Prophetic Voice in A Morally Bankrupt World: Bishop Hassan Kukah and The Ethics of National Leadership

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Abstract

In an era marked by political uncertainty, moral ambiguity, and institutional decay, the prophetic voice remains a crucial force in shaping national discourse. This paper examines the prophetic engagement of Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah within the Nigerian socio-political landscape. As a cleric, scholar, and public intellectual, Kukah embodies the intersection of ethical leadership and prophetic witness. His interventions in public affairs consistently challenge both state and society to uphold justice, accountability, and the common good. Drawing on the frameworks of prophetic imagination and ethical praxis, the paper evaluates Kukah's role in critiquing political excesses, advocating democratic ideals, and confronting religious intolerance. It also considers the criticisms directed at his interventions and assesses the broader implications of his leadership style for governance and civil society. Through a qualitative analysis of his speeches, writings, and public engagements, the study argues that Kukah's prophetic voice offers a model of ethical leadership for Africa's public sphere.

Keywords: Prophetic voice, Bishop Matthew, Hassan Kukah, ethical leadership, national discourse, governance, Nigeria.

Introduction

In contemporary Nigeria, the tension between power and principle has become increasingly stark, as national discourse is often overshadowed by ethno-religious partisanship, institutional weakness, entrenched corruption, pervasive insecurity, and widespread poverty. These crises have created a "flavourless" environment, a metaphor for a moral and spiritual vacuum in which ethical standards, public trust, and social cohesion have been severely eroded. Amidst this moral and political entropy, voices of conscience have become rarer and less impactful, often drowned out by state propaganda, populist rhetoric, and systemic repression. However, certain figures emerge who not only resist this decay but actively challenge it with integrity, clarity, and moral urgency. One such figure is Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, a Catholic priest, scholar, and public intellectual whose role in shaping national conversations has positioned him as a prophetic voice in contemporary Nigeria.

Bishop Kukah's public interventions frequently critique systemic injustice, religious intolerance, and political irresponsibility. His fearless articulation of inconvenient truths aligns with the traditional role of prophets not merely as religious seers but as moral watchdogs who speak on behalf of the voiceless and hold the powerful accountable (Brueggemann, 2005). In the Christian theological tradition, the prophetic voice is characterised by its courage to challenge established norms, its deep identification with the suffering of the people, and its insistence on justice and righteousness (Wright, 2010). Kukah exemplifies this tradition, often drawing both admiration and criticism for his blunt yet thoughtful reflections on national issues.

The prophetic role becomes even more critical in environments where leadership is transactional, citizens are apathetic, and democratic institutions are fragile. Nigeria's recurring leadership deficit has prompted scholars and practitioners to revisit the question of ethical leadership a leadership model that emphasises character, vision, accountability, and service to the common good (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Burns, 1978). In a country where political leadership is often marred by personal enrichment and identity politics, Kukah's insistence on ethical governance, inclusive nationalism, and social justice presents a counter-narrative a refreshing moral compass in an otherwise compromised public space.

Moreover, Kukah's contributions go beyond sermons. His work as secretary of the Oputa Panel on Human Rights Violations, member of various reconciliation committees, and consistent interventions through lectures, essays, and interviews make him a leading example of how religious leadership can engage secular politics without compromising its moral authority (Ogundiya, 2017). He does not merely critique; he proposes. He does not only lament; he educates. This ethical engagement is not passive but active, reflecting Greenleaf's (1977) model of servant leadership, where the leader is first and foremost a servant, committed to the growth and well-being of others.

This paper argues that Bishop Hassan Kukah exemplifies the kind of ethical leadership urgently required in Nigeria's socio-political landscape. His prophetic voice stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing moral indifference and socio-political complacency that characterise much of the Nigerian elite. Through an examination of Kukah's speeches, writings, and public engagements, the study situates his contributions within broader discourses on prophetic leadership, ethics, and national transformation. In so doing, it underscores the enduring importance of truth-telling, moral clarity, and spiritual courage in the quest to restore the moral fabric of a nation in drift.

Theoretical Lens: Prophetic Imagination and Ethical Praxis

Understanding Bishop Hassan Kukah's role in Nigeria's national discourse through a theoretical lens requires an engagement with the concepts of *prophetic imagination* and *ethical praxis*. These frameworks offer critical tools for unpacking how religious voices, especially those grounded in moral conviction and visionary critique, can influence public life, governance, and socio-political transformation.

