

## Toward Sustainable Development Goals (Sdgs): The Contributions of Selected Arab Poets in Yorubaland, Nigeria

نحو تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة: إسهامات مختارات من الشعراء المستعربين ببلاد يوروبا، نيجيريا

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Received: 01/09/2022

Accepted: 07/05/2023

Published: 13/07/2023

### Abstract

Major countries in the world commite to the seventeen life-changing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as outlined by the United Nation in 2015. The goals include poverty eradication, better healthcare and peace, etc. Arab poets of Yoruba origin, have demonstrated their interest in these goals, but their works are yet to receive adequate attention from researchers. The aim of this paper is to translate and examine SDGs in Arabic poetry in Yorubaland. The study adopted both historical approach and descriptive method. The findings show that poems in Arabic by Yorubas discuss SDG objectives ; such as health, poverty, agriculture and others and the poems conform, to a large extent, with the norms of Arabic poetical composition. The study recommends compilation, documentation and translation of the poems on SDG to different languages

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development Goals, Arabic Poetry, Yorubaland, Nigeria.

**المخلص:** اتخذ معظم الدّول العالمية قرار تطوير كوكب الأرض، وتحسين أحوال أمّتهم قبل حلول عام 2030م. وفرضوا على أنفسهم تبنى الأهداف الإنمائية السبعة عشر التي تمّ احرازها من موافقات الأمم المتحدة عام 2015م. تشتمل هذه الأهداف على محاربة الفقر والمرض وتحقيق المساواة بين الرجال والنساء، وانشاء السلام والعدالة، وتعزيز الإبتكار ومعالجة تغير المناخ، ضمن أولويات أخرى. وقد أسهم الشعراء اليورباويون النيجيريون في تحقيق هذه الأهداف الإنمائية عن طريق أشعارهم العربية. يهدف المقال الحالي إلى ترجمة ودراسة الأهداف الإنمائية في الشعر العربي في بلاد يوروبا، ومدى تضلع أصحابه في نظم الشعر العربي الجيد. وقد اعتمد هذا البحث في دراستها على المنهج الوصفي في تحليل القصائد المختارة والمنهج التاريخي لتدوين نبذة عن حياة الشعراء والمناسبات التي قيلت فيها قصائدهم. وقد توصل البحث إلى أن الشعراء اليورباويين قد ساهموا في تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة في نيجيريا عن طريق صياغة أشعارهم ومواضيعها. اقترح البحث ترجمة الأشعار إلى عدة لغات لتعميم فوائدها

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الأهداف، التنمية المستدامة، الشعر العربي، بلاد يوروبا، نيجيريا.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The social transformation and development process in any community can be examined through their education, health care, infrastructure, community growth and level of their creativity. The scholars of Arabic studies in Yorubaland, especially the poets among them, took it upon themselves to use their literary works to orientate the citizenry and admonish the government on the issue of nation building in which most of the seventeen life-changing goals of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) are the themes of discussion. However, their works are yet to be given proper attention by scholars.

This study therefore, aims at examining the contributions of Yoruba poets of Arabic to the Sustainable Development Goals.

To achieve this objective, the paper adopts historical approach and descriptive methods. The Historical approach was employed to document the events that lead to composition of the selected poems respectively, while the descriptive method is maintained to analyse the poems. Eight poets are randomly selected for the study.

## 2. Poverty/Hunger Eradication in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland

Two of the selected poets, Abdurrahman Abdulazeez Az-zakawi and Abdusalam Babatunde Ambali, discuss poverty and hunger in their poems. They point out the effects of the duo on the society and suggested a way of eradicating them. Abdurrahman Abdulazeez Az-zakawi, a renowned Arab poet from Saki, Oyo State, (Ibraheem, 2005, p. 29) wrote a poem in 1993 entitled : "To the Entire Yoruba Descendants" with which he registered his annoyance that was ignited by the nullification of the "June 12 Polls" the most peaceful election in the history of Nigerian civil rule, when the military Head of State Gen. Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida dash the hope of Yoruba people to rule the country democratically. He also documented the maltreatment and social injustice melted on Yorubas who, as a result, suffer from hunger and other forms of hardship on their land where they live as second class citizens. He wrote:

إلى كم نشتكي وئحًا ثُبورًا	***	نعيشُ بأرضنا عيشًا أسيرًا
سَكْتَنًا لا كلامَ ولا ظَهِيرًا	***	إلى كم نحنُ في ظمئٍ وَجُوعٍ
وَنُطْرَدُ من مساكننا جَبورًا	***	ومن أنهارنا نسقي حميمًا
ألم نشعُرُ بأحداثٍ شُعورًا	***	نُقَهَرُ في السَّيادة كلَّ يومٍ

