

Theology and Jurisprudence in the Ideological Framework of Current Insurgencies: Towards an Alternative Islamic Discourse

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Prophetic Opening Sermon

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إن الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا، من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضل فلا هادي له. وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأشهد أن محمداً عبده ورسوله.

All praise is due to Allah; we praise Him, seek His help and beg for His forgiveness. We seek Allah's refuge from the evil of our souls and the wickedness of our deeds. Whomever Allah guides there is no one to misguide him, and whomever Allah leads astray shall find none other to guide him. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone **Who** has no partner and I bear witness that Muhammad (SAW) is His Slave and Messenger.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

“Oh you who believe, keep your duty to Allah with all seriousness and do not die except as Muslims.” (1)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

“Oh you mankind, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created from it its mate, and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, through whom you ask one another and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.” (2)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

“Oh you, who believe, keep your duty to Allah and speak words of appropriate justice. He will (then) amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His messenger has certainly attained a great victory.” (3)

¹ Al Qur'an Chapter 3, Verse 102.

² Al Qur'an Chapter 4, Verse 1.

³ Al Qur'an Chapter 33, Verses 70 – 71.

Furthermore, in an attempt to discuss the topic, I will divide it into **five-step algorithm**, which will be discussed *in sha Allah* through divide-&-conquer approach.

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Theology & Jurisprudence in the Ideological Framework of Current Insurgencies
- ✓ Ideological Issues of Current Insurgencies in Nigeria
- ✓ Islamic Perspectives to the Challenges
- ✓ Recommendations and Conclusion

✓ Introduction

I am glad to be invited to this very important regional conference (which comprises intellectuals and academics from the UK, Nigeria, Jordan, Turkey, Yemen, Mali, Kenya & Cameroon) and to be given a topic to make a presentation on. Furthermore, the title of my presentation is a very wide and comprehensive one that cannot be comprehensively discussed within the time frame and conference paper scope. However, I will do my best to give a concise but insightful presentation of the topic and I hope it will make us appreciate the substance of the title.

Currently, majority of people depend significantly on secondary data as their sources of information without critically verifying it sincerely, which compel them to believe so much in conspiracy theory which is another conspiracy in itself. In addition, I also hope my presentation will provide food for thought for further deliberation.

Consequently, the paper will discuss their theology, which is “the study of religious faith, practice and experience” of the current insurgencies with more emphasis to our experience in Nigeria. Today many countries have been engulfed and swallowed in chaos and pandemonium as a result of “irreligious religious crises.”

Furthermore, the current insurgency started in Nigeria around 2002 CE, through two young people (Names withheld) who imported the ideology from abroad. One of them died after the crises of Kanamma and Geidam towns in Yobe state. They got it (the ideology) through reading the publications of **AbdulMun’in Mustafa Halima** popularly known as **Abul-basir At-tartusiy**. They went to many states of

Nigeria discussing with some selected religious leaders, particularly in Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe, Maiduguri and Yobe States.

Subsequently, the ideology was accepted in Maiduguri and later propagated in Nigeria through preaching from 2002 to 2009CE. Some young Muslims from all Islamic organizations in Northern Nigeria abandoned their various organizations ceremoniously accepted the ideology. In other word, the members emerged from all sects and organizations that exist in northern Nigeria. However, the ideology has been going through a lot of metamorphoses, but significantly maintaining the basics of their teachings.

In addition, many names (almost seven) have been used to describe the movement. The name they officially adopted is “Jama’atu Ahlis Sunnah lid Da’awati wal Jihad” popularly known as “Boko Haram.”

✓ Theology and Jurisprudence in the Ideological Framework of Current Insurgencies

The theology of the current insurgencies agrees with the majority of Muslims in five pillars of Islam and six articles of faith. However, they significantly differ with the majority of Muslims in the world in some selected areas. This is because they largely depend on their personal understanding in interpreting the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

In addition, they hardly accept or believe in ‘Addaruurah,’ which is the condition of necessity that is beyond one’s control or ability. Based on their ideology, no “Daruurah” is accepted from individuals and communities except if they are also affected.

Similarly, they usually reject the rules of “Qawa’idul Fiqh” and “Usulul Fiqh” in their teachings and verdicts. They believe that the rules were formulated in order

to divert Muslims away from the genuine teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. In addition, they partake in “Al-HUKUM bil lawaazim” (Judging people based on indirect and even insignificant circumstantial evidence).

