



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



# THE OUAGADOUGOU COMMUNIQUÉ

REGIONAL CONSULTATION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS (CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS) IN FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA ON CONFLICT PREVENTION AND THE PROMOTION OF PEACE IN WEST AFRICA

Hôtel des Conférences Ouind Yide SARL  
From 25 to 28 April 2016

We, Christian and Muslim religious leaders from six Francophone West African countries of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal with observer participation from Togo, at the invitation of the Programme for Christian-Muslim relations in Africa (PROCMURA) met at Hotel des Conférences Ouind Yide SARL in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 25th - 28th April 2016 to deliberate on the theme 'Conflict Prevention and the Promotion of Peace' in the region.

Having reflected and deliberated:

- That the need for proactive conflict prevention and peace building in Africa in general and in West Africa sub-region in particular remain urgent
- That accepting the differences that exist between the two religions, Islam and Christianity is crucial for peaceful coexistence;
- That it is necessary to avoid acts that will instigate tension and militate against peace in our countries;
- That the need to build strong and sincere relationship between Christians and Muslims at all levels is important;
- That tolerance and respect for the religious "other" is essential;
- That negative religio-political solidarity should be avoided
- That the Politicisation of Religion and Religionalisation of politics should be rebuffed;
- That Christian and Muslim communities should openly condemn all forms of radicalisation and violent extremism;
- That religious leaders should spearhead actions aimed at curbing radicalism and religious extremism;
- That importation and exportation of conflicts into African countries should be rejected;
- That deepening Culture of Peace and all that it entails is pivotal for the survival of any nation;
- That search for the path of lasting peace is critical for countries faced with civil unrest or violent conflict;
- That country-levels plans of action for collaborative initiatives for entrenching and preserving peace is significant for national cohesion and stability;

**Having** worked together in different discussion groups with clear knowledge of the various situations of each country as presented by participants from the countries present and further enriched by the good examples shared on peace-building initiatives and recognising the important roles religious leaders should play in conflict prevention and promoting peace;

**Aware** that religion and religious differences have always been manipulated and exploited for political, economic, communal and personal gains which have led and still leads to death of thousands of our sisters and brothers and destruction of properties;

**Deeply Concerned** about the rise in acts of violence perpetrated by certain groups in our countries who claim to do so in the name of our respective religions;

**Recognising** that despite some positive developments in the relations between Christians and Muslims in some countries much remains to be done;

**Having understood and accepted** that as religious leaders we must endeavour at all times to serve and lead by example;

**We hereby pledge and reaffirm** our commitment and determination to remain united and to work relentlessly in collaboration with each other towards conflict prevention and the promotion of sustainable peace in West Africa in particular and throughout Africa in general;

**In order to achieve these,** we as religious leaders from the two main religions within the sub-region and representing millions of the faithful,

### **Commit ourselves to:**

- 1 lead the way in conflict prevention and peace building;
- 2 respect and acknowledge each other's religious values, beliefs and practices;
- 3 initiate leadership education programs for young people;
- 4 be pragmatic in designing and disseminating messages that will counter and debunk malicious religious teachings propagated by religious extremists;
- 5 make every effort to conduct awareness campaigns among religious communities to promote peace and peaceful coexistence;
- 6 remain pragmatic and courageous at all times in challenging unjust policies, structures and systems;
- 7 remain impartial and refrain from collaborating with politicians who have partisan or personal agendas by effectively playing our parts to ensure peace and peaceful coexistence among citizenry;

### **We strongly appeal to ALL RELIGIOUS LEADERS, OUR GOVERNMENTS, THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS) AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS:**

- To make the promotion of peace and peaceful coexistence among people a top priority in the sub-region;
- To promote and practice good governance to enhance political stability, economic growth and sustainable development towards the wellbeing of the people in the region;
- To put in place effective mechanisms that would enable member states to expeditiously counter violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism.

**Finally, we urge** Religious Leaders and our governments to ensure that **WOMEN** are fully involved in all initiatives aimed at conflict prevention and promotion of sustainable peace within the sub-region.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

- We express our gratitude to the Government and people of Burkina Faso for the warm welcome accorded to us on our arrival and during our stay in Ouagadougou;
- Our thanks to PROCMURA Area Committee of Burkina Faso for accepting to host the Consultation and to the entire religious communities of Burkina Faso for the religious collegiality demonstrated during the programme;
- Finally, our profound thanks to the General Adviser of PROCMURA and all the staff from Nairobi, Kenya for organizing and sponsoring such a timely programme.

Issued in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, April 28, 2016

Ont signé :

1. BURKINA FASO	Yedou DRISSA <del>Moussa</del>	P. SOUBEIGA Pascal <del>Pascal</del>
2. COTE D'IVOIRE	Kouyate M Lamino <del>Amadou</del>	Kialo Foutoumata <del>Kialo</del>
3. GUINEE	Madja Roseiane SOW <del>Madja</del>	Mo pou Marthe loua <del>Mo pou</del>
4. MALI	Tenir Rachel <del>Tenir</del>	KEITA Nohamed <del>KEITA</del>
5. NIGER	Rahimatu nouso Zouy <del>Rahimatu</del>	Pasteur ASSO Bymanta <del>Pasteur</del>
6. SENEGAL	Bamab Gueye <del>Bamab</del>	Abbe Jean Pierre <del>Abbe</del>
7. REPRESENTANTE DES FEMMES	M <sup>e</sup> Haïdara Djeneba Sy <del>M<sup>e</sup> Haïdara</del>	LAURANT AGBESSI ABRA ESTHER <del>LAURANT</del>
8. PRICA	<del>Wmy</del>	Johnson Moullak