

POSITION STATEMENT

The Hausa Community of Jos North, Jos South, Barkin Ladi, Riyom, and Bassa Local Government Areas of Plateau State

INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, through the support of the Canadian Embassy, has initiated a dialogue between the different communities of Jos and its environs where strife and crises had been recurrent from 1999 to date. The Hausa community appreciates this initiative and wishes to express its full commitment towards resolution of local conflicts peacefully and by negotiation. We seek a fair solution in which all have a stake in a peaceful political process and no community is excluded. It is also against the background of discussions and assurances given by the HD Centre and various participants, to the effect that our grievances and those of the other sides of the "conflict" will be collated and analyzed for further action, as a basis for creating and sustaining a durable peace. We look forward to working with the HD Centre and other stakeholders as the process continues. For the purpose of clarity, the term 'Hausa Community' in this write up connotes all those referred to as 'Hausa' in the former Jos Division which includes but is not limited to all Muslims and other tribes that are referred to as Hausas.

A Hausa Dialogue forum was held on Saturday, 18th May, 2013 at Crest Hotel, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. The Forum was organised by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) as part of its commitment and effort at facilitating and mediating inter-communal dialogue to come up with credible solutions to the lingering crises in the four LGAs of Jos-North, Jos-South, Barkin Ladi and Riyom in Plateau State, Nigeria. The Forum was attended by invited dignitaries and stakeholders within the Hausa Community in the affected areas. The participants overwhelmingly **APPROVED** the composition of the Steering Committee of the HD Centre Hausa Dialogue Forum and **MANDATED** the Committee to represent them at all levels of the Process towards a lasting solution to the lingering crisis in Jos-North, Jos-South, Barkin Ladi and Riyom LGAs of Plateau State Nigeria.

HD Centre facilitators for the warring communities, members of the Steering Committee of the Hausa dialogue, members of the HDC Advisory Committee and the Representatives of the HD Centre: Dr. Philip Ostien and Dr. Andrew Ladley.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

1. It is an established fact that from 1994 to date, there had been continued violent conflicts in and around Jos that involves several communities including the Hausa Community.
2. That as a result of these incessant conflicts, thousands of people have been killed or maimed and no arrests were made and where arrests were made, the people involved for one reason or the other were allowed to go free without being brought to justice.

3. That property worth billions of naira was destroyed. Our own means of livelihood and properties worth billions of naira were specifically targeted and destroyed through arson by ethnic militias and their collaborators. These acts of violence have created wide economic and social havoc among our people.
4. That over 40 established Hausa settlements were sacked and completely destroyed by the Berom Communities of Bukuru, Barikin Ladi, Riyom and other Berom dominated areas.
5. That there is mistrust, hatred and loss of confidence between the Hausa Community and the Plateau State Government through its discriminatory policies.
6. That several Commissions of Enquiry were established by the Plateau State Government to look into and recommend solutions to these crises, but due to the lopsidedness in their formation, these commissions failed in doing anything concrete. In addition the commissions were designed to do what the State Government wants them to do as an interested party.
7. That right from the inception of this violent strife, the Hausa Community had always been on the defensive and at the receiving end because it had never launched any specific attack on any community.
8. That since the beginning of this conflict, there had been deliberate use of the media, especially the State owned media (PRTV) and the social media to demonize the Hausa Community as well as incite and instigate other communities.
9. That there had been deliberate attempt to distort the history of the old Jos Division on the Plateau through several jaundiced newspaper articles and publications. There is a hate campaign going on by means of ethnicity and religion targeted to create suspicion mistrust and disharmony against Hausa Community.
10. The average so called Plateau indigene have been sold a dummy by their leaders in Government and at community level that the Muslims in Plateau largely as so called settlers have plans to Islamise Plateau State through Jihad.
11. It is on record that the Plateau State Government had never sympathised or apologized to the affected Communities for its failure to provide security for lost lives and properties since the inception of these crises.
12. That a dialogue to resolve these issues is very important. We therefore support all forms of dialogue aimed at finding lasting solutions to the crisis for sustainable peace.