Furthermore, they also adopted “Solution looking for Problem approach” to majority of their verdicts and beliefs. Majority of them are young in age, energetic and committed to their belief, but also immatured. Their ego is far higher than their knowledge.

However, to be fair to them, at the time they started the movement peacefully you will hardly doubt their sincerity, sacrifice and commitment to religion. Whether you agree with them or disagree, you must appreciate their commitment and their certainty in what they believe in.

✓ **Ideological issues of current insurgencies in Nigeria that lead to *kufir***

(i) Democracy:

The members of the current insurgency do not believe in democratic systems of governance, or accept it as “Daruurah” in any way. Furthermore, they completely reject Democracy because of at least two main reasons, these are:

- a) Ownership of government belongs to people as stated by Abraham Lincoln, while in Islam the sovereignty belongs to Allah alone; and
- b) In Democracy, the wish of the majority prevails while in Islam, the Almighty Allah shows that mostly majority is not synonymous with what is right.

(ii) Laws & Legislation (Tauhidul Haakimiyyah)

The ideology of the insurgency, strongly believes without any excuse that laws and legislative power exclusively belong to Allah (SWT). No human being is allowed in anyway to formulate any law or has power of legislation. As a result, they consider members of the parliament (Senators of the Upper Chambers, Members of the House of Representatives and House of Assembly) as “kuffaar” who claim to be selected as “Law makers” and “Legislators.”

Similarly, they support their arguments with many verses. The most prominent verse is “...legislative power belongs to Allah alone...” (Yusuf: 40)

In addition, they opined that the members of these chambers bow to an object called “Mess” before and after submission in their chambers, which is another aspect of “Shirk.” They stated that you can only bow to the Almighty Allah (SWT).

iii) Paying Allegiance to any un-Islamic Government is Kufr

They Support their arguments with many verses: For example, the Almighty Allah says: “...Whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold, that never breaks.” (Baqarah:)

iv) Recognizing any un-Islamic Government is Kufr

This point is similar to (iii) above. However, they differ significantly, because (iii) explains “’Almubaaya’ah” while this point expounds only recognizing the government as a legitimate government without even being part of it. Their argument is the saying of Allah (SWT): “Already has He sent you word in the book, that when you hear the signs of Allah held in defiance and ridicule, you are not to sit with them unless they turn to a different theme. If you did, you would be like them. For Allah will collect, the hypocrites, and those who defy faith all in hell.” (Nisa’i: 140)

v) Educational System

The Ideology of the insurgency completely disbelieves and rejects our educational system because of what they perceive as un-Islamic. The issues that they capitalize on and consider our educational system as un-islamic are: Paying allegiance to un-Islamic government; the syllabus of Sociology, Political Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics etc does not recognize the existence and the Oneness of the Almighty Allah (SWT); Co-education where both males and females mix together, wanton display; and weekends of Saturday and Sunday that are for the jews and Christians.

vi) Law Enforcement & Security agencies

They also consider working in law enforcement & security agencies as disbelief. They started their “Da’awah” and justified their ideology with a prophetic hadith that has been reported by ibn Hibban (RH) which forbade working under an unjust leader. However, many scholars, like Shaykh Muhammad Nasir (RH) consider the Hadith as a weak one.

In addition, they observed that the law enforcement and security agencies are protecting a kufr government, which must be eliminated by any means.

vii) Reciting National Pledge and National Anthem is kufr

Most especially the phrase “to serve Nigeria with all my strength.” They translate “serve” as worship. Similarly, using Passport, National ID card and National Identity Number (NINO) are all prohibited.

viii) Using the word “Ubangiji” in Hausa referring to Allah is *kufr (Disbelief)*

They translated the word “Uban” as Father, so “Ubangiji” is literally translated as “father of Giji.” Gramatically, the words are “the possessed” and the “the possessor” or “Mudaafun wa Mudaafun ilaihi.”

ix) Theory of Evolution is also Kufr

x) Big bang Theory is also Disbelief in Allah

xi) Photosynthesis is also Kufr

xii) Using the phrase my lord referring to judge in the court is kufr

xiii) Water cycle is also Disbelief

xiv) Going to Court in Nigeria is also Kufr

For example, the Qur’an says: “Do they then seek after a judgement of (the Days of) ignorance?... (Ma’idah: 50)

The Almighty Allah (SWT) says again: “Hast thou not turned thy vision to those who declare that they believe in the revelations that have come to you and to those before you. Their wish is to resort together for judgment to the evil one, though they were ordered to reject him. But Satan’s wish is to lead them astray far away (Nisa’i: 60).

