

# Towards a Christian Response to Al-Shabaab's Terror Attacks on Kenyans

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## Abstract

The recent escalation of terrorist attacks in Kenya is the direct result of Al-Qaeda affiliate, Al-Shabaab insurgency in the neighbouring Somalia. Al-Shabaab, an Islamic Religious Sect has been a thorn in the flesh of Kenya since 1998 to the present. The Al-Shabaab militants are suicidal. Their use of unconventional warfare tactics, calculated violence to kill, threaten, intimidate and maim the innocent citizens of Kenya has left devastating effects on all spheres of life of Kenyans. Al-Shabaab attacks portend a danger to the future of education, tourism, business, health, religion and psychological damage of Kenyans. As Al-Shabaab continues to weaken in Somalia, the government of Kenya must focus on finding suitable approaches to de-radicalize the small number of Muslims who have been lured into extremism in Kenya. The current counter-terrorism activities tend to ignore the lessons learned from other protracted insurgencies and that over-reliance on military responses is counter-productive and will only complicate and prolong an already difficult problem. Even the perceived civil society's duty to carry out civic education to counter the radical ideologies that reduce productive Kenyans into murderous gangs may not bear much fruit. The Church remains a credible voice of mediation because peace and reconciliation remains the central themes in the Bible. This paper offers practical suggestions on how Christians can respond to this national problem by addressing the misinterpretation and distortion of the Quran, underlying political and theological issues and bearing witness to Jesus by overcoming evil with good by responding to the historical injustices and seeking to change the world.

**Keywords:** Terrorism, Al-Shabaab's terror, Muslim, Quran, Injustice, Peace and Love

## 1. Introduction

History has provided us with data showing what role religion has played in many conflicts that have devastated mankind and caused untold suffering. Good examples are the crusades (Riley-Smith, 2005), the slaughter between Iraq and Iran -1980-1988 (Karsh, 2002), Hindu – Muslim clashes in India (Graff & Galonnier, 2013), Boko Haram and Christians in Nigeria (Ilechukwu, 2014) among others. It is therefore true to say that more wars have been waged, more people killed and these days more evil have perpetrated in the name of religion than any other institutional force in human history. No wonder, Blaise Pascal (1623-62) pointed out that “men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction” and Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) regrets that “we have enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another” (Ilechukwu, 2014). Religion causes all kinds of trouble in the public arena. It divides people into friends and enemies, ‘us’ and ‘them’. It is within this backdrop that Al shabaab, an Islamic religious Sect poses a great danger to Kenyans.

This paper offers practical suggestions on how Christians can respond to this national problem by addressing the misinterpretation and distortion of the Quran, underlying political and theological issues and bearing witness to Jesus by overcoming evil with good by responding to the historical injustices and seeking to change the world.

### 1.1 Meaning of Terrorism

There is no single universally accepted definition of terrorism. It has been defined variously by different authors. For Ajayi (2012) “terrorism” is from the word “terror” which conjures the image of fear and anxiety brought about by unprovoked, random and unpredictable bombing, hijacking, kidnapping, assassination, gun attack, arson and assaults on important state institution with the purpose of drawing attention or gain sympathy for a cause. The perpetrators are usually religious extremists. Others view it as a calculated use of violence and non-violence threat or both to frighten, oppress and suppress people into submission, usually for the purposes of achieving political change or force a government to act. The methodology is limited in physical destructiveness but high in psychological impact because it creates fear and shock through acts of lethal violence (Fletcher, 2006, Hoffman, 1998, & Encyclopedia American, 1998).

It is a premeditated, politically motivated; violence perpetrated against non-combatant civilian targets with an intention of influencing another less reachable audience such as a government. (Webel, 2013; National Counter-terrorism Center, 2012). This definition was exemplified by the carriage and destruction in the coastal town of Mpeketoni in Kenya.

Alao and Uwom (2012) and Marshal (2002) adds that terrorism results from emotions or psychic impulse or vengeance whether as a result of perceived injustice or just an act of humiliation and that is why there is a lot of secrecy that surround the act of terror. This explains the reason why terrorist operate under oath and in close association with their sympathizers, nationally and internationally.

From the aforementioned, terrorism can be defined as a calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. It seeks to instill a climate of fear that erodes the public psyche and to impose escalating economic costs from state's resources and the collective will.