THE ISSUES IN CONFLICT

1. INDIGENESHIP

A claim over exclusive ownership of land by the Berom and some other communities against the Hausa degenerated into deliberate refusal to continue to issue indigene certificates to members of the Hausa Community. The use of the term indigene confers favours and gives greater access to state resources, such as school or university scholarships, jobs in the civil service, and even in the allotment of infrastructures. The present State Government has done nothing to redress the challenge which has expanded beyond Jos North to the other neighbouring Local Government Areas of Jos South, Bassa, Riyom and Barikin Ladi. The previous Government of Plateau State had issued a letter calling for a return to the status

quo, when members of the Hausa Community were enjoying this benefit as equal stakeholders, but the present Government is doing little or nothing about this issue.

2. SUBVERSION OF OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

There has been genuine yearning for the creation of chiefdoms and districts by the Hausa and other communities that are adequately qualified due to the size of their population and economic viability but instead of creating them, even the age long traditional leadership structures that are in the statute books which clearly chronicled the Traditional Institution of Sarkin Bukur belonging to the Hausa Community and also like that of the Sarkin Jos which was later undermined and reduced to Magajin Garin Jos, and a host of other Ward Heads have not been appointed giving rise to suspicion and mistrust. The Hausa have such traditional institutions that are over 100 years old in Jos South, Barikin Ladi and Bassa Local Government Areas. The Hausa have clearly stated that, with regard to Jos North, the Hausa Community are not interested in the throne of the Gbong Gwom which is now a Berom affair, but requires a leadership position for its people and its area which are qualified to have several districts due to the size of the population and the economic viability of the area.

3. POLITICS OF EXCLUSION

A deliberate State policy of excluding the Hausa Community from governance and socio-economic empowerment has been entrenched by successive administrations in Plateau State culminating in imposition of candidates in elections, marginalisation from appointive positions and manipulation of elections and malpractices. There was integration and cohesion in politics among the communities in the past that was responsible for peace and tranquillity. The basic strategy of the exclusion of the Hausa Community in Plateau is the ascription of 'settlership' to their status. Our numbers and geographic location confer on us a choice of leadership in a democracy under a free, fair and just atmosphere.

4. ECONOMIC EMASCULATION

There is a deliberate policy aimed at damaging and marginalizing members of the Hausa Community that are actively engaged in private businesses through the destruction of markets and attempts to relocate them to hostile areas. Deliberate attempts to close down motor parks, over taxation and introduction of discriminatory levies, refusal to grant education scholarships and indigene certificates for members of the Hausa Community that are needed to further their education or access gainful employments. Members of the Hausa Community are deliberately excluded from enjoying Government Poverty Alleviation programmes. This has compartmentalised and or polarised the towns along religious and ethnic lines, while also creating unemployment, drug addiction, lack of educational opportunities and general poverty.

5. DENIAL OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO BASIC AMENITIES TO THE HAUSA COMMUNITY

The policy of denial extends to education and access to other basic amenities to the Hausa Community of former Jos Division. For instance, the Family support model school located in the Hausa Community area of Kerana, Bukuru, has remained

closed for long while the authority had redeployed all the teachers to schools located in other communities. Several efforts by the Hausa Community to operate the school had been truncated by the authority. Similarly, the Sardauna memorial Secondary school in Jos North has suffered the same fate; whereas the school land has continuously been seriously encroached upon and the authority concerned keeps aloof. In addition, the Hausa community are also being denied primary health care, and other basic amenities in their areas. This is a deliberate denial of the basic rights of the Hausa children to education as further demonstrated by total neglect of schools within their communities which are in total dilapidation and without teachers.

6. IMPUNITY AGAINST LAW AND ORDER

There is impunity by people especially within Berom Communities to commit crimes which includes ethnic genocides, murder, profiling, arson and other forms of destruction of properties with no law arresting them. Even those arrested are eventually allowed to go scot free as teams of lawyers engaged by the State are handy to set them free.