أَلْسِنَا قَبْلَ حَاضِرِنَا رَجَالًا      \*\*\*      فَشِتُّ أَحْبَارِنَا فَشَوًّا نَضِيرًا  
 أَلْسِنَا بَيْنَ أَحْيَاءَ كَمَوْتِي      \*\*\*      تُرَابِ الْأَرْضِ يَكْفِينَا قُبُورًا  
 (Ambali, 2019, p. 39)

We are living on our land like prisoners,  
 How long shall we suffer from hardship and grief?  
 How long shall we endure thirst and hunger?  
 We kept mute, no complaint, no protest.  
 From our own stream we drink so hot,  
 In our own abode we feel so oppressed.  
 We are retrogressing in leadership everyday,  
 Why are we so indifferent to the happenings?  
 Are we not, in the past, the honourable people,  
 Whose fame was prominently celebrated?  
 Haven't we turned as dead among the living?  
 The surface of the earth is enough as our grave.

In this poem, Abdur-Rahmān Abdul-Aziz Azzakawi employs effective rhetorical devices to protest against the hardship and the hunger which his kinsmen are suffering through the ethno-political injustice in Nigeria. He likens their situation with that of the oppressed prisoners who are poorly fed from the resources they worked for and as a result, they are like living deads. He proffers the following solution as a way of emancipating the Yoruba clan :

فَهَذِهِ الْحَادِثَاتُ لَهَا عِلَاجٌ      \*\*\*      وَكَانَ دَوَائُهَا شَيْئًا يَسِيرًا  
 فَكُونُوا بِالتَّعَاوُنِ وَالتَّأَخِي      \*\*\*      عَلَى الْإِحْسَانِ كَانَ لَكُمْ نَصِيرًا  
 بِهِذَا نَبَدُوا حِقْدًا وَيُغَضُّوا      \*\*\*      وَمُحْسِدَةً كَذَا طَبَعًا شَرِيرًا  
 كَذَلِكَ تَعْصَبُ قَبَلِيًّا نَبْدًا      \*\*\*      وَنَقُّوا عَنْ مَفَاسِدِكُمْ ضَمِيرًا  
 تَكُونُوا أَقْوِيَاءَ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمْ      \*\*\*      عَوَاقِبِكُمْ سَتَنُحْمَدُهَا سُرُورًا  
 عَلَى الْأَعْمَالِ وَالْإِنْتِجَاجِ دُومُوا      \*\*\*      تَصِيرُوا بَيْنَ عَالَمِنَا بُدُورًا  
 فَكُونُوا بِالْوَيْئَامِ وَبِالسَّلَامِ      \*\*\*      كَأَسْنَانِ الْمَشَاطِ وَأَنْ تَخِيرًا  
 وَبِالْعَقَبَاتِ تَنْجُو عَنْ قَرِيبٍ      \*\*\*      كَفَانَا اللَّهُ خَالِقِنَا مُجِيرًا

(Ambali, 2019, p. 39)

These unfortunate occurrences are surely remediable,  
 The remedy is so simple.  
 Be supportive and brother's keeper,

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Do the right always and turn victorious.  
Forsake malice and aversion,  
As well as jealousy and bad habits.  
Do away with tribalism or racism,  
Cleanse your hearth against evil thoughts.  
If these are done you shall be powerful,  
At the end you shall be pleased and happy  
Continue to work harder and be productive  
You shall become, across the globe, a shining Moon.  
Relate among yourselves with endurance and peace,  
Be like the teeth of the comb (in Justice and Equality)  
Success against obstacles will soon be at your door step,  
Allah the Creator is enough a savior.

The poet enjoins his people to stand up for their right and take the necessary measures to get out of the poverty and hardship. He specifically recommends cooperation, righteousness, unity of purpose, sincerity, diligence, creativity as well as eschewing tribalism and jealousy as the means of liberation and eradication of poverty in their land.