The term prophetic imagination was popularised by Walter Brueggemann (1978), who posits that prophetic voices are not merely foretellers of doom or divine messages, but rather challengers of the dominant consciousness and purveyors of alternative realities. In this view, the prophet operates within the tension of reality and hope, lamenting societal decay while envisioning a just and ethical order. Brueggemann explains that the prophetic task is to "nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture" (Brueggemann, 1978, p. 3). Bishop Kukah's interventions in national matters reflect this imagination. His consistent critique of injustice, corruption, religious

intolerance, and misgovernance in Nigeria reflects a lamentation for the moral and ethical decay of the nation-state. Simultaneously, his call for peace, dialogue, institutional reform, and justice for the marginalised articulates an alternative, ethical vision for Nigeria.

In tandem, the concept of ethical praxis, the application of moral principles to practical decision-making, offers a grounding for Kukah's activism. Ethical leadership is not only about adherence to moral standards but about embodying and enacting them in public life, especially in leadership. According to Ciulla (2004), ethical leadership involves "a complex process of making moral choices and setting standards in ways that promote the common good." This theoretical framing aligns with Kukah's approach to public engagement: his speeches, writings, and national interventions often call attention to the failures of leadership to uphold the moral obligations of stewardship, accountability, and justice (Kukah, 2011; Kukah, 2020).

Moreover, the public theology perspective offers a complementary theoretical dimension. Public theology refers to the application of theological insight to issues of public concern and governance. According to Stackhouse (2007), public theologians are those who "take their religious insights into the public square, engaging the state and civil society in reasoned moral conversation." Bishop Kukah embodies this role, functioning as a public theologian who brings religious and ethical reasoning into conversations about national identity, social cohesion, governance, and justice.

Bishop Hassan Kukah's prophetic voice and bold interventions in Nigeria's national discourse have not been without controversy or criticism. As an outspoken cleric and moral advocate, he has frequently clashed with political elites and sections of the public, particularly when addressing sensitive socio-political and religious issues. His unwavering commitment to speaking truth to power, grounded in ethical conviction, has earned him both admiration and resistance.

Conceptual Clarifications

To appreciate the thrust of this paper, it is essential to clarify key concepts that form its thematic foundation, namely, prophetic voice, ethical leadership, and the metaphor of a flavourless world. These terms are not merely rhetorical devices; they encapsulate complex

theological, ethical, and socio-political ideas that underpin the role of moral leaders like Bishop Hassan Kukah in national discourse.

Prophetic Voice

The term "prophetic voice" finds its origins in the Judeo-Christian tradition, where prophets were divinely inspired individuals called to challenge injustice, expose corruption, and offer hope grounded in spiritual conviction (Wright, 2010). Far from being fortune-tellers, biblical prophets such as Isaiah, Amos, and Jeremiah functioned as social critics and reformers, confronting kings and societies with uncomfortable truths. Walter Brueggemann (2005) describes this function as the "prophetic imagination", a capacity to critique the dominant consciousness of the empire and articulate an alternative vision rooted in justice, compassion, and covenantal responsibility.

In contemporary contexts, the prophetic voice is often embodied by individuals who courageously engage public life through a moral lens. Such figures, though not always members of the clergy, function as the conscience of society. They speak truth to power, particularly in moments when institutional religion may remain silent or become co-opted. As Chitando and Manyonganise (2020) observe, the prophetic voice in modern Africa serves as a critical counterforce to authoritarianism, corruption, and moral decay. Within this framework, Bishop Kukah's interventions may be regarded as prophetic—not in the sense of predicting future events, but in confronting present injustices and articulating a vision for a morally grounded national order.

Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is a normative framework of leadership that emphasises the demonstration and promotion of ethical conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships (Brown & Treviño, 2006). It involves leading by example, upholding moral principles, and fostering an organisational or societal culture that values integrity, justice, transparency, and respect for human dignity. According to Northouse (2018), ethical leaders are concerned not only with the goals they achieve but also with the means by which they pursue them.

