

## **Culture of Peace and Non-Violence in Nigeria: The Role of Women and Youths**

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### **Abstract**

To understand the concept of peace or non-violence, it is crucial to probe what violence is, briefly recognize what denotes or connotes violence, and then the reverse standpoint of non-violence which is peace and the role of women and youths therein. Violence is a global pandemic that affects the core of human life and can be found in any ecosystem, where people interact. Nigeria as a nation of violent eruptions continued to suffer the repercussions of violence, from the 1967-1970 Nigeria-Biafra War, religious violence like the Kasuwa Magani experience in 1980, Ilorin in 1989 and Zango Kataf in 1992 among several violent conflicts (Kamal-deen, 2016). The recent EndSARS violent protests which spanned the Nigerian geo-political space retain the involvement of youths in the national peace agenda, especially the need to end police brutality or governance-sponsored violence (Uwazuruike, 2020). This paper uses the library research method which draws from written sources to focus on the concept of non-violence, its apologists and how the women and youths of Nigeria could be arrowheads of non-violence. The inclusion of internationally recognized agendas, conventions and policies is seen as imperative for violence to end. Again secrecy and silence which fuel violence should be addressed.

**Keywords:** Peace, Violence, Non-Violence, Resolution 1325

### **Introduction**

It is claimed that violence erupts suddenly when vehement ideas, intense emotions, and standpoints are activated. Violence is a form of viciousness that is inherent in the whole world. Certain attributes drive violent dispositions or responses because no one was born violent, and there is no permanently violent individual, therefore peace or non-violence is possible. Violent contexts depend on varying degrees of circumstances without control, individuals without caution, or even deliberate resort to pain-causing options. The contributing factors to violence are relative and can be ethnic, environmental, physical or psychological, depending on the individual culture or groups concerned.

What is termed violence in a particular country or race may not be termed violence in another. The World Health Organisation defines violence as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in crying, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation”. When the outcome of any act culminates in pain, we can say that violence has taken place. In Nigeria, violence is responsible for the various degrees of physical, social, or even emotional harm that has taken its toll on our national ethos. No society should justify violence. Ahluwalia et al (2007) describe further that “Africa is tendentiously associated with violence in the historical, political and anthropological imagination, as well as in contemporary media representations (1).

Africa is always associated with violence as opposed to other continents. These various forms of violence outlined eat deep into society, as violence knows no age, race, or social status. Physical violence involves the use of force and pressure to cause bodily harm by an opposing person which in turn causes direct hurt, pain, and discomfort, this harm can be in the form of kicks, heavy blows, punches, or pressure applied directly with the intent to cause pain or kill as the case may be. Vulnerable and oppressed people in society are always at the receiving end of this form of violence. People believe that women are mostly at the receiving end of sexual violence but over the years the narrative is gradually changing as men, just as women, also suffer sexual violence and more men are coming out to reveal that they suffer sexual and gender-based violence too. Society has awarded men the status of the stronger sex, and people find it surprising that a man would be a survivor of such acts because violence mostly affects the “vulnerable and weak” which women are assumed to be.

### **Research Methods**

This research was conducted using the written research methodology that relies on published texts and documents. This lends the paper some focus on socio-political events within the Nigerian political space. The review of writings on violence, non-violence and the inclusion agenda that makes the role of women and youths essential in the agenda for peace also underscore the paper. The concept of Satyagraha influences the treatise, especially the components which underscore resistance, peace, pacification/pacifical/pacifism either as opposition to conflict or war, neighbourliness, law-abiding, reconciliation, passivity and peaceful resistance

### **Review of Literature**

Galtung 1996 asserts “To say that 95% of direct violence is committed by men is probably an understatement. This does not mean that women may not participate in criminal and even violent gangs, support warfare etc. only that the directly violent acts are committed by men” (41). Shapiro (2010) sums up violence thus “we must ... see violence as something present in more than the visible acts of physical harm.

Violence is present in the very way we treat one another—in our work situations, schools, families, sports, and social lives. It is ... wherever we see or treat others as beings to be exploited, made invisible, jettisoned, manipulated, objectified, connived against, outmanoeuvred, ridiculed, bullied, or cheated” (5). Women and youths belong in these categories. In Nigeria, violence has eaten deep into the fabric of the society as every geopolitical zone has experienced the eruption of violence. There are tensions in the North East, North West, South East, South-South, South West, and North Central, regions of Nigeria, over resources, mainly land, political expressions, and power-sharing, among other perceived entitlements. The alternative to violence is a viable option that society should adopt for healthy and peaceful coexistence.