Abdus-salam Babatunde Ambali, a native of Ilorin, Kwara State and a lecturer in the Department of Arabic at the University of Ilorin, wrote a poem during the first wave of COVID 19 in 2020, entitled : "A Pandemic Virus Corona" in which he gives account of the origin of the pandemic and narrates the pain that people went through during Lockdown in which hunger is the crusts of their agony. He says ;

توحّدوا، تصدّقوا إخواني      \*\*\*      فالجوع في القفل طغى وبلاه  
مثلكم أجساد بالأعضاء      \*\*\*      شعورها بالعطف ما يهواه

(Ambali A. B., 2020)

Unit and be generous my brethren  
Indeed hunger is biting harder  
You are all like organs to a body,  
In sharing unbearable pains and grief

The poet calls on the public to unite and be generous by supporting the poor ones with palliative to rescue them from hunger and starvation. He calls every Muslim to be his brother's keeper by feeling his pain. This submission goes in conformity with the teaching of the prophet in his Hadith reported by An-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said "The believers, in their mutual love, compassion, and sympathy are like a single body; if one of its organs suffers, the whole body will respond to it with sleeplessness and fever" (Sahih Muslim: 2586)

### **3. Agriculture in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland**

Prior to the independence attained in 1960, agriculture served as the lifeblood of Nigeria's economy. Even in the current post-independence era, agriculture has continually playing a significant role in Nigeria's economic growth as it accounting for the biggest portion of the foreign exchange earnings generated by the country. According to economic statistics, agriculture accounts for over 70% of Nigeria's GDP, making it the largest contributor to Nigeria's economy around the 1960's (Ufiobor, 2017).

At the time, Nigeria's agricultural earnings were generated through the exportation of commodities which were mainly cash crops like cotton, palm oil, groundnut, rubber, cashew nuts and cocoa. Nigeria succeeded tremendously in sustaining its economy through agriculture despite the low prices at which agricultural products were exchanged. However, agriculture soon began to lose its grounds as Nigeria's major source of foreign exchange earnings due to the country's massive diversion to crude oil. Another major factor which contributed to the massive diversion from agriculture was the emergency of oil boom around the 1970s. Consequently, there was a drastic decline in the percentage contribution of agriculture to Nigeria's economy. From the initial 63%, it got reduced to 34% and this further aggravated the incidence of unemployment. According to a statement from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria has been depending heavily on the importation of basic food staples since 1975. (Ufiobor, 2017)

By a way of recalling events from years of blossoming agriculture in Nigeria, Nigeria contributed 23% of global production of groundnut oil, 60% of palm oil supply, 25% of cocoa and 35% of groundnut. During those days, northern and southern farmers – especially those who grew cash crops –made substantial money from their efforts. (Ufiobor, 2017)

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It was of great expectation for Nigerians to witness a manifestation of economic diversification, as symbolized by reviving Agriculture. Murtadha Ali Baba, a respected poet in Lagos State, wrote a poem in response to Nigerian Youths agitations and protest embarked on because of the Government's pronouncement of subsidy removal from fuel in 2012 - entitled "Removal of Fuel Subsidy" in which he called on the Government to diversify the economy and place agriculture in the position it was some years back. He says:

الزّرع معدننا الفعّال في الوطن      \*\*\*      في الأّمس، ما بالهُ في اليوم؟ ربّاه!  
ما باله؟ فسلوا الحكام يا أمّمي      \*\*\*      قد شوشوه إلى أن ساء عقباه!

(Ambali A. , 2017, p. 75)

Yesterday, Agriculture was our major resources in the country (Nigeria)  
Oh my God! What is happening to it today?  
Enquire from the rulers its plight, O my people  
They mismanaged it and turned disrupted.

The poet recalls the time when Nigeria succeeded tremendously in sustaining its economy through agriculture. However, he asks question on the reason why Agriculture quickly lost its grounds as Nigeria's major source of revenue. He indirectly calls for manifestation of economic diversification and investment in agriculture. This call is indeed a boost to the SDG awearness and in the country.

### 4. Education in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland

Education is the engine room for the growth and development of any country. It therefore, expected to be one of the major indeces to lookout for whanever development and its sustainability is been discussed. The Arab poets of Yoruba origin examined the structures of the Nigerian educational system, and identified some of the problems facing it, amongst which are lack of dependable infrastructural facilities, inadequate budgetary allocation, poor conditions of service for the teachers and University Lecturers. In a poem entitled "Be careful O! Honorable Minister" the injustice to education is vividly captured by Isa Alabi Abubakar, in 1996 during the strike action embarked upon by the University Lecturers thus:

ونظام التّعليم خالفه الحد      \*\*\*      ظ مهانا أمام كلّ قدير  
وسكوت القريض في موطن الظّل      \*\*\*      هم يؤدى إلى مصير خطير  
جوّعوا العلم في التّعيم وأضحى      \*\*\*      ظامئا تحت كلّ جوّ مطير

رحمة للذي تحرق كالشمع  
عاش في قومه بدون احترام  
بالي الثوب والحذاء تراه  
خامل الذكرتافه القدريسعى  
مرهقا بالديون في كل شهر  
لعنات العباد تلحقه إن  
أجلوا أجره الجميل بلا ح

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عنة بين الظلام للتنوير  
معدما شاكيا عديم النصير  
خالي الكف مثل أهل القبور  
لنجاح الورى قليل الأجور  
دائم المكث في عذاب السعير  
ثاريوما لأجل عيش نصير  
ق إلى يوم يقظة ونشور

(حنبلي, 2015)

Luck goes against the Education system (in the Nigeria)

It is being ridiculed by those in the authority.

