**Conflict Resolution between Indigene/Settler in Nigerian Politics**

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Nigeria is a very highly complex, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious polity, with a diversity of cultural groups, having some 395 ethnic groups. However, three quarters of these groups are from the Middle-Belt of Nigeria, thus making it a polyglot region, exhibiting almost unparalleled diversities in culture and social organizations. Fifty-four of these are from Plateau State, where Bantu and Kwa sub-families of the Benue-Congo and the Chadic-sub group of the Nilo-Saharan or Afro-asiatic family (to which Hausa belongs),

Rather than nurture harmony and unity, these complex diversities tend to give birth to crises, such that conflicts have become common place in Nigeria’s fledging civil rule that it borders on the miraculous that the country has not plunged into civil war or returned to military rule. The vicious cycle of violence continues to oscillate between various ethnic groups involving minority and dominant groups. At other times, the religious card is flashed, as is characteristic of Muslim/Christian conflicts throughout most of the north, which is usually about anything (politics, economic control and competition after scarce resources, ethnicity) aside from religion.

In fact in a recent survey, Ellsworth discovered that ethnicity and religious affiliation are the two highest ranked identity makers for a vast majority of Nigerians than other indices such as state, national, ECOWAS and African identity. Though the research results revealed that northerners (people in the defunct northern region) are more tenaciously inclined towards religious identification, and southerners (people in the defunct Western, Mid-Western and Eastern regions) were more likely to rank ethnicity first, ethnicity was discovered to be the second highest ranked identity country-wide after religion, with state and national identity coming third and fourth, respectively.

It must be stated that this is currently exhibited in Nigeria, in the growing tendency for crisis to emerge between those who are perceived as so called “indigenes” and those who are regarded as “settlers” and are therefore considered “outsiders”. This presentation raises such pertinent questions as: Who or what makes for a “settler” and who or what constitutes an indigene? Which Nigerian is an indigene and which Nigerian is not? What factors make for indigeneship/indigeneity and which ones make for citizenship? When will a “settler” become a “native”? These questions are paused in terms of distinction.