## Non-Violence

Non-violence is a positive means of intervention by absence or seclusion from acts of violence that is, not participating in violence by hermitage. This abstention from violence is strategic and often prescribed to further curtail violence and its consequences despite being viewed as cowardice. The withdrawal from causing grievous harm to man, and other creatures despite dire provocation, is known as non-violence. This personal philosophy commences from the personal to the interpersonal, yielding outcomes in the group or general interaction dynamics. To be non-violent means a conscious choice for pacifist, irenic, peaceful and non-belligerent standpoints or acts. The opposite of violence is non-violence and may have an equal consequence of peaceful effects in society. At this juncture, one may consider the terms often employed for non-violence (Satyagraha):

- i. Resistant
- ii. Peaceful/Peaceable
- iii. Pacificatory/Pacific/Pacifism: opposition to conflict or war
- iv. Neighbourly
- v. Law-abiding
- vi. Reconciliatory
- vii. Passive
- viii. Peacefully resistant

Non-violence has become a necessary option to be considered in the present turbulence of global proportions. Across the universe, the political and philosophical stance on non-violent outlook has become widespread. Since Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr utilised it in India and the USA respectively, more individuals and groups see it as a very viable option to counter violent and destructive department. Be it the non-violence of the weak, cowardly or brave, pacifism from religious or secular perspectives, the conscious effort to desist from causing pain is worthwhile. Non-violence includes, but is not limited to: passive resistance/Satyagraha (Gandhi), Christian pacifism, a refusal to be conscripted into war for religious, moral, or ethical reasons. (non-violent resistance), non-violent resistance or coercion and (Direct Action/peaceful or passive resistance) others are; revolutionary, secular pacifism, non-participation in war, non-violent direct action/non-violent revolution, non-resistance, personal action to dissuade violence, like persuasion, conversion, use of physical violence, sabotage through active non-cooperation, sit-at-home order, that are often termed illegal acts by the government, the belief in non-violence, to justify religion, practicality, change, and the need for intervention and active reconciliation are given as reasons. (Sharp, Paullin, Clarence Marsh Case, Mulford Sibley, Leo Kuper, Theodore Paullin, Guy Hershberger).

To Sharp, there are different methods of non-violent actions. The 198 that he mentions are almost synonymous, interchangeable, and are often used singly, or in a combination of twos, or more. The concept of peace can be understood to mean pursuit: ... to end direct violence, ... to act as the starting point for more profound transformative processes ... the design of policies aimed at addressing issues such as exclusion, poverty, or democratization (Maria Villellas Arino)

### **Broad Categorisations of Non-Violence**

There are major types of non-violence:

1. Non-resistance: Often based on faith, it is a total rejection of physical violence by sects like; The Mennonites and Jehovah's Witnesses. Many of these religious groups do distance themselves from governance, abstain from courts, refrain from oath-taking, etc.