This model contrasts with Machiavellian or transactional approaches to leadership that prioritise efficiency, loyalty, or self-preservation over ethics. In the Nigerian context, where leadership often revolves around patronage systems, ethnic loyalties, and the pursuit of personal gain (Ogundiya, 2010), ethical leadership is both rare and revolutionary. Bishop Kukah's leadership style aligns with this ethical paradigm. His moral critiques of government policies, emphasis on the dignity of all Nigerians regardless of religion or ethnicity, and his refusal to be co-opted into partisan politics embody the principles of ethical leadership.

Moreover, scholars like Greenleaf (1977) have expanded the concept of ethical leadership to include servant leadership, where the primary focus of a leader is to serve others, particularly those who are marginalised. Kukah's long-standing advocacy for the poor, his work in truth and reconciliation, and his engagement in peacebuilding efforts across religious lines clearly place him within this tradition. His moral compass is consistently oriented toward the common good, a hallmark of ethical leadership in both theory and practice.

Flavourless World

The metaphor of a "flavourless world" is derived from Matthew 5:13, where Jesus states, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavour, how can it be made salty again?" In theological and ethical discourse, salt symbolises moral presence, integrity, and the power of preservation. A flavourless world, then, is a society that has lost its moral vitality—where ethical standards are compromised, truth is relativised, and public life is characterised by cynicism and indifference (Volf, 2006).

In the Nigerian context, the metaphor aptly describes a nation beset by systemic corruption, religious intolerance, weak institutions, and a general erosion of public trust. The *flavourless* condition is evidenced by the normalisation of impunity, the weaponisation of identity politics, and the commodification of religion. It is within this morally anaemic environment that prophetic voices such as Kukah's become both rare and necessary. His consistent call for national repentance, good governance, and moral renewal provides a much-needed seasoning in an otherwise tasteless political dish.

Indeed, as Chiluwa (2014) observes, when national discourse is dominated by propaganda, hate speech, and superficial displays of unity, voices that call for genuine moral

reflection and an authentic sense of national identity become indispensable. Although often controversial, Kukah's interventions seek to restore flavour, meaning, truth, and direction to Nigeria's troubled public sphere

Bishop Hassan Kukah: The Person and the Prophet

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah is widely regarded as one of Nigeria's foremost moral voices and a distinguished public intellectual whose influence transcends ecclesiastical boundaries. Born on August 31, 1952, in Anchuna, a small village in Zangon Kataf Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Kukah has emerged as a rare figure in Nigerian society, one who seamlessly integrates theology, social critique, and civic engagement (Kukah, 2012). Ordained a Catholic priest in 1976, Kukah's academic and pastoral journey has taken him through prominent institutions, including the University of Ibadan, the Pontifical Urban University in Rome, and the University of London, where he obtained a Ph.D. in Political Science. His training, therefore, combines the rigour of academic scholarship with deep theological reflection and a lived concern for social justice (Ajayi, 2020).

Kukah's reputation as a *prophetic voice* in Nigeria is not merely honorary; it is earned through decades of unwavering commitment to truth, equity, and human dignity. His sermons, essays, speeches, and public statements consistently address issues of poor governance, religious intolerance, and systemic injustice. For Kukah, faith must not be locked within the private sphere; it must be public, transformative, and ethically grounded (Kukah, 2015). In this sense, he embodies what Brueggemann (2005) describes as the prophetic imagination- the capacity to articulate a moral vision that transcends political realism and boldly confronts the status quo.

His service on Nigeria's Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (the Oputa Panel) from 1999 to 2002 marked a significant moment in his civic engagement. As the Secretary of the Commission, Kukah helped shape national conversations around truth, reconciliation, and accountability in the post-military era. The panel's emphasis on restorative justice and moral healing reflected Kukah's theological orientation and his belief that national development must be predicated on ethical reflection and institutional repentance (Osaghae, 2004). According to Akinola (2018), Kukah's role in the Oputa Panel showcased his capacity to operate at the nexus of religion, justice, and nation-building.

Moreover, Kukah's commitment to interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding in Northern Nigeria, particularly in the volatile Sokoto region where he has served as bishop since 2011, is emblematic of his prophetic identity. Despite representing a religious minority in a predominantly Muslim region, Kukah has used his platform to promote religious tolerance and social cohesion. He has consistently argued that Nigeria's problems are not rooted in religion but in the manipulation of religious identities for political ends (Kukah, 2017). His establishment of the Kukah Centre in Abuja, a research and policy think-tank, furthers this commitment to civic engagement, ethical leadership development, and interreligious understanding (The Kukah Centre, 2020).