### *1.2 The Rise of Al – Shabaab Terrorists*

Al-shabaab traces its origin to the formation of the Al-Ittihad Mahakem, Al-Islahiya or Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which was a union of different militant groups in 2000 that sought to fill the power vacuum after the collapse of Siad Barre's rule in 1991 in Somalia (Thomas, 2013). Al-Shabaab was the youth wing of the ICU and it took fierce militant nature focused on enforcing the strict shari'a law similar to the Taliban in Afghanistan. After the collapse of the ICU following the intervention of the Ethiopian troops in 2006, Al-shabaab emerged as a separate independent group that merged with Al-Qaeda in 2012. (Cable News Network (CNN) wire staff, 2012). Al-Shabaab therefore, is an offspring of the jihadist organization Al-Qadea whose aim is to fight western interest and establish Islamic states in the world (Marchal, 2009).

A United Nations report of the monitoring group on Somalia and Eritrea of 2011 estimates that Al-Shabaab has an annual budget of between 70-100 million US dollars and fighters numbering to 14,000 (UNSC, 2011). The development of Al-Shabaab can be said to be beyond Somalia. Hansen (2013) points out the fact that foreigners have joined the group and its declared merger with Al-Qaeda shows its international networks and operations.

### *1.3 Al-Shabaab Terrorists in Kenya*

An empirical study by Hansen (2013) indicates that 10% of Al-Shabaab membership to be of Kenyan origin tracing the link between Al-Shabaab to Kenyan Islamic charitable organizations and radical clerics such as Sheikh Aboud Rogo among others, dating back to mid-1990s. The sympathy, financial support and recruitment for Al-Shabaab was done through these charitable organizations and clerics who portrayed the Kenyan government especially the police department as allies to the United States of America and European Union in fighting Islam all over the world. The Al-Shabaab group took advantage of the many jobless Kenyan youths from non-Somali origin by recruiting and taking them to Somalia for military training.

To make its influence felt, Al-Shabaab started cross- border attacks and kidnapping of western tourists and other foreign aid workers from the coastal and northern areas of Kenya, harming the Kenyan tourism industry which is one of the main income earners of the country. (International Crisis Group, 2012). This led to a decision by the Kenyan government to deploy the army to secure the borders and interest of the country.

In October 2011, the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) set foot on the Somali soil to pursue the Al-shabaab militant group in an operation dubbed *Operation Linda Nchi* (Gentlemen, 2011). Though the Kenyan soldiers were initially fighting Al-shabaab on their own, they later joined the African Union Mission in Somalia- AMISON (International Crisis Group, 2012). Resulting from KDF's deployment, the Al-Shabaab therefore declared jihad on Kenya for allegedly playing puppet to the western powers in their "global struggle against Islam" (Hansen, 2013, p.130-131) and also claiming that the "Christian" western nations were using the "Christian" KDF to fight Islam in Somalia and convert the Somali people to Christianity (Osanzo, 2013).

This confirmed the worst fear of Kenyans of being a target of religious extremists (Allison, 2013). Al-Shabaab's attack on Kenyan soil has since taken diverse faces from killing Police Officers, abducting Government Officials, killing aid Workers, attacking Bus Stops, Churches, Restaurants, Shopping Malls (Miller, 2013 & Odhiambo et al., 2013) and most recent one being the attack at Mpeketoni, Bus travelers and Quarry workers in Mandera County. A good number of the attacks were on churches with the help of radical Muslim clerics.

This change of tact by the Al-Shabaab and potential transformation of the conflict largely depended on how Christians reacted to the attacks. This paper however, intends to show how Christians should respond to such terrorist attacks.

### *1.4 History of Terrorist Attacks in Kenya*

Islamic related terrorism did not appear in Kenya for the first time after the country's military intervention in Somalia in 2011 or with Al-Shabaab's subsequent attacks on Kenyan restaurants, public places and churches. The first significant manifestation of the growing threat of terrorism in Kenyan soil was at the Norfolk Hotel in 1981 when an Islamic terrorist detonated a bomb killing 15 people. The most prominent of these incidents was

on August 7 1998 when Al- Qaeda attacked the U.S Embassy in Nairobi, killing 213 people (Los Angeles Times October 9, 1998) and the group also attacked the Israeli- owned paradise Hotel in Mombasa killing 15 people (British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) , November 28, 2002). Ever since 2002, there has been an unprecedented terror attacks in several parts of the country. The recent escalation of terrorist attacks in Kenya, however, is a direct result of the Al- Shabaab insurgency in the neighbouring country of Somalia.

