**Major Types of Conflict in Nigeria**

Conflict is inevitable when there is existence of injustice and lack of freedom. Conflicts occur when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources. Conflict emerges whenever one party perceives that one or more goals or purposes or means of achieving a goal or preference is being threatened or hindered by the activities of one or more parties.

**Ethnic conflicts** are also communal conflicts in the same sense that they are conflicts usually between neighbouring communities. Many of the intra and inter village conflicts in Nigeria are communal in nature. Jega (2002) reveals that major aspects of ethnic dynamics is the massive mobilisation of identities as a basis for contesting hegemonic power which is often used in igniting the embers of negative ethnicity with accompanying violent conflict. Certainly, there is proliferation of ethno-religious movements with pronounced political agenda in some parts of Nigeria. These are associations found largely to promote the interest of ethnic groups. Examples of such movements include Movement for the Actualisation of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in Eastern Nigeria, Movement for Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) and Ijaw National Congress (INC), both in the Niger-Delta area of Nigeria. While in Western Nigeria we have the Oodua People’s Congress (OPC). In Northern Nigeria, we have the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF). In many cases, ethnic militias have been formed, further complicating the political landscape with far- reaching implications.

**Political Conflict:** Nigeria is a colonial state cobbled by the British in 1960. Since then incidence of political violence has been associated with the electoral process in Nigeria. The bone of contention has always been over perceived rigging and other election malpractices as well as sharing of political gains. For instance, in the 1983 general election, the victory of the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN), was greeted with a lot of political violence and protest. Since then, political violence has assumed an ever more worrisome dimension and sophistication, including assassinations. In addition, the country has witnessed political crises on some government policies such as protest against Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), protest over increases in the prices of petroleum, strikes etc.

**Religious Conflict:** Nigeria is a multi-religious society but the most dominant religions are Islam and Christianity. Nigeria has experienced incessant clashes between Muslims and Christians in many parts of this country. Religion is being manipulated in so many ways for selfish gains.

**Economic Conflict:** Nigeria’s economic crises have long been implicated and complicated by the tangles of debt trap, corruption, mismanagement, advance fee fraud, Niger-Delta crises, resources allocation and several economic doldrums.

**Conflict involving values:** Conflict involving values are the most difficult to understand and resolve. Values are the basis of one self. They are our belief system and what we often not prepared to negotiate. When people in conflict talk about transparency, honesty, fairness, equality, they are talking about different values. We often see parties involved in conflict over values defending their positions strongly. These types of conflicts are more likely to be resolved when the parties understand and respect each other’s values. Nigeria, which is a segmented society with varieties of conflicting interest, values and preferences provide ground for conflict.

In conclusion, though there are many types of conflict, these are some of the major types of conflicts in Africa. Religious conflicts are faith based conflicts that have to do with religious beliefs, while some are value based conflict that have to do with land, cultural norms and values, traditional beliefs and other related issue. However, the recent case of xenophobia and increasing indigene/settler conflicts has added a new dimension to the existing types of conflict.