2. Active reconciliation: Based on individual convictions on the need to reconcile with one another. This group shifts from the self to others by preaching, converting people to reconcile, rather than become violent, or retaliate acts of violence. Examples are Leo Tolstoy and the Quakers.
3. Moral resistance: These resist evil, violent acts like oppression, and slavery through deliberate acts like legislation, lobbying, education, and non-retaliation, among others.
4. Selective non-violence: This is found in the refusal to engage in certain violent acts in local spheres, or international wars. It is also the choice of the form of violence to participate in, this group does not support nuclear warfare. They blame capitalism for violent acts and seek to entrench solidarity among workers (labour) in domestic or international jurisdictions.
5. Peaceful Resistance: This form uses conflict to gain or torpedo political, social, or economic advantages through change. One example is the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott which lasted for 381 days (1955-57), the Gandhi resistance movement, and others like them. Their standpoint is on the superiority of non-violence to violence. They employ violence (only when necessary) but employ to greater detail, constitutional, democratic, or established frameworks, strategies, and procedures, as well as persuasion, to curb violence. Peaceful resistance is considered to be more dynamic than passive resistance because passive resisters often turn violent.
6. Non-violent direct action: This direct effort at non-violence seeks to establish new forms or discourage established systems that are malicious and violent. The strategy is usually to investigate the status quo, lobby the leadership concerning the disagreeable acts, or needed change, negotiate, carry out silent/loud vigils, sit-ins like the occupy campaigns, conduct opinion polls and appeal to public conscience on the matter. Many civil society organisations use these non-violent direct-action strategies.
7. Satyagraha (Adherence to truth/reliance on truth): The use of love and propriety in every action is central here. Mohandas K. Gandhi developed this stance of non-violence that pursues social problems, deviance, and aberrations to transform society. It includes personal non-violent behaviour using truth, love, patience, no injury, and perseverance among other personal virtues. At a general level, the principle seeks justice, social inclusion, improvement in the socio-political and economic order, and education that liberates and minimises conflict. The methods used are negotiation, the fast (hunger strike), boycotts, labour strikes, civil disobedience, migrations from geographical locations, and picketing, to achieve their goals.
8. Non-violent revolution: This is revolutionary change through peaceful transition that seeks to change social, and economic problems, and exploitative approaches through individuals and groups. These sets of change agents utilize their lives as examples for change in policies, power relations, individual actions, and institutions, and cultivate the acceptance of nonviolence by inclusion, equity, equality, and liberty to create a just society to achieve freedom from war, and oppression. The United Nations supports the non-violent revolution.

### **Advantages of Non-Violence**

- i. Full of benevolence and love
- ii. Violence without hatred
- iii. Non-violence helps to check physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and neglect.
- iv. Promotes participation
- v. Attracts more participants than violent actions
- vi. No training is needed, only conviction
- vii. Number, or mass advantage as different groups congregate
- viii. Obtains legitimacy with time
- ix. Promotes diversity of skills, and know-how,

- x. Innovative (use of mass/social media Asmaa Mahfouz and her video that initiated the 18-day protests which ignited the Egyptian revolution that overthrew Mubarak of Egypt)
- xi. Unites people

### **Disadvantages of Non-Violence**

- i. Often considered as a resort by the weak people
- ii. Full of hatred
- iii. Domestic limitations
- iv. Causes embarrassment
- v. Overt violence like rape, other Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)
- vi. Reinforcement of male power
- vii. Biased press
- viii. More violence

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **a. Women and Non-Violence: The Role/Power of Women**

The steps by women to end conflict could be labelled deliberate steps towards non-violence by women. Gary (2002) in his bestselling book *Men are from Mars Women are from Venus* opined that “women are relationship-oriented; they are more concerned with expressing their goodness, love, and care... They (men) are more interested in “objects” and “things” rather than people and feelings”. This clear observation of Gary further explains why women are always at the forefront of taking care of and shaping individuals for the future, for sustainability, and building bridges that relationship-oriented. To uphold the culture of peace and non-violence in Nigeria the women and youths play intentional roles as stakeholders at reconciliation, negotiation, and social reconstruction after conflict (Birgitte, 2008). Women are central to society, while the youths are the leaders of tomorrow. Both groups deliberately engage in sustainable peace-building for development. The woman is the first orientation and human touch a child gets acquainted with, and that orientation or contact can make or mar the child in the long run when he is to make choices against violence. Despite this strong posture, women are vulnerable (McCarthy, 2011). Nevertheless, the woman remains central to peace infrastructure in communities. Without the security of women’s lives and their property, peace may elude many groups in the country.

Women in many traditional societies often participate in non-violence to discourage antisocial, or violent acts. Songs, performances, mass protests, marches, (naked or not) have been used severally. The Ebre dance among the Efik people, and the ancient Greek play *Lysistrata*, are among some creative efforts to stop a war. The struggle for the vote by women (the suffragist movement) also refers. Culturally, women used folkloric methods to teach non-violence through peaceful co-existence, integrity in financial tasks, and moral tenets that eschew greed, and infidelity, among other virtues.