There seems to be a clear relationship between ethnic and religious backgrounds and the growth and expansion of Al-Shabaab in Kenya. This was especially felt in the north-eastern and coastal regions, which are characterized by marginalization, frustration and resentment towards Nairobi, the centre of political power. This divide is, however, not based on ethnicity alone: the religious divide between the coastal region, which is predominantly Muslim, and Nairobi, which is seen as predominantly Christian (Botha, 2014). Radicalization of Kenyan youth has rapidly grown because of these of rising discontent among the Muslim community fueled by the 'elimination' or assassination of leaders or scholars has radicalized and recruited dozens; if not hundreds to the ranks of extremist organization.

Following the Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in Kenya in 1998 and 2002, the government of Kenya improved its ability to fight terrorism and related threats. It increased its capabilities to identify arrest, detain suspects through an Anti- Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) that was established in 2002.

As Al-Shabaab continues to weaken in Somalia, the Kenyan Government must also focus on finding suitable approaches to deradicalize the small number of Muslim who have been lured into extremism and are waging jihad in Kenya (Nzes, 2012).

Given the growing global threat of terrorism, it is significant that an understanding of the nature and mechanism, premises under which terrorists operates is obtained. This is significant as it would shape the perspective of policy makers and also the approach that Christians need to employ.

### *1.5 Christian Response to Al- Shabaab Terror Attack on Kenyans*

The threat of terrorism is unpredictable. It is an exceptional phenomenon requiring exceptional moral responses by Christians. Accordingly, it is wishful thinking to believe that terrorism can be ended overnight or even perhaps within our lifetimes. An intelligence agency RUSI reported that Islamists were shifting their focus from Western and military targets to Christians in Africa as part of their mission of global jihad. Evidence of this is that in the last decade Muslim persecution of Christians has increased fourfold with an average of 200,000 Christians being killed annually because of their faith (Kendall, 2012 & Smith, 2011).

There has been a serious debate by African Christian leaders on the appropriate response to these increased terrorist attacks. Many opine that we defend ourselves for no one has the monopoly of violence and others call for non –violence as the best ethical approaches founded on Love for the neighbour (Smith, 2011). However, the command to love one's enemy, neighbor and self sometimes conflict with the command to resist evil, end injustice and protect the vulnerable. There are some Biblical passages like Numbers 16 and 2 Kings 1:9-12; 2:23-25 among others that appears to endorse the use of violence which may have been the justification for the Christian Crusaders, the World Council of Churches (2006) and Long (2004) have rejected the so-called war on terror paradigm for it tends to undermine civil and political rights and produce more casualties than the original attacks. It also weakens civil and political liberties by turning democratic societies into police or security states (Stassen, 2004). Opinions vary on religion's involvement in contemporary violence and terror. Studies have shown that conflicts in the world today are caused by different factors, among them being religion. However, religion in itself is ambivalent (Juergensmeyer, 2003). It can inflame or calm a conflict. Therefore due to its ambivalent nature and place in society today, religion can contribute to the promotion of peace and reconciliation in the following ways: peacemaking is central in the teaching of every religion, the sacred texts (the Bible or even the Qur'an and others) can be interpreted either to justify war or pacify war; the concept of *Missio Dei*, illustrates that God is in the business of reconciling humanity to Himself, to one another and to the cosmos and finally the concept of restorative justice aimed at reintegrating both the offender and the victim back to the community by helping to forgive and move on are methods that have been used successfully elsewhere in the past (Kaberia, 2013; Schreiter & Knud, 2013 and Kim, Kollontai & Hoyland, 2008).