And silence of the poetry in an oppressive situation

May lead to a hazardous consequence.

Knowledge is being starved amid opulence

And it becomes thirsty under the heavy down pour.

Have mercy on the one who gets burnt like a candle,

In the dark, in order to provide light

He lives in the community without honour,

Shouting for help, in penury, but has no helper.

Putting on tore clothes and shoe, you will see him

Empty handed like the dead in the grave.

He is a non-entity nugatory who strives

For the success of the people with little reward

Overwhelmed with huge debt on monthly basis,

Perpetually dwelling in a severe torment.

People's curse catches up with him whenever he embarks on strike

To request for better life.

His beautiful reward is wrongly postponed,

Till the day of Arousal and resurrection

To solve these problems, the poet makes some proposals that need priority attention and which are capable of curbing the problem facing education in the remaining part of the poem

أي مال يعدّ أغلى وأعلى  
من رشاد يزيل عيب الغرور؟

\*\*\*

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م دواء يجلى سقام الصّـدور	***	حسّنوا حالة المعلم فالعد
زّ إلى جامعاتنا بحبور	***	وأعيدوا الحياة والعلم والع
فيه تطويل كلّ أمر قصير	***	إنّ قطع الحوار قطع الأمانى
وشجار وفتنة ونفور	***	ينتهي بالحوار كلّ خلاف

(Abubakar, 2005, p. 150)

What amount of money is more treasurable or valuable  
Than the instruction (knowledge) that eradicates the blemish of egotism?  
Improve the Teacher`s condition of service,  
For knowledge is a cure to hearth related diseases  
Restore life, knowledge, and honour with joy,  
To all our Universities.  
Deadlock in the negotiation indeed is a loss of hope.  
And unnecessary prolongation of a simple matters.  
Dialogue ends grievances,  
As well as fight, trouble and aversion.

He also sees education as birth right of every Nigerians regardless of gender, ethnicity or affiliations, as he registered his consent in education for all. He wrote:

أيّ مال يعدّ أوفر من عد \*\*\* م لدى كلّ ناشئ وكبير؟

Can a wealth be more all-encompassing as Education,  
For all human, old and young ? (حنبلي, 2015)

The poet emphasises his full support for "Education for all" agenda, as he identifies some problems that could hinder the process of literacy in Nigeria. Amongst these problems are: lack of dependable infrastructural and instructional facilities, inadequate budgetary allocation to education sector and poor conditions of service for the teachers and University Lecturers. He therefore calls for re-fertilization of Nigerian Universities.

وأعيدوا الحياة والعلم والع \*\*\* زّ إلى جامعاتنا بحبور



(حنبلي, 2015)

Restore life, knowledge and honour  
To the Universities with happiness.

## 5. Good Health in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland

The poet, Abdus-salam Babatunde Ambali, reported the detriment experienced by the patients of COVID 19 during the pandemic, when many lives were lost because of inadequate health care facilities in major hospitals in the country. He wrote;

مرضاكم وقت الوباء كورونا \*\*\* ذاقوا وبال الأمر وأسفاه!  
إعدادكم أجهزة صحيّة \*\*\* مستشفيات تشتكي مأواه

(Ambali A. B., 2020, p. 2)

Your sick relatives during the Pandemic,  
So pathetic, went through hell  
Your Provision of good health care facilities,  
The hospitals are protesting their inadequacy

The poets is trying to call the attention of the Government to the importance of enriching the national hospitals with adequate facilities that will enable the health workers to stand before any challenge during the time of pandemic like COVID 19. He further narrates the origin of the virus and describes the velocity of its spread and transmission. He registers his condolence to the severely affected countries like; America, Britain, Italy, to mention but a few. He wrote:

ما هذه نازلة الله \*\*\* فَيُرُوسِ كَوْرُوْنَا طغى ويلاه  
والعالم في خيرة ظلماء \*\*\* وما بها من ضوءة مولاه!  
بالصين جذر فيروس كورونا \*\*\* فأصبحت بين الورى بلواه  
ما مثله في سرعة أمراض \*\*\* تعمّ في لحظتها عدواه  
أولو النهى في مسّه حمقاء \*\*\* أرباب بأس في الدنا مرماه  
أمريكا ليث أصبحت نسناسا \*\*\* بزطآن فهد يالها عقباه!  
عيون دمع نبعه إيطالي \*\*\* مئات دفن حينه شكواه  
ملك مميت فيروس كورونا \*\*\* ليل نهار سهمه معدهاه

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يهتمّ أصغار بني إنسان \*\*\* كذا كبارا ماله محياه  
يميت ذا مال أبا النعماء \*\*\* ثرواته تربة وا ندماه!