7. UNWARRANTED BLOCKAGE OF HIGHWAYS

That there is the practice of unwarranted blockage of the highway between Barikin-Ladi/Kassa along Jos road, the Abuja-Jos Road and Bukuru-NIPSS Vom Road by irate Berom youths which is a serious threat to the peace process on the Plateau and should be stopped as the highway respectively constitute the only link between Jos, the Plateau State capital with about 14 LGAs in the State and to other parts of Nigeria.

8. ILLEGAL CONFISCATION OF EID-PRAYER GROUND AND MOSQUE

There is a deliberate policy of encouraging Christian Communities to confiscate legally acquired places of worship like age old Eid Praying grounds in the former Jos Division as exemplified in the Muslim Eid Praying ground of Rukuba road and Tudun Wada Friday Mosque (All the six routes leading to the mosque have been deliberately blocked except one which also forms the only exit from the mosque) in Jos North and the 45 years Eid Praying ground at Barikin Ladi either on the pretext that the land was wrongly sold to the community or through violent threats.

9. ILLEGAL CONFISCATION OF BURIAL GROUND

Similarly, the Hausa Community in Jos-North and Jos-South have been denied access to their traditional graveyards to bury their dead ones. The Muslims of Jos-South have helplessly resorted to burying their dead ones inside their Mosque, which is already full. The Muslim burial ground in Tudun Wada has illegally invaded by the Christians who have started building houses on the field while the authority concerned, the State Government, remained carefree to neither salvage the situation nor allocate alternative land for Muslim burial despite the ardent need for it.

10 HATE CAMPAIGNS

There is a deliberate use of religion and ethnic differences by the Plateau State Government and its elites using Churches, Community Development Associations, Media and Traditional Institutions to fan the embers of dispute, disaffection, suspicion and campaign of calumny against the Hausa Community in Plateau State.

PEACE DECLARATION

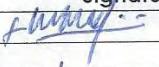
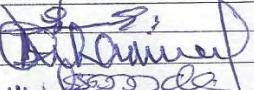
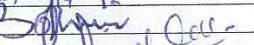
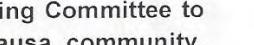
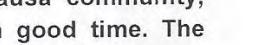
We propose a way forward and a road map leading to a Peace Declaration as follows;

1. The Hausa Community should be guaranteed all the rights and privileges accorded all other ethnic groups in Plateau State as it is incontrovertible that they are bona-fide citizens and indigenes of the State.
2. The Hausa Community want their basic rights and privileges guaranteed and protected in line with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
3. The Hausa Community want cessation of all forms of discrimination by the Plateau State Government especially in the areas of education, employment support such as poverty eradication and provision of social services and amenities to our communities.
4. The Hausa Community want a clear unreserved apology given by the Plateau State Government to all those affected by strife, as well as the resettlement of displaced communities back to where they were before the crises and granting of some form of compensation to affected victims of the various carnages who have suffered substantial damages and loss of bread winners.
5. The Hausa Community recommend that three (3) additional Districts be created in Jos North Local Government Area for Communities including our Community while the District of Bukuru be restored on the present occupant who was selected to the office by the Community since the death of former district head - Alhaji Sulaiman Mohammed who died in 2001. Doing these will definitely restore confidence from perceived marginalisation and entrench peaceful co-existence and harmony. There is the compelling need to strengthen the Hausa traditional institutions in Jos, Bukuru, Barikin Ladi and Bassa among others, as a way of cultivating early warning signals in times of crisis.
6. The Hausa Community recommend that carefully implementing the White Paper of General Abisoye and Solomon Lar Advisory Committee but especially the White Paper chaired by the Attorney General and Minister of Justice in 2011 will go a long way in resolving most of the contending issues associated with the crisis and restore peace in our communities.
7. The Hausa Community recommend that Government at all levels should set up machinery for constant dialogue amongst the various communities as a way of engendering greater understanding and respect for one another in order to correct misconceptions to bring back peace and harmony.
8. The Hausa Community recommend that peace can be entrenched with the resuscitation of grazing reserves, and animal rights of way should be enhanced to curtail incessant feud between Fulani herdsmen and farmers as fighting between them always affects the Hausa.