In Liberia, women used non-violent campaigns, strategies, and group efforts to end war. In 2003, the use of nudity forced a truce between the warring factions in 2003 that ended Charles Taylor’s rule. Leyman Gbowee in 2002, raised women’s participation in Women of Liberia Action for Peace. This group effort galvanized action for the peace agreement. The campaign by Niger Delta women against oil companies like Chevron using the traditionally potent power of nakedness is another apposite example. The Women in Peace Network (WIPNET) under the aegis of the West African Network for Peace Building actively participates in centralized women’s issues in peace processes in West Africa. In Argentina, (1976-1983) the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo often gathered to protest the abduction of their children. Also known as the *Los desaparecidos* the women, who were mothers of disappeared

children and adults, marched every Thursday to public edifices in non-violent protests. The global impetus for women includes the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1999, before which was the one in Mexico, the First World Conference on Women in 1975, the second in Copenhagen in 1980, while the Kenyan Conference was the third and held in 1985. The UN Decade for Women, from 1975-1985 also gave stimulus to women's issues. Some global backing for women to promote peace and nonviolence include:

a) **Resolution 1325**-The UN Security Council enacted the resolution in 2000 to highlight the need in women's situation in the post-conflict search for peace. Five years later in 2005, it was reviewed to include women in the processes that entrench peaceful coexistence. The agenda, which Nigeria is a signatory to, highlights the tactical role of women in peace and non-violence as well as gender sensitivity, and responsiveness in peacekeeping missions. It also mainstreams gender into conflict resolution strategies.

b) The Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and instituted in 1981. is crucial to ending discrimination, or latent and manifest violence against women. Through it, institutions can conduct gender analysis and promote gender equality. Others are the MDGs, SDGs, etc.

c) Locally, The National Gender Policy (2006), and the National Policy on Women (2000) also generated support for women in non-violent conditions. The projects by spouses of political office holders also created space for non-violent orientation for women and their use of peaceful strategies continentally, like the African First Ladies Peace Mission and the nationwide, or state-based projects in Nigeria.

#### b. **Youth and Non-Violence**

Nigeria has a large population of youths faced with challenges that are glaring in our society such as unemployment, sexual harassment in school, dislocated family, substance abuse, misplaced priorities, crime, and criminality. The youths face the inequality gap evident in youth unemployment and poverty. The bid to curb the challenge of economic deprivation led to the peaceful protests that were organized to draw attention to their plight in October 2020. The "END SARS" protests as they were dubbed, did not succeed. The insensitive reactions to end and sabotage the protest have contributed to dissuading the youths from non-violent protests. What was meant to be a peaceful protest turned into the murder of young people by the military. The youths only amplified the call for social justice and equity in governance, and humane economic policies by the government. Women were not left out of the END SARS activism. Renowned activists like Aisha Yesufu, Rinu Oduala, Feyikemi Abudu, Moe Odele, and a host of others were part of the protesters who refused to be muted at the frontlines. It is noteworthy that women always find non-aggressive ways to relate to violence and gender oppression. When advocating for a culture of peace Castro and Galace 2010 posit that

the need for a culture of peace particularly in today's world is evident as we reflect on how our civilization has succumbed, from time to time and still again very recently, to the human frailties of greed, selfishness, ambition, and xenophobia. We have seen that heinous acts are often committed under the veil of public mandates when in fact they are the wishes of the few in power, be they economic, political, military or even religious.

Just like Castro and Galaces' position on culture for peace above, selfishness, ambition, greed and xenophobia are some of the hindrances of peace in our society, when all these are checkmated, we can begin a culture of peace which is all-inclusive. Most times seems like a

fruitless effort because there are people who cash out on violence and human frailty, especially the warlords and gun runners as well as other profiteers, so these categories can intentionally do everything to maintain the status quo of violence in society. Going further Castro and Galace give a vivid and significant way of promoting the culture of peace thus:

The most significant way of promoting the culture of peace is through peace education. Peace education needs to be accepted in all parts of the world, in all societies and countries as an essential element in creating a culture of peace. To meet effectively the challenges posed by the present complexity of our time. The young of today deserve a radically different education ...one that does not glorify war but calls for peace, nonviolence and international cooperation". They need the skills and knowledge to create and nurture peace for their selves as well as the world they belong to (xii).

