

Abstract of Paper:

PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE AND THE EVOLUTION OF A CULTURE OF PEACE IN A DEVELOPING SOCIETY

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Conflicts and violence persist in virtually all sectors of society all over the world. These are particularly evident in the developing countries of the world, and Nigeria is no exception. Violent conflicts cause pain and suffering, destroy hitherto existing harmonious relations and divide previously united people into opposing camps. An incidence of violent conflict in Nigeria, which is fast becoming a hydra, defying the various military, political, constitutional and economic efforts of resolution by the Federal Government of Nigeria, International Non-Governmental Organizations and other interested parties, is the Niger Delta debacle.

A central hypothesis of this paper is that the establishment of an enduring peace in society requires the evolution of a culture of peace (understood as a framework of values, attitudes, social institutions and social structures that promotes and predisposes people to peaceful co-existence and non-violent resolution of conflicts). This, in turn, must be premised on an adequate philosophy of peace. The dearth of such philosophy in Nigeria constitutes an important reason for the inadequacy of many attempts to resolve conflicts, prevent them from degenerating into violence and enhance social peace in a sustainable manner.

The paper, therefore, presents what is considered as the essential content of a philosophy of peace that would constitute an adequate foundation for enduring social peace. This includes a discourse on the nature and value of social peace, the nature of violence and war, the idea of social development, the nexus between social peace and social development, and prerequisites for social peace and development. It is within the context of the discourse on the prerequisites for peace and development that such issues as social justice, human rights, economic stability and efficient political order would be discussed.

Contact Information and Brief Biography

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Dr. Adebola B. Ekanola is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He received a Ph.D degree from the same department in 2003. His Ph.D thesis was on **Peace and the Problems of Justice and Group Loyalties in Contemporary Society**. Dr. Ekanola has a special interest in the philosophical study of issues relevant to conflict resolution and the attainment of social peace as a prerequisite for sustainable social development in Nigeria and other developing societies. Of the 32 publications to his credit, 25 are on different theoretical issues related to conflict resolution, social peace and social development in contemporary society. He is currently engaged with a project to design a course in philosophy of peace to be taught at the postgraduate level in his home university. He expects that the proposed course would provide an adequate framework for the effective resolution of conflicts and a suitable foundation for enduring peace and social development in contemporary developing societies.