9. There must be a level playing ground for all political contests devoid of rigging of elections and imposition of anointed candidates by Plateau State Government through Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission, PLASEIC, for peace to be restored which allows the legitimate exercise of constitution rights and democratic freedom. Manipulation of laws or and creation of conflict as a means of disenfranchising our people should be stopped by the State Government and its agencies.
10. The Hausa Community want the practice of unwarranted blockage of the highway between Barikin-Ladi/Kassa along Jos road, the Abuja-Jos Road and Bukuru-NIPSS Vom Road by irate Berom youths which is a serious threat to the peace process on the Plateau to be stopped.
11. The Hausa Community wants the denial and illegal confiscation of places of worship be stopped and adequate protection for the exercise of religious freedom be provided for the sake of fairness and justice. The Plateau State authority should intervene and ensure the safety of worship places across the State especially those at Rukuba Road and Tudun Wada in Jos North and that of Barkin Ladi LGA.
12. In the same vein, Denial of the right to Education and basic amenities to the Hausa Community should be addressed accordingly by the Plateau State Government through all agencies concerned.
13. The Hausa Community wants the issue of illegal confiscation of legitimately acquired burial grounds in Jos North, Jos South (Bukuru) and all other places to be addressed urgently. The Hausa Community must be allowed to bury their dead ones at designated grave yards as a mark of assurance for peaceful co-existence.
14. The Hausa Community strongly recommend rebuilding of the existing Jos Main Market which was burnt in 2001 to alleviate hardship suffered by the people and assist in mitigating tension as a way of restoring peace.
15. Finally, The Hausa Community strongly recommend that all Federal agencies, but especially security outfits be represented by both Muslims and Christians to lend credence to justice and fair play anywhere in Nigeria. This will aid the return of peace. As it is now, only in Plateau State can one find all the Federal Government established security outfits headed by only Christians, entrenching fear and suspicion by the Muslims and a semblance of official injustice.
16. Islam is a religion built on peace and justice. The religion calls on persons in authority to always be fair and just, to all manner of people under their authority. It also admonishes all its adherents to live peacefully among themselves and their neighbours. The Hausa Community therefore recommend that all communities beseech the Almighty God to guide and protect us all as we strive to have a just and peaceful society at all levels.

This is the Hausa Community declaration of Peace.

The Hausa Steering Committee Signature Page

S/n	Name	Status	Signature
1	Alhaji Umaru Sani	Chairman	
2	Hon. Ibrahim Dasuki Salihu Nakande	Vice-Chairman	
3	Alhaji Shehu Ibrahim Masallah	Member	
4	Hon Nazifi Ahmad	Member	
5	Engr Mansur Nakande	Member	
6	Engr Hassan Hussaini (mni)	Member	
7	Alhaji Baba Bala Muhammad	Secretary	
8	Alhaji Danjuma Ibrahim B/Ladi	Member	
9	Alhaji Sani Mu'azu	Sub Committee Chairman	
10	Alhaji Sani Mudi	Member	
11	Alhaji Haruna Tanko Wada	Member	
12	Bashiru Shu'aibu Jibrin	Member	
13	Alhaji Ibrahim Sale Hassan	Member	
14	Alhaji Muhammad Auwal	Member	
15	Alhaji Danladi Pasali	Member	
16	Hon Aminu Baba	Member	

[Note: HD has been authorized by the Chairman of the Hausa Steering Committee to issue the foregoing as the opening position statement of the Hausa community, although it has not been possible to obtain all the signatures in good time. The signatures will be added as soon as possible.]