Shaping the knowledge of youths intentionally and radically towards peace education will yield great results, enhance a culture of peace, and education, help shape society, and teach one the basic etiquettes of life. Most people are reformed and rebranded when educated for peace due to the systematic instructions and guidance that they receive on how to go about life challenges. Education can be formal like learning in a well-structured classroom from various schools or institutions or informal like practical adult learning or real-life examples of learning which can be carried out at an informal location, like the home, places of worship, and interactions. Notwithstanding peace education can be fashioned into these various forms of education for youths, women and even the elderly in the society. When youths also take part in peace education, the culture of peace and non-violence in Nigeria will be further boosted. Shapiro (2010) suggests ways peace education can be achieved broadly to be all-encompassing

Educating for peace is always a holistic process. It means recognizing that for human beings to move towards a less violent and more cooperative and caring mode of existence, the broad development of all our potentialities will be required. It will demand change and development in our social consciousness and our capacity to reason, in our sentient life as feeling and embodied creatures, in our moral sensitivity and conscience, and an awakening or enlargement of our spiritual awareness (9).

Youths should be able to move towards a less violent approach to handling whatever social problems they face through peace rallies, concerts, talent shows, creativity fairs, and proffer means of self-reliance. When youths shun violence, deliberate peace becomes an easy option. To Ahluwalia (2007) "When we speak of non-violence in this volume, whether in the colonial or postcolonial contexts, we refer to it as a conscious decision to act in defiance of oppression, injustice, or of a violent reality, while deliberately choosing not to resort to violence" (2). Peace becomes the only option. Only the conscious pursuit of peace in our minds and actions in secret first, then publicly, can the grains of non-violence be reaped in any fractured society.

### c. **Women, Youth and Peace**

The United Nations outlined in detail, very comprehensive pointers to ensure a culture of universal peace and non-violence. When looked into and adopted by all societies, peace will certainly prevail. The declaration of a culture of peace on 10th November 1998 and the adoption of same by the United Nations on the 6th of October 1999 states that "a culture for

peace is a set of values attitudes, traditions, modes of behaviour and ways of life that inspire. This culture concerning women and youth indicates that irrespective of class, gender, age, race, region, or ideology, there are necessary steps to take for peace to prevail. Some of these steps are:

- a. Respect for life and all human rights (The UN Bill of Rights of 1948, The African Charter on Human Rights 1981)
- b. Rejection of violence in all forms
- c. Promoting sustainable economic and social development
- d. Ensuring full participation in the development process of the society
- e. Prevention of violent conflict by tackling their root causes through dialogue and negotiation
- f. Commitment to full participation in the process of equitably meeting the needs of present and future generations
- g. Promotion of the equal rights and opportunities of women and men
- h. Recognition of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information
- i. Ensuring the free flow of information at all levels and enhancing access to them.
- j. Devotion to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue, and understanding between individuals, nations, ethnic, religious, cultural and other groups.

When youths and women are exposed to a culture of peace and non-violence, they actively lend their voice to a peaceful cause which leads to a sane or safer environment where people in the society can function properly and participate in governance. When women and youths who are mostly at the receiving end of violence and abuse do not speak up or take proactive steps to counter such, it becomes allowed. The voices of women and youths deserve to be heard to correct the ills and stand out as change agents. Couldry (2010) gives a vivid new dimension to voice:

Voice requires a material form which may be individual, collective or distributed. The voice does not simply emerge from us without support. We saw earlier that voice requires social resources, but more than that it also requires a form: both are aspects of the materiality of voice. Since voice is a process, so too is the sustaining of voice's material form" (9).

For youths and women to be heard they should have individual and group voices and embrace positive change. Again, they should not surrender to or exhibit inertia (Evwierhoma 2002, 97). An individual can advocate for a culture of peace and non-violence, likewise, the advocacy could be collective, because there is strength and power in unity but most importantly as Couldry states voice requires a material form and social resources to be able to advocate for a culture of peace, material forms in the sense of empowerment, and good resources for audibility. Investment in material and non-material resources for youths to achieve a certain voice, social capital, and power for recognition is not futile. Resources like opportunities for expression provide the needed visibility, stability, and influence that youths need to affect society positively. Youths require peace to empower one another with social and material resources to become voluntary and not coerced agents of peace.