Bishop Kukah's prophetic stance has, however, not been without cost. His 2020 and 2021 Christmas messages, in which he decried Nigeria's rising insecurity and alleged nepotism in the federal government, sparked both national debate and official backlash (Premium Times, 2021). Some accused him of partisanship or incitement, while others praised his courage and moral clarity. Yet Kukah remains undeterred, often insisting that his loyalty is not to any regime but to God, the Nigerian people, and the truth. In his words, "Criticism is not hatred. Patriotism demands that we must always raise our voice against injustice, corruption, and all forms of abuse of power" (Kukah, 2021, p. 2).

This boldness resonates with the biblical tradition of prophets who were vilified, ostracised, or threatened for confronting the powerful. Like the prophet Jeremiah, who was accused of treason for denouncing the king's policies (Jeremiah 38), Kukah's public witness challenges both ecclesiastical comfort and political complacency.

In addition to his intellectual and moral leadership, Kukah's eloquence and writing style distinguish him as a communicator. His books *Witness to Justice* (2012) and *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria* (1999) are not only scholarly but also accessible, weaving theology, political theory, and social commentary into compelling narratives. These works articulate a theology of engagement that insists the Church must be a moral agent in society, not merely a sanctuary for personal piety, but a catalyst for social transformation (Ehusani, 2016).

Thus, Bishop Hassan Kukah represents a unique fusion of scholar, priest, prophet, and public intellectual. In an environment where silence is often rewarded and dissent penalised, his

voice serves as both a challenge and a call to conscience. He reminds Nigeria's leaders and citizens alike that democracy without ethics is dangerous, and religion without justice is hollow.

Ethical Leadership in National Discourse: Kukah's Contribution

In societies experiencing moral fatigue and institutional dysfunction, ethical leadership becomes not only desirable but indispensable. Nigeria's national discourse has, for decades, been characterised by a troubling disconnect between leadership and moral responsibility. Public officials frequently operate within a framework of expediency, patronage, and self-preservation rather than one of truth, justice, and service. In this morally compromised climate, Bishop Hassan Kukah stands out as a compelling advocate of ethical leadership, a form of leadership rooted in integrity, responsibility, courage, and vision (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Northouse, 2018).

Speaking Truth to Power

At the core of ethical leadership is the willingness to confront injustice, even when it entails personal risk. Kukah's public engagement exemplifies this virtue. His critique of state policies, particularly around issues of nepotism, marginalisation, insecurity, and religious intolerance, places him in a lineage of public intellectuals who understand silence in the face of oppression as complicity. In his 2020 and 2021 Christmas messages, Kukah accused the Nigerian government of institutional bias, arguing that under President Muhammadu Buhari's administration, national cohesion had been weakened by selective appointments and failure to address insecurity with impartiality (Kukah, 2021) stated that "There is no way any non-Northern Muslim President could have done a fraction of what President Buhari has done with his nepotism and gotten away with it" (p. 3).

Such statements ignited national debate and provoked strong reactions from political actors, while also exposing deep structural issues that many were reluctant to acknowledge. According to Akhaine (2021), Kukah's courage in speaking truth to power exemplifies a form of moral resistance that is rare within Nigeria's religious establishment, much of which remains closely aligned with political interests.

Moral Framing of National Issues

Ethical leadership entails framing public discourse through moral and humanistic lenses. Kukah does not simply engage in political critique; he reorients national conversations around core values such as human dignity, justice, equity, and solidarity. He consistently emphasises to both leaders and citizens that governance is fundamentally a moral enterprise rather than merely a technical or political one. His interventions are grounded in theological ethics, Catholic social teaching, and a profound concern for the common good (Ehusani, 2016).

For instance, in a lecture delivered at the Nigerian Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kukah (2019, n.p) argued that "Leadership is not about power for its own sake; it is about the ethical responsibility to protect, to include, and to humanise the most vulnerable among us".

This approach is consistent with the ethical leadership model described by Ciulla (2004), which views leadership not merely as a tool for achieving outcomes but as a morally guided process that respects both means and ends.