## **2. Clearly Understanding the Premise within Which AL-Shabaab Operates**

It is important to dispel some popular misconceptions about how the terrorist operates. Many people believe that terrorists are pathological, driven by religious fanaticism. On the contrary, many terrorists are well educated and seemingly rational (Jackson, 2009). The fact that they are rational people demands that we use preventive

diplomacy (Eskandarpour & Wennmann, 2011) which is an action to prevent disputes from arising, escalating, and to limit the spread of latter when they occur. This approach calls for the following:

### 2.1 A Clear Understanding of Terms used by Muslims.

There is need to distinguish between *Islam* (the whole system of beliefs and the way of life of 1.3 billion members), *Islamism* (Islamic fundamental radical or political Islam) and *Islamic terrorism* (terrorism carried out by Muslims in the name of Islam) (Sookhdeo, 2004). Failure to distinguish these terms we may be tempted to think that terrorism carried out by Muslims is a natural expression of Islamic beliefs. Statistics show that 15% of Muslims are radicals, another 15% are liberals and the majority 70% is traditional or orthodox. Those who approve terrorism are a minority within minority (Sookhdeo, 2004).

### 2.2 Basic Convictions Held by All Muslims

Ramadan (2004) identifies the basic unifying factors that bind the Muslims together as:

*The concept of Umma* (the Islamic people who accept the core beliefs of Islam) creates a strong sense of solidarity among Muslims worldwide, so that an attack on one group of Muslims is an attack on the whole house of Islam.

*Their thinking of politics is guided by Shar'ia law* (Sharia) which should order individual and communities lives; there is no separation between religion and state. Where Islam ruled was called *Dar al- Islam* (Home of Islam) and the rest of the world *Dar- al – Harb* (the house of war) referring to areas hoped it would eventually come under the rule of Islam also known as House of Mission, House of Testimony, House of peace). This is the premise within which motivates an armed struggle for the advancement of Muslim power (Lewis, 2004). While suicide is forbidden in Islamic Law, those who die for the cause of Allah (*Martyrs or Shuhada*) in the context of Jihad are highly honoured and are rewarded by instant entrance to paradise (Chapman, 2005). This is because the Qur'an in Sura 9:29 instructs Muslims to "fight against those who do not believe... until they are reduced to submission to Allah".

### 2.3 The Ideological Convictions that encourages Terrorists towards violence

The conviction that turn an ordinary Muslim into politically motivated terrorist can be traced to the ideologies developed by Abd al-wahhab (1703-1791) in Arabia, Abul A'la Mawdudi (1903 – 1979) in Pakistan and Husan al Banna (1906- 1966) and Sayyid Qutb (1906 -1966) in Egypt in response to be social and political development of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Chapman, 2005). The reasons that saw the revival of these terrorists' ideologies are caused by among others; an alleged abandonment of real Islam by fellow Muslims, Islamic leadership that is not faithful to Islam, that Islam is a complete religio-political system that do not need any of the western ideologies and proposes an adoption of *Khalifa (Caliphate)* that is the unity of the Muslim world under Islamic Law and one central leadership (McRoy, 2006; Burke, 2004, Esposito, 2003). These among others are the beliefs that turned Osama Bin Laden, a devout orthodox Muslim into the leader of a network whose members are dedicated to violence. However, Islamic terrorism on Islamic grounds has attracted strong criticism (Sisto, 2015), because moderate Muslims still hold to the view that the use of violence in the name of Islam is a total perversion and betrayed to the real Islam. (Riddell & Cotterall, 2003).

The concept of martyrdom when understood properly is something valued by all religions and societies as the ultimate sacrifice one can make to serve his Creator and his fellow man. It is ironical for the Qur'an to explicitly prohibit suicide while at the same time calling the suicide-bombers Martyrs (Cook, 2003). For Muslims, this is an ideological conviction that drives Islamic militant (Martyr or Shahid is a title for a Muslim who has died fulfilling a religious commandment) to engage in acts of terrorism. Many Islamic extremists use the term *Shahid* or *Shahada* in their effort to legitimize the use of violence and terrorism against western groups of unbelievers (Esposito, 2011). While Americans are accused of using skewed perception of Islamic *Shahid* to depict Islam as a religion characterized by sensuality, violence and irrationality (Campell, 2010). Warraq (2002) confirms that the most prominent reward promised to Shahada is that of seventy two dark-eyed and beautiful virgins sheltered in their tents which neither man nor Jinnee will have touched in Paradise, though this may turn out to be a great disappointment. However, sensual pleasures are graphically elaborated that:

Each time one sleep with a houri (gazelle-eyed virgin) they find her virgin. Besides, the penis of the elected never softens. The erection is eternal, the sensation that one feel each time they make love is utterly delicious and out of the world and were they to experience it in this world, they would faint. Each one will marry 70 houris besides the women he married on earth and will have appetizing vaginas.

