



Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa
Programme des Relations Islamo-Chrétiennes en Afrique



STATEMENT ON THE PREVAILING SITUATION IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA



**AFRICA CHRISTIAN & MUSLIM RELIGIOUS
LEADERS FOR PEACE & DEVELOPMENT**

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 8TH - 13TH JANUARY 2012

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**AFRICA CHRISTIAN & MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS
CONFERENCE ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

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PARTICIPANTS AT THE AFRICA CHRISTIAN & MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONFERENCE ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 8TH - 13TH JANUARY 2012



AFRICA CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONFERENCE ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT ON THE PREVAILING SITUATION IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

We, 60 Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders from eight (8) African countries that include: Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania (mainland and Zanzibar), met at the Global Hotel PLC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 8th – 13th January, 2012 under the auspices of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) on the theme “Africa Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders for Peace and Development.”

Having closely followed the events and happenings in Nigeria (especially some states in the North and South), are alarmed by the spiral of violence and utterances that are bound to further derail any hope for peace in the states, regions, cities and towns concerned, and indeed the entire country.

At a conference called to deliberate on the contribution of Africa Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders towards Peace and Development, the sheer mayhem purported to be unleashed against innocent people in the name of religious ideology which finds no credence in our respective religious faiths and practices could not have come at a worse time.

It is common knowledge that religious differences have always been exploited to satisfy political, economic and social agendas, and that ethnic exclusivism has more often than not found allies in religion thus perpetuating negative solidarities with its attendant blind support and determination to undermine ethnic and religious plurality of Nations.

As Christian and Muslim Leaders gathered here, we are devastated by the indiscriminate killings and destruction of properties including worship centres being carried out by some members of our respective religions.

These acts seriously undermine our religious mandate to be agents of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation, and thus discredits our resolve to live up to that mandate.

We strongly condemn the heinous crimes being inflicted on innocent people and call on peace lovers in Nigeria, Africa and indeed the world, to join us in the condemnation of these inhumane acts that bear the marks of human beings inhumanity towards fellow human beings.

Our hearts and thoughts at this moment in time are with the families who have lost their loved ones. We extend our condolences to those families and the people and government of Nigeria.

In order to avoid this already volatile situation from becoming worse and in the spirit of peace and reconciliation;

We CALL on the Christian and Muslim leadership of Nigeria to exercise maximum restraint and refrain from making pronouncements and statements that would threaten the unity of that Nation and the spirit of togetherness.



We acknowledge that inconsiderate utterances in the context of the current situation are recipes for further chaos and go against the spirit of acceptance of the ethnic and religious pluralities which are innate realities of Nigeria as in many African Nations. On account of this we would like to implore Nigeria Muslim and Christian Religious Leaders as well as adherents of the two religions to avoid any action or inaction that will lead to the heightening of tension and aggravation of what is already a highly charged situation.

We urge them to immediately create a platform for effective engagement in intra-Muslim and intra-Christian discussions that will lead to inter Christian and Muslim consultations towards sustainable peace in that country.

As Religious Leaders it is our strong conviction that if we were to allow this mayhem to continue we will be doing so in the name of our respective religions and not in the name of the one God (*Tawhīd* in Islam) and (Triune in Christianity) who is loving and merciful.

We CALL on governments at all levels (local, state and federal) to intensify the security measures already being taken to put an end to the ongoing senseless killings and destruction of properties as well as extra-judicial killings and all forms of human rights violations.

We urge them to immediately put into place control mechanisms to stop the proliferation of small arms and light weapons which will go a long way in safeguarding human lives.

We CALL on politicians and the political elite to refrain from unguarded utterances and acts that will exacerbate an already deteriorating situation in the country.

We CALL on the Media, Civil Society and all responsible institutions to immediately refrain from reportage that is based on regionalism and focusing on negative religious dimensions, as well as sensationalism and to be objective and reflect the diversity of the Society/Nation.

We also call on the Media to be Agents of Peace.

We call on Civil Society to be more proactive and become more involved in civic education for the promotion of peace and peaceful co-existence and interfaith relations.

Conclusion

That Nigeria being the most populous nation in Africa, and seen as one of the leading powers in the continent, we recognise that a peaceful Nigeria would create a peaceful environment in Africa. Therefore, we see a divided and turbulent Nigeria as having a negative impact on the continent and not only in West Africa.

We do hereby agree to continue to remain in solidarity with each other in the promotion of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation. We further would like to assure the people and government of Nigeria that as Religious Leaders we commit ourselves to continuously pray for the peace and unity of that country even as we stand by for any assistance that may be required from us.




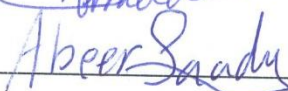

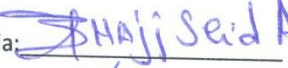
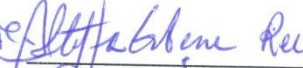




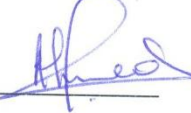
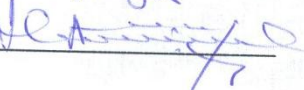
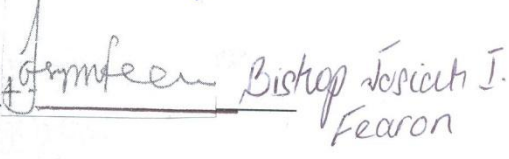
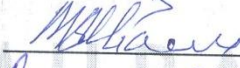
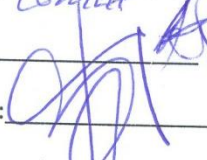
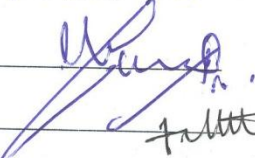
In Solidarity for Peace and Development.



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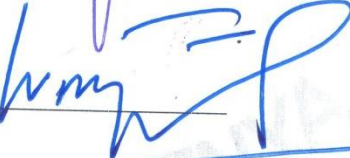


Signed on behalf of the Christian and Muslim Leaders here gathered:

- Cameroon: Rev. Goyek Robert ELHADJ H. M. BANOUFE
 
- Egypt: Sheikh Khaled Hassan Abeer Saady young Edward
  
- Ethiopia: Sheikh Seid Asmare Rev. Itffa Grobena
Sheikh Is'ia Shejelli Benjamin D. Lortey
   
- Liberia: [Signature] [Signature]
 
- Madagascar: RASENDRAHASINA Lala (Rev) HAMED
shk. dr. Khabiel A. Aliyu 
- Nigeria: [Signature] Bishop Jesicah J. Fearon
 
- Sierra Leone: [Signature] Rev. Moses B. Khamu
SHEIKH ABU BARAKA 
- Tanzania (mainland) and Zanzibar: [Signature] [Signature]
 

Witnessed by:

General Adviser of PROCMURA


REV. DR. JOHNSON MBILLAH