Promoting National Integration and Religious Tolerance

Nigeria's pluralistic composition has made nation-building a fragile task, frequently undermined by ethnic and religious chauvinism. Kukah's consistent advocacy for religious tolerance and national integration is a vital contribution to ethical leadership in such a context. As the Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, he has worked within a challenging environment to foster Christian-Muslim dialogue and interfaith cooperation. He has often reiterated that religion is not Nigeria's problem; rather, it is the politicisation of religion that fuels division and violence (Kukah, 2017).

His peacebuilding work, including his role in founding the Kukah Centre, has led to initiatives focused on interreligious harmony, civic education, and good governance. According to Okeke (2020), Kukah's engagement with both Christian and Muslim leaders across Northern Nigeria demonstrates the role of ethical leadership in bridging societal fault lines through empathy, understanding, and dialogue.

Institutional Critique and Systemic Reform

Unlike populist figures who offer charismatic outbursts without structural analysis, Kukah's interventions often include concrete calls for institutional reform. He does not merely critique leadership personalities; he interrogates the systems that enable corruption, mediocrity, and impunity. He has called for police reform, judicial independence, decentralisation of power, and the restructuring of Nigeria's federal system as moral imperatives for building a just and equitable society (Kukah, 2015).

This systemic perspective is essential to ethical leadership, which, according to Maak and Pless (2006), involves a commitment to transforming institutions in ways that promote fairness, accountability, and long-term sustainability. In a polity marked by weak institutions and elite capture, Kukah's voice provides a counterbalance, insisting that reform must begin with values and character, not just policy.

Ethical Leadership by Example

Beyond his words, Kukah leads by example. He has declined positions and patronage that would compromise his independence, and he maintains a simple, accessible lifestyle despite his national prominence. His refusal to align with any political party or ethnic bloc further enhances his credibility as a moral leader. This kind of integrity is central to the theory of authentic leadership, which emphasises transparency, consistency, and self-awareness as essential traits (George, 2003).

Kukah's moral consistency, even under pressure, provides an example to both religious and political leaders. As Achebe (1983) famously observed, the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. Kukah's life and message offer a model of what that leadership could look like when guided by conscience rather than convenience.

Challenges and Criticisms

Bishop Hassan Kukah's prophetic voice and bold interventions in Nigeria's national discourse have not been without controversy or criticism. As an outspoken cleric and moral advocate, he has frequently clashed with political elites and sections of the public, particularly when addressing sensitive socio-political and religious issues. His unwavering commitment to speaking truth to power, grounded in ethical conviction, has earned him both admiration and resistance.

One of the major criticisms Kukah has faced revolves around accusations of partisanship and religious bias. Critics have sometimes misconstrued his interventions as politically motivated or ethnically inclined. For instance, when Kukah delivered his 2020 Christmas Day homily criticising the Buhari administration's handling of insecurity and nepotism in federal appointments, it sparked a heated national debate. While many hailed his courage and moral clarity, some government officials and political commentators accused him of inciting division and promoting a sectional agenda (Premium Times, 2020). The Presidency, through its spokesperson Garba Shehu, dismissed his remarks as "a political sermon" (Shehu, 2020).

Moreover, Kukah's emphasis on justice, equity, and accountability has drawn criticism from individuals who perceive his positions as overly idealistic or confrontational. In a country where ethno-religious identities are deeply entrenched in politics, any effort to challenge the status quo risks misinterpretation. Kukah's consistent condemnation of bad governance and human rights abuses has made him a target for those benefitting from systemic corruption and impunity. His critics argue that religious leaders should remain apolitical, focusing solely on spiritual matters. However, Kukah has consistently refuted this view, insisting that faith and social justice are inseparable. As he argued, "the Gospel message does not permit neutrality in the face of injustice" (Kukah, 2019).

In addition, Bishop Kukah has also faced internal opposition from within the Christian community. Some church leaders and followers have expressed concerns over his readiness to publicly critique Christian politicians, or what they perceive as a deviation from ecclesiastical diplomacy. Nevertheless, Kukah remains convinced that the prophetic role of the clergy necessitates moral confrontation, regardless of religious affiliation. He insists that ethical leadership must transcend partisan loyalties and serve the broader interests of truth and societal well-being (Obadare, 2023).

Furthermore, the nature of Nigeria's media landscape has compounded the challenges Kukah faces. In a context where media narratives can be manipulated, misquoted statements, out-of-context headlines, and sensationalism have sometimes portrayed his nuanced critiques as inflammatory or oppositional. This not only undermines his message but occasionally exposes him to personal threats and reputational risk.