### **Recommendations**

To promote a culture of peace and non-violence in society, there are deliberate efforts that need to be harnessed in certain areas in the society, which are:



1. Understanding- There should be adequate understanding and high tolerance between individuals in society. As much as possible, ethnic and religious misunderstanding and discussions should be shunned deliberately in for the avoidance of issues which when raised can escalate and trigger hate and serious conflict between both parties.

2. Visibility - Visibility and the consideration of platforms for women and youths should be apportioned to such people in society so they function as expected especially their participation in governance. Invisibility causes a feeling of negligence, abandonment, and rejection. Youths desire to be seen and heard in the areas of positive contribution to society. The clamour for visibility and audibility resulted in the ‘Not too Young to Run Act which gave a platform to the youths in governance. Their inclusion in governance enabled by the legal backing made the youths to advocate for peace and extend the frontiers of their advocacy to be “Not too Young Rule”.

3. Governance- there is a lot of push for the actualization of the women’s agenda, in consonance with the mandate of the established institutions with the oversight functions for issues that concern them. The need for more empathy towards achieving global impact is stressed here. Government should embrace needs assessment strategies before policy enactment, to involve persons living with disabilities among the women and youth population.

4. Justice - Fairness should be served rightly without bias in society, as this will go a long way to ensure a culture of peace. Injustice in the social space affects several spheres of life, in our schools, organization, our daily interaction, and contact with people. There should therefore be justice for rape survivors, the harassed, displaced persons, communities affected by insecurity, those affected by the social ills perpetrated in the society so the culture of peace and non-violence will be promoted. Justice can eradicate the surge in victimhood as it is being experienced all over Nigeria.

5. Security – The youths should support the efforts to ensure adequate security to maintain a culture of peace in Nigeria. The upsurge in kidnapping, rural insecurity, ritual killings, business email scam also known as ‘Yahoo Yahoo’, which have become the order of the day, are often traced to youths. Security is one of the major determinants of a culture of peace and nonviolence, when the society and its proximate environments are fully secured, violence is not expected to prevail.

6. Women’s participation in non-violence in conjunction with the youths can end violent social dislocations, estrangement, especially of family members, environmental degradation, sexual exploitation, sexual and gender-based violence, and above all, the use of minors, women, and youth for banditry, and as soft targets.

Of utmost importance as we map out environmental roles for women, and youths in Nigeria is the role of the mother ministry in charge of this workshop. The synergy between the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture and every other ministry in the country should be real, felt by women and youths, rather than on paper. Through such collaborations, government-backed roles for women and youth in volunteer work, physical and virtual platforms for voices, reorientation from deviance, and in return, the needed support from the women and youths to enable such plans to materialize would build a culture of peace and non-violence in Nigeria. The voices of morally upright youth role models are also required for more gains to be recorded in ascribing such roles. Building the culture of peace and non-violence in the Nigerian society is possible because the planned peaceful protest enabled many Nigerians to realise that whatever good we want in society can begin with us. The youth who are the leaders of tomorrow should be well-equipped in every sense of the word, with the needed know-how to manage the culture of peace, further reoriented for responsibility, accountability, and morality in governance as the future is theirs. This future,

lies also in their ability to change the paradigm from youth listlessness, academic lethargy and political indolence to visibly active, proactive, and result-yielding participation. Even The Holy Bible admonishes peace and peaceful living in society. Other Options for the women and youth are:

- i. . The use of creativity for non-violence. Women's inclusion in development projects as participants and beneficiaries.
- ii. Women and youth in more leadership spaces minus tokenism.
- iii. Women and youth in responsively balanced conflict resolution roles.
- iv. Resources for women and youth economic empowerment.
- v. The implementation of safety and security architecture for women and youths that translates to the same for the overall society.
- vi. Attention to non-violence strategies by women and youth using social media networks.
- vii. More recognition for women and youth institutions via legal and institutional frameworks.

### **Conclusion**

Peace is an essential ingredient for national growth and so is non-violence advocacy. Women, youth, and non-violence are intricately connected. Therefore, we can no longer underestimate the role of women and youths in non-violent activism that leads to sustainable peace and development. Two things are important for women and youths to mediate: the need to check the infiltrating force of secrecy in the efforts to promote non-violence and shun incriminating silence. What we are in secret, promote in secrecy, determine the outcomes that we experience where peaceful or violent constructs are concerned.

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