(Ambali A. B., 2020, p. 3)

What a calamity is this O Allah?  
Woe, Corona Virus turned a tyrant.  
The World is in darkness and confusion,  
No illumination available, O my lord.  
The virus was ignited in China,  
In no time, sorrowfully engulfed the World.  
No disease like Corona in velocity,  
For its blast covers the multitude in seconds  
The wise ones in the hands of Covid turn fools  
The strong on its target became weak  
America the lion tumbled like Monkey  
Britain the leopard suffered in Pandemic  
Tears flow in Italy like a stream  
Hundreds of dead berried, O my God.  
Covid, you are indeed the angel of death,  
.Day and night, your targets are met.  
He takes the young children of Man,  
As well as old, with no regards.  
He kills the rich in his comfort,  
His wealth regrettably turned to dust

He then proffers solutions to get rid of the pandemic thus:

لزوم بيت مخرج الضراء \*\*\* وعزلة تنجي الذي يلقاه  
نظافة شطر من الإيمان \*\*\* وهي إذابة لمن يخشاه  
أعوذ من جذام بالرحمان \*\*\* وسيئ الأستقام يا الله!  
دعاء طه سيد الآنام \*\*\* قت نزول الويل ما نخشاه  
سمعا وطاعة أمة الإسلام \*\*\* قفل المجامع الذي فتواه  
توحدوا، تصدقوا إخواني \*\*\* فالجوع في القفل طغى ويلاه  
مثلكم أجساد بالأعضاء \*\*\* شعورها بالعطف ما يهواه

(Ambali A. B., 2020, p. 1)

Stay at home, safe from transmission,  
Social distance controls its spread.  
Sanitation is the half of Faith,  
And the guard for the one who cares  
I seek refuge from Allah against leprosy,  
As well as all sorts of deadly disease.  
The recommended prayer by Toha the leader of  
Mankind,  
To be recited during the time of Pandemic.  
Listen and abide by the rules O Muslim community,  
Locking the Mosques is an advisory opinion.  
Unit and be generous my brethren  
Indeed hunger is biting harder  
You are all like organs to a body,  
In sharing unbearable pains and grief

His advice for the people is to adhere strictly to all Covid 19 rules and measures such as: Sanitation, Social distancing, avoidance of large gathering etc.

Isa Alabi, in one of his poems, also called for good health by condemning smoking of cigarette by saying:

آفة العصر فتنة المسكين	***	أيها الشعرثر على التدخين
م وقد جزاه بداء دفين	***	جعل الصدر مرتعا لجراثيم
وتراه يسعى له كل حين	***	متعاطيه كان رهن هواه
ب كرعد بدون ماء هتون	***	وسعال دويّه يحدث الرء
ن كأن الجروح تحت الجفون	***	ودموع مريرة تملأ العيون
عد طودا بقلبه الموهون	***	تتعالى أنفاسه كالذي يص

(Abubakar, 2005)

Revolt, O you Poetry, against Smoking  
Societal blight, a trial for the poor.  
It turns the heart to hotbed of bacteria  
That infects it with deadly disease.  
The smoker actually became addicted to it.  
He always goes around looking for it.

A very strong cough torments him,  
With a blast like a thunder in the dry.  
He sheds tears profusely in pain  
As if there is a wound under his eyelashes,  
His respiratory pressure is high,  
Like an ascendant to Uphill with a weak hearth.

## **6. Innovations in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland**

Abdurrahman Abdulazeez Az-zakawi calls on the youths to be proactive and display their intelligence on creativity and innovations. He says:

فكونوا أقوياء إذا فعلتم      \*\*\*      عَوَاقِبُكُمْ سَتُحَمَدُهَا سُرُورًا  
على الأعمال والإنتاج دؤموا      \*\*\*      تصيروا بين عالمنا بدورًا  
(Ambali A. , 2017, p. 145)

Be strong and proactive in your dealings,  
At the end, you shall be happy and appreciated  
Always be proactive and productive,  
You shall be shining like the Moon in the World

He encourage the youth to pursue whatever they want to do with vigor, that, he enjoined, will always end in happiness. As he figuratively assures them that they would shine like a moon if they work hard and be creative.