#### 2.4 *The Abuja Declaration of 1989 by Islam in Africa Organization (IAO)*

The Abuja declaration of 1989 by 24 African member states that belong to Islam in Africa organization (IAO) could explain the Al-Shabaab Phenomenon in Kenya. IAO was formed with clearly set objectives among others, electing only Muslims to political posts, replace all western forms of legal and judicial system with Shar'ia Law, appoint only Muslims into strategic national and international posts, reinstate the concept of 'Umma' which emphasizes on the unity of Muslims in Africa and completely making Africa completely Islamic (East African Centre for Law & Justice, 2014). What informs Islamic conspiracy to take over Africa is that; Africa is faced with myriad problems – social, political, economic and environment among others. These problems have been caused by imperialism and Christianity. Various solutions prescribed have failed and therefore, an alternative prescription is Islam. As at now, Islam is accomplishing the Abuja Declaration in sub-Saharan Africa by increasing Muslim population and immigration in the target countries, repackaging Islam especially on issues that touch on women (inheritance, issue of evidence, restitution, marriage to non-Muslims and invalidity of women political leadership) to make it appealing and finally use violence and intimidation (East African Centre for Law & Justice, 2010). The goal behind this grand strategy is to produce a theocracy with Allah as the ruler of society where there is no dichotomy between religion and the state. Thus creating a society where democracy, freewill and freedom of expression is suffocated.

#### 2.5 *Clearly Identify the Suitable Approach to be used in Reaching out to the Al-Shabaab*

When it comes to Christians response to the Al-Shabaab our approach is as important as making a genuine impact on Muslims as the substance of our arguments. Christians need to provide solid answers to their arguments and do so in the spirit of gentleness and patience.

Gilchrist (2002) warns of wrong approaches and attitudes that can damage Christian response. These include among others first, the spirit of triumphalism that is the temptation to lord our faith over Muslims, second, the inclination to demonize and misrepresent Islam by projecting false assumptions and thirdly avoid negative and militant attitudes towards Muslims. Other responses commonly taken by Christians that perhaps seem to be self-defeating include co-operation (Islam is attractive for it is simple and natural religion which does not expect drastic changes in life), crusading (we have to fight them), carelessness and indifference (Muslims are too hard to reach, fear their reaction) and finally an attitude of genuine compassion (Love our Muslim neighbour – ISLAM – I Shall Love All Muslims). The attitude of genuine compassion therefore calls for Christians to:-

##### 2.5.1 *Critically Address the Theological Issues underlying Terrorism*

One of the major factors that has been attributed to the perpetuation of terrorism in the world is theological, which is directly related to how the Qur'an should be interpreted. Christians must therefore recognize that some Islamic terrorist use Qur'anic verses that call for violence such as that of Surah 8:39 which says "*and fight them until persecution is no more and religion is all for Allah*" as a theological justification for terrorism. There is a convincing logic that lies behind both these ways of interpreting the Qur'an, because both are based on accepted principles of interpretation (Chapman, 2005). Christians therefore need to be cautious about claiming that one approach or the other is the only way of interpreting the Qur'an. Instead, Christians should listen to the internal debate between moderate and extremist Muslims and add whatever weight they can to support Muslims who challenge the extremist wing and its misinterpretation of the Qur'an.

Christians can effectively combat terrorism by building bridges of compassion and cooperation – no matter what our races, ethnicities or religions may be. Only then can we come closer to our shared goals of security and peace, thereby sanctifying life just as God intends us to – not only for ourselves, but for future generations as well.

##### 2.5.2 *Address the Socio – Political and Historical Injustices meted on Citizens*

Groups that are known for justifying violence on Islamic grounds such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah, Boko Haram, and Al-Shabaab (Ilechukwu, 2014) are all motivated by social, economic and political injustices. There is indeed a legitimate cry by the extremists that needs to be heard by responsive governments. In winning the war on terror, Mustafa (2014) calls for understanding terror by focusing on preventing ideological motivation that fuels the group. In an empirical study on radicalization by the Al-Shabaab in Kenya, Botha (2014) cites government-imposed collective punishment of all Kenyan Somali nationals through arbitrary detention, harassment, profiling by government security forces, extrajudicial murders of the extremists group leaders, corruption in government among others.