Despite these criticisms, Bishop Kukah continues to champion ethical leadership as a transformative force. He demonstrates resilience in the face of adversity, aligning his voice with a tradition of prophets who, throughout history, endured persecution for confronting oppressive powers. His consistent advocacy underscores the necessity of critical voices in strengthening democratic values, human rights, and accountability in Nigeria's fragile democracy (Ibrahim, 2020).

In essence, Kukah's experiences underscore the price of prophetic witness in a society plagued by moral decay and institutional failure. The criticisms he faces reveal not only the societal resistance to ethical truth-telling but also the importance of such interventions in galvanising collective conscience toward national renewal.

Implications for Leadership and Governance

Bishop Hassan Kukah's ethical interventions in Nigeria's socio-political landscape offer crucial lessons and implications for leadership and governance. His voice, consistently rooted in moral clarity, intellectual rigour, and theological integrity, illuminates the indispensable role of ethical leadership in confronting systemic injustice, corruption, and governance failures. Kukah's praxis demonstrates that national discourse devoid of values-based leadership becomes sterile, manipulative, and disconnected from the needs of the people (Ogundiya, 2010).

At the core of his interventions is the conviction that leadership must transcend political power to embody responsibility, accountability, and service. Kukah insists that ethical leadership involves not just legal compliance but moral courage to speak truth to power even at personal risk (Kukah, 2020). His public critiques of successive Nigerian governments, both military and democratic, highlight how the erosion of public trust stems not just from institutional weakness but from the moral bankruptcy of those entrusted with public office (Okechukwu, 2018). This echoes Ciulla's (2004) assertion that leadership, devoid of ethics, becomes authoritarian or transactional, rather than transformational.

From a governance standpoint, Kukah's engagement invites a rethinking of how national leaders conceptualise their mandate. He advances a prophetic model of leadership that calls attention to the plight of the poor, the marginalised, and the excluded—those often forgotten in elite-driven policy conversations. His approach aligns with Greenleaf's (1977) notion of "servant

leadership," which emphasises empathy, stewardship, and a commitment to the growth of people and communities. Through this lens, governance becomes a moral enterprise grounded in justice and the common good.

Importantly, Kukah's contributions also foreground the role of civil society and religious actors in shaping public ethics. He reminds political leaders that legitimacy is not only derived from electoral victory or constitutional authority but from the ability to act justly and govern with integrity (Omoyibo & Akpomera, 2013). His work thus encourages the institutionalisation of ethical leadership training within public service, democratic institutions, and educational systems.

Furthermore, Kukah's prophetic witness underscores the critical need for inclusive governance that reflects the plurality of Nigeria's religious, ethnic, and cultural identities. He challenges leaders to build structures that promote national cohesion over parochial interest, a call especially urgent in a nation marred by ethno-religious tensions and violent extremism (Adibe, 2012). This vision calls for governance strategies that are participatory, justice-oriented, and rooted in shared national values.

Finally, the implications of Bishop Kukah's ethical leadership extend beyond mere critique. They offer a transformative framework for re-imagining governance in Nigeria where conscience, courage, and compassion serve as guiding lights. His prophetic leadership serves as a template for leaders who aspire not just to rule, but to serve meaningfully and ethically in a world deeply in need of flavour, direction, and hope.

Summary and Conclusion

In Nigeria's challenging socio-political landscape, characterised by corruption, impunity, religious division, and poor governance, Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah serves as a significant advocate for ethical leadership and societal transformation. His critical interventions are grounded in moral theology, civic responsibility, and a commitment to justice, reflecting the church's vital role in nation-building. Kukah embodies the prophetic tradition of "speaking truth to power," offering a vision for a just, inclusive, and accountable society, thereby acting as a national conscience. His commitment to ethical praxis is evident in his peace-building efforts, demonstrating that leadership requires direct engagement with governance and social

reconstruction. Despite facing criticism for his candidness, Kukah maintains that ethical leadership necessitates informed and courageous engagement with societal moral and political issues, acting as a moral compass. His prophetic role offers a model for religious leaders in contexts where they might otherwise be compromised, providing a clear, challenging, and hopeful voice for values-driven leadership essential for renewing governance and society.

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