



CONTINUOUS VIOLENCE, MANIFESTATION OF FAILED STATE

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ABUIA. NIGERIA -

The Catholic Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, Most Rev. Matthew Hassan Kukah has described the continuous violence in the society to the manifestation of state failure; pointing out that “It is the irresponsible and corrupt leadership that prepares the ground for violence”.

The Bishop made the assertion recently in a paper titled: *The Politicisation of Ethnicity and Religion: Challenges to National Integration: The Way Out*; delivered at the Conference on National Unity, Integration and Devaluation of Power organized by the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development at the Sheraton Hotel Towers, Abuja, recently.

According to him: “Today, one of the greatest challenges that we face is the reign of alienation that has descended on our people. This alienation is the manifestation of state failure in our society today. State collapse is the story of Africa and its effects are what explain the climate of violence and war that now characterise our lives on the continent.”

Bishop Kukah went on to outline the symptoms of failed state that have eventually led to the frustration of the people, thereby resulting in violence. These include: “Vulnerability to likely loss or challenge to claims of national territory; likelihood of loss of monopoly of legitimate use of violence; erosion of legitimate authority and capacity to command loyalty of citizens and loss capacity to make and enforce collective will of the state.”

Others included: “Inability to provide social and welfare services to citizens; inability to guarantee safety of citizens; institutionalization of corruption as a dominant platform of governance; domination and control of environments by criminal gangs and mafias; inability of regulatory agencies of government to levy and collect taxes; rise in population of displaced and homeless persons even in peace time; sharp economic decline, making nations vulnerable to recession; circles of violence and instability and increasing lack of respect for the state and its law enforcement agencies.”

Proffering solutions for the identified challenges and the failed state syndrome, Bishop Kukah stressed the need for cooperation and collaboration to address the issue of national integration. His words: “Let us learn from the past but put it behind where it belongs. Let us look ahead now. Remember, today, you are a Nigerian because there is a Nigeria, but without Nigeria, you are nothing. You can join in the building of our dear nation or become a little insignificant ripple in the ocean.”

While noting that all segments of the society are presently wounded, Bishop Kukah urged that all hands must be on deck to effect the healing process. His words: “ ... let vengeance and hate end, and let forgiveness start ... Let us strike the drums of joy and hope because we are Nigerians. We have never turned back from battle and we won't now.”