The Christians should not just be heavenly minded but of no earthly use. Every Christian is called to challenge every form of unrighteousness in the political affairs of the nation. Christians are encouraged to use their power in the political arena to educate and motivate people to support and vote in political parties whose "manifestos

are rooted in justice, righteousness, equity, fairness to all, love, peace, sound social and economic programmes and above all seeking God's glory" (Adeyemo, 1997, p. 98)

### 2.5.3 Christians Should Capitalize on their Strength as Peacemakers

Christians today continue to be the source of hope because of their message of love, justice and peace. The Biblical words *Shalom* (Hebrew) and *eirene* (Greek) means more than just peace or even absence of conflicts but it denotes kindness, justice inclusive community, wholeness and transformation (Rummel, 2001). A peacemaker is a biblical Christian; rooted and grounded in God's truth. Just like Christ, they break down social, religious, and political barriers by removing the seeds of violence and creates an environment where people become hospitable (Ephesians 2:14 -16).

It is true that the history of the Crusades in the Middle Ages has left a legacy of Christian-Muslim hostility that persisted up to today (Gilchrist, 2002). However, scholars view it as campaigns for religious, economic and political reasons on one hand and purely defensive war against Islamic conquest on the other (Riley-Smith, 2005).

However, despite that unfortunate past, Christians serve Christ who is described in Isaiah 9:6 as the "Prince of Peace". His death on the cross does not only bring reconciliation between individuals and God but also creates reconciliation among people by removing hostility that keeps us from living peacefully together. In the same way Christians should live cross – shaped lives by willingly loving Muslims (for ISLAM stands for I Shall Love All Muslims) and truly manifesting the love of Christ thus becoming peacemakers and bridge builders.

A more healthy approach is to see Muslims not as people to be feared and resisted but as neighbours to be loved (Matthew 19:19; 22:39) and respected in a gentle manner (1 Peter 3:16).

### 2.5.4 Be prepared for "Hard Talk" with Muslim and Islamist (Terrorists)

Although it is hard to have meaningful dialogue with the violent Al-Shabaab, it should not be so difficult to have serious discussion with mainstream Muslims and moderate Islamists who are aware of the crisis created for Islam by terrorist.

These are some of the hard questions we may want to ask them:

- **We are prepared to be critical about our history but are you prepared to be critical of yours?** Western imperialism Vs Islamic Empires.
- **What is your ideal Political Order?** (Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, & Pakistan are Islamic countries - Is Islam really the answer?)
- **Do you accept the concept of Universal human rights as they have developed in recent years?** (There is tension between internationally accepted standards of human rights and traditional Islamic values (e.g. status of women and freedom to practice and change ones religion).
- **What about the means that you use to achieve your goals? Does the end justify the mean?** (They do not recognize democratic processes regarding them as Western Imperialism).
- **Are you willing to accept the existence of pluralists Societies?** (What West has done to the Muslim world versus what Islamist want to create in the Western World – The Qur'an 2:256 clearly states that "*there is no compulsion in religion*" (But how about submission to Allah by Coercion).

A critical look at these questions is envisaged to soften the stance of each group and be able to approach issues objectively.

## 3. Conclusion

As we had earlier mentioned, this paper aims at offering practical suggestions on how Christians can respond to the national problem of Al-Shabaab's attacks on Kenyans. We have attempted to first, define and trace the rise of Al-Shabaab; secondly, describe the premise within which they derive their convictions; thirdly, debunking on their theological inconsistencies and distortion of the Quran; fourthly, challenge the political class in addressing the legitimate socio-political and historical injustices meted on the Muslim minority group; fifthly, capitalize on the strength of Christians as peacemakers and lastly engage the Muslim community apologetically by taking a serious audit on the Islamic ethos. This kind of dialogue by Christians and Muslims is at the heart of theology of hospitality where we are either guests or hosts to people from the Islamic faith. In this way, religious conflicts and other kinds of discord will be in the path of decline and transformation.

Christians must always remember to stand out as unique. Our uniqueness is found in the fact that we are not of this world, yet in this world. We interact with the world but we refuse to be contaminated by the world. We have a cardinal responsibility of serving as salt and light, and becoming the agent of radical transformation by overcoming evil with good (Roman 12:21).

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