disenchantment as the scheme continue to be met with serious criticism over issues like underpayment, late payment and/or no paid at all for the corps members. More so, several youths participating in the scheme have been killed in the regions where they were sent due

to religious, ethnic and/or political violence. The biggest criticism of the scheme yet, is that it is elitist in nature. Being limited to only graduates implies that an estimate of over fifty per cent of Nigerian youths, do not have a chance to participate in any way, and this number is not negligible as the rate of youth-related violence in the country show. The young people who are not incorporated in the scheme are mainly the foot soldiers who serve as fodder for violence and war mongers in the country.

A Compelling View of the Youth: Cinderella, Humpty Dumpty, and Robin Hood

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2012), Nigeria has a population of about 167 million people, and the National Population Commission (NPC 2013) posits that about half of the population is made up of youth, who are people between 15 and 34 years of age. As the Cinderella character, young people, though full of potentials to be productive and live a fulfilling life are constantly harassed by the vicissitudes of life. Although they constitute the cradle of development in any society, their skills and potentials are undermined and under-utilized. The situation is such that in Nigeria, as the youth population grows, so does the unemployment rate. The implication is that young people are not encouraged to develop and use their skills, abilities, and resourcefulness in an enabling socio-economic and political environment leaving them to resort to violence, drugs, prostitution, and armed robbery, amongst others.

In other words, young people constitute a major part of the labor force and have innovative ideas, which are indispensable in the development process of the nation. Taken as an acronym, Cinderella represents some of the significant qualities of the youth: creativity, ingenuity, nationalistic, determination, enthusiastic, responsive, energetic, leadership ability, learning capacity and adventurous. In view of this, Isaac Newton was only 24 when he discovered the pull of gravity; Albert Einstein was also 24 when he discovered the theory of relativity and Anthony Enahoro was only 28 when he spoke up and moved the motion for Nigeria's independence in 1958. It should, however, be noted that these positive qualities do not necessarily pre-suppose that young people do not contend with the negative sub-culture that is synonymous with the phase of life. In fact, the dilemma of young people is amplified by these contradictions, i.e., their potentials and the problems that challenge them.

Like Humpty Dumpty, once young people are left or allowed to drift into negative patterns of behaviour, they become a double burden to the society – disturbing the peace by becoming rebellious and dysfunctional as well as ensuring that the future

becomes bleak and empty and members of the society cannot rest. The bottom-line is that after the fall, fixing the youth becomes the problem of all the king's men and all the king's horses (the society) who never manages to recapture the lost article being unable to put him together again. As the Igbo saying goes "ihere anaghi eme onye ara, o na eme ezi n' ulo ya" (it is the family of the madman that experiences his shame). The lesson is timely and clear enough, if the stakeholders in the society fail to do anything for the youth today, there may be no tomorrow for a large number of young people, who may become so disillusioned with life as to ruin themselves. In fact, Adebayo (2013, 350-357) argues that current figures only reconfirm the fact that high growth rates have failed to improve Nigeria's entrenched macro-economic deficiencies which are born out of decades of failed governance, mismanagement and conflict. As a result, "the downstream effects of youth unemployment are fuelling rapid alienation and social unrest across the Nigerian landscape, the immediate symptoms of which are evident in the palpable rise in organized crime, armed insurgency, vandalism and drug trafficking".

The Robin Hood syndrome is manifest in the various youth groups functioning as armed militia pressure groups all over the country. Betraying a loss of confidence in the elected political officials representing their states and communities, each of these youth-oriented militia groups feels they have the right to speak and act for their respective communities and claim that they have the justifiable reason to take steps towards ensuring that they protect the interest of their people, many times through violent means. The Boko Haram, Indigenous People of Biafra and Niger Delta Avengers are typical examples of youth groups in this category. Note that the Boko Haram is ambiguous because they have consistently refused to negotiate with the government; they have not made any specific demands on the government and have chosen their targets at random including churches, mosques, markets, schools and motor parks, as well as political, religious and social leaders. Whatever the reasons they adduce for their dastardly acts, what is typical about young people in this category is that they have gone beyond working for a living and petty criminal tendency into big time anti-social posture. Indeed, their acts tend more towards terrorism and felony rather than as youth restiveness.

On the whole, a typical Nigerian youth is a very creative, talented and adventurous person, who is often exposed to near unimaginable social problems and challenges because of inadequate, and sometimes, non-existent socio-economic and political infrastructure. As a result, they are repeatedly broken in spirit, mind and body until they can no longer be remedied, leading the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) (2008) to describe them as able-bodied but unskilled, jobless and

alienated, often ready to take up arms in exchange for small amounts of money – together with the promise of recognition, loot and "wives". This absence of opportunity to be productive explains why young people are more likely to be lured into anti-social behavioral patterns that include joining warring factions or criminal gangs in order to gain economic empowerment, recognition and a sense of belonging in the society.

Summary and Recommendations

For the records, most of the socio-religious conflicts in Nigeria are largely struggles over economic and political control in a nation almost effectively divided along ethnic and religious lines. Indeed, though erroneous, it is often taken for granted that all northerners are Moslems and Hausas, while all southerners are Christians and Igbos. This is why more often than not, religion and ethnic labels are used to pitch the people against each other while manipulating and controlling the conflicting parties. In view of this, in most cases, when a conflict does arise, the guilty party is rarely punished and this reason more than any other is why this continues to be a recurrent decimal in Nigeria.

Young people in Nigeria live under abnormal situations and are burdened with the strain of a number of factors including unemployment, population growth and inadequate socio-economic structures, inappropriate school curricula and the rapid expansion of the educational system so that in cases where they are able to acquire certificates, these are hardly enough to secure them jobs or even provide job security. They are forced to make rural-urban migrations in the hope of getting better deals out of life and end up gaping at the declining the manufacturing sector in a social system that is "fantastically" corrupt. Amidst all these challenges, if it is true that bad leadership will naturally breed bad followership, the source of youth dysfunction in Nigeria is not hidden.

The recommendations put forward in this paper are not necessarily rocket science, but they represent simple practical steps that should be taken to adorn Nigeria's Cinderella, remedy Humpty Dumpty and avert the Robin Hood syndrome among young people in Nigeria. First, young people in Nigeria must be carefully and correctly profiled. This is because they are not a homogenous group and any meaningful project must begin with understanding whether it is well suited for those it was intended. Without taking this step, government projects will continue to fail irrespective of the amount of money spent and who administers it. Second, an enabling socio-economic environment for young people to thrive must be created and the steps to be taken may

include locating labor-oriented and beneficial projects in communities where they will serve to distract the youth from joining negative socio-religious groups. Achieving this may take the form of creating more jobs or opportunity for businesses in order to raise the standard of living among the youth. In view of this, it is imperative to provide quality education for young people in order to take them off the streets and end street begging and hawking. Finally, young people must be re-oriented to respect human rights and individual freedoms while staying within the limits of the law.

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