So many theories of law, psychology, sociology & political science are **Kufr**. However, based on their ideology no course in Nigerian curriculum is free from elements of kufr.

✓ Islamic Perspectives to the Challenges

We strongly believe beyond doubt that Islam has an answer to every question that comes up in the world. Invariably, no challenge will arise except that Islam has already prepared a solution to it.

Therefore, I will present some issues and recommendations that could guide our religious leaders and academics in making a gigantic contribution towards addressing all the major elements of the ideology.

In the past, many scholars failed to partake in researching the issues of the ideology. They assumed the issues are not even issues to be considered and researched. Majority of scholars and other men of God “dine and wine” in the corridors of power with “Their Excellencies”, while youth were confused with the “Fatwah” and very few people were ready to listen to them and guide them ideologically. However, there are many counter-narratives, but most of them lack substance and impeccable references.

i) Faith-Based insurgency cannot be completely eliminated through military campaign alone

Throughout history, no insurgency has ever been completely subdued, vanquished and eliminated with force only. The recent case of the USA meeting with the Taliban & Co in Afghanistan is a food for thought on this.

Furthermore, majority of the members of the current insurgency are not afraid of death. On the contrary, they always welcome death and consider themselves as martyrs. So what do you have to terrify them?

ii) Intellectual Dialogue should also be encouraged

There is the need for encouraging government to give more priority and preference to identifying the genuine insurgents and engaging them in dialogue. This has been useful during the time of Ali bn Abi Dalib (RA) when he allowed Abdullahi ibn Abbas (RA) to engage insurgents in an intellectual debate and dialogue on their ideology.

In addition, intellectual dialogue has been a dominant factor that helped in conquering the problem of insurgency in Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Egypt and Mauritania.

✓ **Recommendations & Conclusion**

- 1) Scholars and academics should study all the elements and ingredients of the ideology of the current insurgencies and intellectually address their arguments.
- 2) Religious scholars should always try to discuss their misunderstandings with wisdom and words of brotherhood that convey the message of love for them not enmity. Radical approach of our scholars makes them more radicals and extremists.
- 3) We should always remember “two wrongs can never make right.” As a result, we need to be just and polite in discussing and passing verdicts on the quaqmaire. This brought many cases of extra-judicial killings.
- 4) The door of dialogue should be left open. History has shown that no faith-based insurgency has ever been subdued, vanquished and defeated completely through military strategy alone. The effort of Bn Abbas (RA) while Ali Bn Abi Daalib (RA) was Amirul-Mumineen has always been appreciated and cited as a fundamental example of extinguishing extremism through constructive intellectual engagement.
- 5) Youth should never be neglected and abandoned again. In other words, leaders should always have time for youth to listen to their complains, misconceptions and grievances.
- 6) There is urgent need to establish a State-of-the-art International Islamic Dialogue Center” that can bear the name in the true sense of the word. The

center should involve intellectuals and responsible religious leaders. There are similar centers in Kuwait (Kuwait Dialogue Center) and Saudi Arabia (King Abdullahi Bn Abdul’Aziz International Center for Interreligious and intercultural Dialogue).

- 7) There is also urgent need to establish another state-of-the-art Islamic Rehabilitation Center for misguided youth. There is another time bomb or volcanic eruption that could erupt if care is not seriously taken. The issue of aftermath of the “Civilian JTF” is worrisome.

✓ **Conclusion**

Justice should always be promoted and sustained in governance. Injustice always breeds extremism and radicalism. Remember “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

*Subhaanakal Laahumma wa Bihamdik, ash hadu alla
Ilaaha illa Anta, astaghfiruka wa atubu ilaiKa.*

***Glory and Praise be to Allah. I bear witness that none
has the right to be worshipped except Allah. I seek Your
forgiveness and I turn to You in repentance.***

Abbreviations:

- 1) **SWT** stands for *SubuhānaHu wa Ta’ala* (meaning Glory be to the Almighty Most exalted).
- 2) **SAW** stands for *SallalLaahu Alaihi wa Sallam* (meaning Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him).
- 3) **RA** stands for *Radhiyal Laahu Anhu aw Anhum* (meaning May Allah be pleased with him or with them).
- 4) **RH** stands for *Rahimahul Lāh* (meaning May Allah have mercy on him or on them)

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