Isa AbubakarAbubakar in another poem entitled "For the Muslim Youths" also wrote:

لقد جدّ قوم فلا تكسلوا      \*\*\*      ولهو الشبيبة لا يغتفر  
أتلهون في عصر كمبيوتر      \*\*\*      ترى فيه أعيننا ما بهر  
ليملاً انتاجنا عالماً      \*\*\*      يبجل فيه جميل الأثر  
(Abubakar, 2005, p. 170)

People are striving, don't be lazy,  
Youth exuberance is a grievous sin  
Will you be playful in this computer age?  
In which our eyes have witness astonishing things  
Let our productivity spread across the World,  
In which beautiful legacy is dignify

Creativity as an ability to produce new and unique ideas goes hand in hand with innovation. The two, over the last decades, have become critical skills for achieving success in developed economies. The need for creative problem solving has arisen as more and more management problems require creative insights to find suitable solutions. The Arab poets of Yoruba origin recognized the implementation of creative ideas, which we called innovation in this paper, as a sure path to success. They, therefore, encourage the Nigerian youths to start thinking outside the box and make good use of time and resources to explore new ideas and strategies towards the sustainable growth of the country.

## 7. Economic growth in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland

Insecurity is another factor that negatively influences the economic situation of the country. The engagement of some Nigerians in crime has become a great concern to many people in the country. Different violent events, such as rioting, killings, kidnappings and others did not give the potential Investors a feeling of safety, particularly, when the Global Peace index ranked Nigeria as the 18th least peaceful country in the world. (Szmigiera, 2022). Murtadha Ali Baba in a poem entitled : "Boko Haram and the Insurgency in Nigeria" calls the attention of the government and all Nigerians to the consequence of insecurity on the Nation`s economy. He wrote:

إلى متى ينتهي الخسرانُ في وطني \*\*\* ويستريحُ السُّكَّانُ دونَما الرَّعدِ؟  
أهل المصانع من "أورُوبا" قد تركوا \*\*\* وغيرُهم - بلدي للغير للسنَدِ  
فكيف ينمو بهذا الاقتصادُ أخي؟ \*\*\* إنَّ النَّضالَ خسارٌ دون معتمد!

(Ali Baba, 2016, p. 6)

How long could the Country keep incurring loss?

When would the people know Peace?

The European Investors have left the Country,

Others as well for a better and peaceful place

How can the Economy grow, my brother, in such situation?

Violence is a huge loss that cannot be contifiable

The poet submits that, the effect of insecurity in Nigeria is obvious, as it presents itself in the destruction of the few available infrastructures needed for the industrial growth and development of the nation. With pervasive insecurity comes internal displacement of people and crippling of economic activities in

the worst affected areas. Over the past few years, Nigeria witnessed the death of economic activities in the North-Eastern states due to the Boko Haram insurgency and banditry. It has been seen how agricultural produce in Benue State was badly affected by the herdsmen repeated clashes with farmers. Insecurity disrupts economic activities and creates internal refugees within the country. The poet reiterates that, no country can develop in the absence of peace and stability which is known as the major attraction of foreign investors and the needed prerequisite for growth and development. He, therefore, condemns Insurgency and Banditry in totality and called them a heavy loss.

### **8. Energy in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland**

Energy plays a vital role in the economic growth, progress, and development, as well as poverty eradication and security of any nation. Uninterrupted energy supply is a vital issue for all countries today. Future economic growth crucially depends on the long-term availability of energy from sources that are affordable, accessible, and environmentally friendly. Security, climate change, and public health are closely interrelated with energy. (Olopade, 2009)

Energy is an important factor in all sectors of any country's economy. The standard of living of a given country can be directly related to the *per capita* energy consumption. The recent world's energy crisis is due to two reasons: the rapid population growth and the increase in the living standards of whole societies. The *per capita* energy consumption is a measure of the *per capita* income as well as a measure of the prosperity of a nation. (Oyedepo, 2012, p. 5)

Energy supports the provision of basic needs such as cooked food, a comfortable living temperature, lighting, the use of appliances, piped water or sewerage, essential health care (refrigerated vaccines, emergency, and intensive care), educational aids, communication (radio, television, electronic mail, the World Wide Web) and transport. Energy also fuels productive activities including agriculture, commerce, manufacturing, industry and mining. Conversely, a lack of access to energy contributes to poverty and deprivation and can contribute to economic decline. Energy and poverty reduction are not only closely connected with each other, but also with the socioeconomic development which involves productivity, income growth, education and health. (Oyedepo, 2012, p. 6)

The energy crisis, which has engulfed Nigeria for almost two decades, has been enormous and has largely contributed to the incidence of poverty by paralyzing industrial and commercial activities during this period. The Council for Renewable Energy of Nigeria estimates that power outages brought about a loss of 126 billion naira (US\$ 984.38 million) annually. Apart from the huge income loss, it has also resulted in health hazards due to the exposure to carbon emissions caused by the constant use of 'backyard generators' in different households and business enterprises, unemployment, and high cost of living leading to a deterioration of living conditions.

Isa AbubakarAbubakar in his poem entitled "The Dark City" called for settling energy crisis without further delay in Nigeria, because it has largely contributed to the incidence of poverty by paralyzing industrial and commercial activities in the country. He wrote:

عالجوا دائها العضال فقد بطاً \*\*\* تم في البلاد سيرالنماء  
هي رمز النهوض في كل أرض \*\*\* تدفع اليوم عجلة الإنشاء  
(Abubakar, 2005, p. 157)

Expedite the solve of energy problem,  
Because you have slowed down the growth speed of the land  
It is the symbol of growth and development in any nation,  
That promotes income growth and productivity

Isa AbubakarAbubakar, in this poem, sees retrogression in the socio-economic position of this country because of unstable power supply because the cost-effective energy efficiency ensures positive macroeconomic impacts, boosting economic activity and often leading to increased employment. Energy efficiency reduces the tension that arises in provision of needed delivery services, such as mobility, lighting, heating and cooling. He called on the Government to expedite action towards ensuring stable power supply in the country to enhance sustainable development.

## **9. Promotion of Peace in Arabic Poetry in Yorubaland**

Despite the multifarious challenges confronting Nigeria as nation, especially, in the rising cases of man being inhuman to his fellow man, which threatens the

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peace and stability of the country, it is still gratifying that all hope is not lost. The ray of hope Nigeria has, particularly on the problems of insecurity, inter-religious tension and social crises lies in the series of harmonious moves by individuals and groups which have often converted plurality and diversity to remarkable beauty. Such a move is evident in the frequent sermons and orientations given by the scholars of Yorubaland especially, the poets among them. Baqau Hashim, an Arabic poet in Iwo town, Osun state, registered his submissions towards the peaceful co-existence agenda of One Nigeria in his poem entitled "Insurgence : The American's Style" composed in the year 2005. He condemns all forms of terrorism and enjoins peace and unity as an ethics in Islam. He said:

والسّلم لي ملة والله يشهده \*\*\* وذلك الفخر فوق الأرض يكفيني  
الدين يسروما الإرهاب ملّتنا \*\*\* سيعلمون غدا أصحاب سجين  
(Ambali A. B., 2019, p. 18)

Maintaining peace is my way of life, Allah is my witness,  
That, on earth, is enough for me as a pride  
The Religion (Islam) is a simplicity; terrorism is not in our character  
This is a fact the dwellers of the Hell will soon realise

In the personal survey of Baqau Hashim, no single country on the planet dwells in insecurity, ethno-religious crisis, epidemic, criminality and yet grows economically. He confirmed therefore that Peace is his preferred opinion for being an essential prerequisite for true spiritual devotion and lasting economic growth. He called on the Insurgent to demonstrate the real Islamic ethics and give peace a chance.

Furthermore, to promote peace in the world Isa Alabi condemned terrorism that is ravaging the world in one of his suba'īyyāt thus:

قذفوا الرعب في قلوب العباد \*\*\* وأسألو الدماء في كل واد  
كيف تحقيق ما يرومون بالإرهاب \*\*\* أو هدم سور أمن البلاد  
إن ما لا ينال بالسلم قد يصعب \*\*\* إحرازه بغارات عاد  
أي شيء يا قوم أعلى من النفس \*\*\* سس التي يرهقونها بفساد  
أي دين دعا إلى العنف والتمثيل \*\*\* بالأبرياء لنيل المراد؟  
قاتل الله من يشجع في كل مكان تشدد الأوغاد \*\*\*



إن إرهابهم يفيد عدوّ  
الله من قبل ضيره للعباد \*\*\*  
(Ibrahee, L.O. & Jamiu, A.M., 2022, p. 1118)

They threw panicky into the hearth of people  
And shed blood everywhere.  
How possible is achievement of their mission,  
Pursued via terrorism and violation of peace order?  
Any goal that is not achievable via peace and tranquility,  
Is equally unachievable with violence and invasion.  
O my people, what is more precious than the souls  
They are ignominiously taken?  
Which Religion is preaching violence  
And using innocent souls as collateral to achieve one's goal?  
May Allah punish whoever is  
Sponsoring miscreants anywhere in the world.  
For, indeed, their act of terrorism is aiding the enemy of Allah  
In their sinister act of harming the Muslims (worshippers)

To Isa Alabi also, terrorism and violence are not part of any religious teachings. What cannot be settled through peaceful resolution cannot be achieved by violence. He believes that engagement of some Muslims in the act of terrorism will only gave those who are enemy of Islam an excuse to eliminate the Muslims across the world in the name of fighting terrorism. Hence Islam is a religion of peace Muslims should allow peace to rain supreme wherever they are.

### 10. Partnership

Nigerians, as a people of diverse ethnicity, socio-cultural and religious orientations, need to live together, work together to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. The Arabic poets of Yoruba origin keep calling them to unity and work as partners in progress to attain the common goal of a better nation. The poets Abdulsalam Muhammad Usman of the Department of Arabic University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Abdurrahman AbdulazeezAz-Zakawi from Shaki, Oyo state and Abdullah Abdulkareem Ahmad Alaro also from Oyo state advise Nigerians to unite and work together as a victorious team to project the good image of the country. They make the submission in their respective poems entitled: "Islam and National Orientation", "To entire Descendants of Yoruba" and "Any sign of Independence in Nigeria?". Usman on the one hand wrote:

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فتنّمّوها وتحركّوا وتوافقوا \*\*\* وتعاونوا وترابطوا بالذّات  
وتبادلوا الآراء في حركاتكم \*\*\* لصالح ذات بينكم بثبات  
(Ambali A. B., 2019, p. 36)

Be conscious, active and always reach  
compromise,  
Cooperate and be your brother`s keeper  
Share views on your affairs,  
To foster good and lasting relationship among yourselves.

Abdurrahman Abdulazeez Az-Zakawi on the other hand, proffers solutions to how Yorubas will surmount their peculiar problems by saying:

فَهَذِهِ الْحَادِثَاتُ لَهَا عِلَاجٌ \*\*\* وَكَانَ دَوَائُهَا شَيْئًا يَسِيرًا  
فَكُونُوا بِالتَّعَاوُنِ وَالتَّأَخِي \*\*\* عَلَى الْإِحْسَانِ كَانَ لَكُمْ نَصِيرًا  
(Ambali A. B., 2019, p. 40)

The menaces have panacea,  
Its remedy is very simple  
Ensure cooperation and brotherhood among  
yourselves,  
With righteousness, victory is assured for you

While Abdullah Abdulkareem Ahmad Alaro also admonished that:

والإتحاد لدى الرجال لقوّة \*\*\* وأزمنة الأعمار للإشبال  
فهو العزيمة لنجاة لديهم \*\*\* في الفرقة البؤس على الأجيال  
(Ambali A. B., 2019, p. 48)

Cooperation is strength to men,  
Social crisis challenges for the strong  
To them, it is an impetus for victory and success,  
In disunity, there is catastrophe to all generation

According to the above poetic submissions, partnership offers benefits for all and sundry; it bridges the gap in expertise and knowledge and ensure victory and success in all dealings. The poets here emphasis the need for Love, partnership, unity and cooperation in building and projecting the nation`s socio-economic values.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

It is common knowledge that no government in the world can provide everything for its citizenry. This is the case in Nigeria vis-à-vis the provision of infrastructural facilities, education, health care, portable water and other basic amenities. It is therefore, the duty of everyone to contribute toward the development of his community particularly and the entire world at large to make the Earth habitable for mankind.

This paper showcases the contributions of selected Arab poets of Yoruba origin toward achieving the targeted Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The selected poems demonstrated the diplomatic style of Yoruba Arabic Scholars in discussing Issues. The poems written by Eight Arabic scholars of Yoruba origin were translated and studied in this paper to extract their submissions on the issues related to the agitations towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The seventeen life-changing goals, outlined by the UN in 2015 could be regrouped based on the submissions of the above named poets into twelve goals related to; Poverty, Hunger, Agriculture, Good Health, Education, Innovations, Economic growth, Gender equality, Energy, Peace, Justice, and Partnership. It is evident that Yoruba Arabic poets are granded in composition of Arabic poem of high standard. They are able to internalise there thought and contributed to the Sustaibable Development Goals.

It is therefore, recommended that the works of Yoruba poets be properly documented, translated to various national and international languages and projected globally to benefit the larger populace. Other poets of Arabic are also urge to emulate the chosen scholars in this paper to discuss national and international matters in their works for the benefit of all and sundry.

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