



PROCMURA Newsletter

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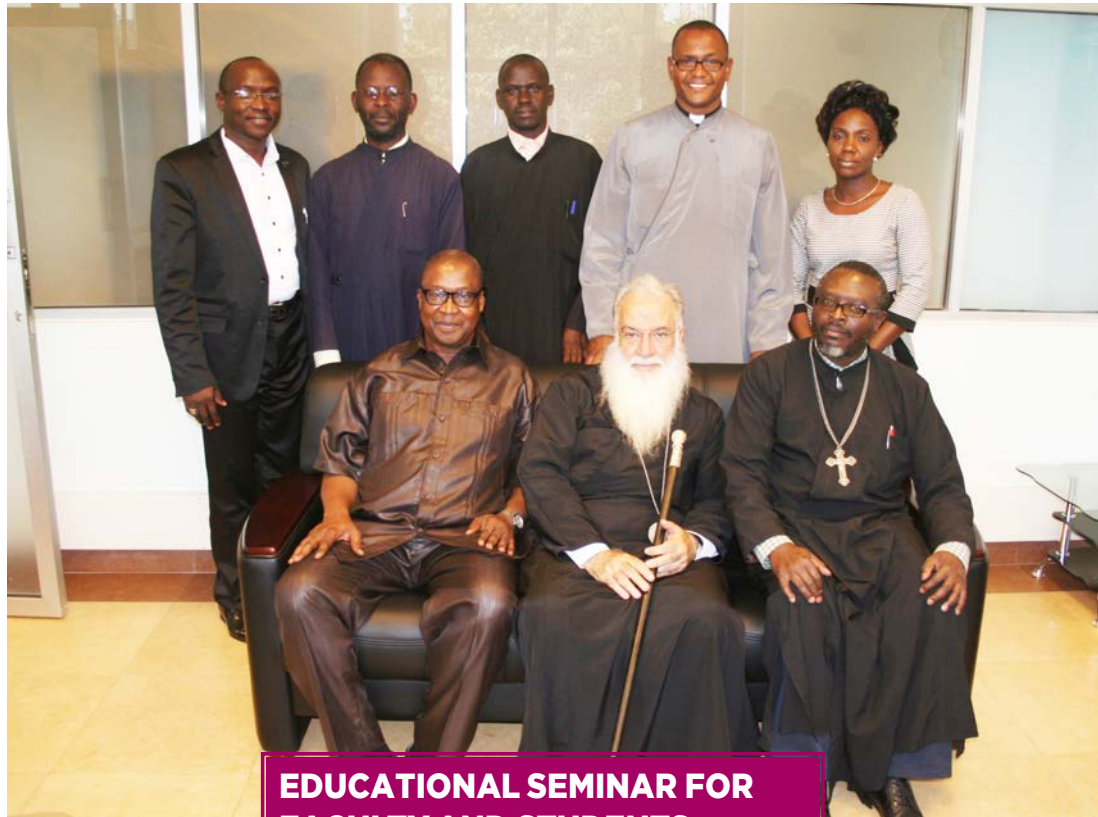
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**EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR FOR
FACULTY AND STUDENTS
OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH
SEMINARY OF AFRICA. | PG. 2**



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Participants in Session

KENYA | NAIROBI

Educational Seminar for Faculty and Students of the Orthodox Church Seminary of Africa.

At the request of the Orthodox Church Seminary of Africa, PROCMURA organised an Educational Seminar for faculty members, administrative staff and forty six (46) students on 11th February 2015 at the PROCMURA Meeting and Conference Centre. Students that participated in the programme were from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi, Malawi and Madagascar.

The PROCMURA Central Office staff led by the General Adviser, took the students through the principles by which PROCMURA operates, its theology and understanding of interfaith and interreligious relations. The staff outlined the complexity of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa and the commitment of PROCMURA to work with the Muslim and Christian communities to ensure that eventually the innate African spirituality of live and let live with our religious differences in peace become the norm and not the exception.

Apart from learning from PROCMURA, it has to be said that the PROCMURA staff also learnt from the faculty and students from the different countries on what Christian-Muslim relations from their perspectives look like. One of the highlights of the one-day seminar was the exposition of His Eminence, Archbishop Dr. Makarios of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa Archdiocese of Kenya on the Church's interaction with Muslims in history and in the contemporary situation.

The seminar which was described as stimulating led to a request from faculty and students that it should be a yearly event since students come and go, and all will need to understand the complexity of Christian-Muslim relations as they return to work towards the promotion of good relations between Christians and Muslims in their respective countries.

For more information see, Orthodox Seminary Education Seminar Briefing on

https://www.procmura-prica.org/files/African-Orthodox-Seminary_Seminar_2015-Briefing.pdf



One of the participants from Malawi making a contribution



Front row sitting; General Adviser, PROCMURA, Archbishop Dr. Makarios and the Academic Dean of the Seminary. Back row Standing: PROCMURA Personnel and Seminary Faculty staff at the PROCMURA Central Office

KENYA

A cross-section of participants during the one-day seminar

MOMBASA

PCEA Woman's Guild National Leaders Seek to Understand Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa.

The Woman's (not Women's) Guild of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) convened a National Leadership Conference of the Guild in Mombasa from the 23rd to 27th of February 2015. The Conference brought together one hundred and seventy (170) participants most of whom were from Kenya, with a few from Tanzania and Uganda, to look into current and emerging issues that the guild needs to take seriously in their different presbyteries, districts and congregations.

An area identified as pertinent and important for the women leaders was Christian-Muslim relations. PROCMURA was invited to take them through what it calls 'Women Issues in Christian-Muslim relations' that require the active involvement of girls, women and mothers. In the context of PROCMURA's commitment and advocacy for Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace in society and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims, the women leaders sought to understand the growing violent extremism, intolerance and radicalisation which Christians in Kenya are known to be the main victims. They also sought to know what needs to be done to curb and eventually eradicate the menace and promote positive tolerance.

The General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah and the Programme Assistant, Ms Florence Iminza who is in

charge of Women Issues in Christian-Muslim relations co-facilitated the workshop. In attendance was the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the Rt. Rev. David Riitho Gathanju. The women pledged to ensure that such educative programmes on Christian-Muslim relations are carried out in their presbyteries, districts and congregations.



Mrs. Veronica Muchiri, Chairlady, Woman's Guild addressing participants at the meeting

LIBERIA



(L-R) Imam Dorley with Pst. Johnson during one of the intervention visits



Secretary General Mrs. Tarpeh-Major and Chairman, Johnson demonstrating the use of electronic thermometers at Dorleyla Town

MONROVIA

The PROCMURA Anti Ebola Task-Force Continue with its Relentless Effort to Combat Ebola and Provide Support for its victims.

The PROCMURA Liberia Area Committee Anti Ebola Task-Force led by its chairperson Rev. Emmanuel F. Johnson and its Area Adviser, Rev. St John York, continued with its valuable contribution to combat what they (along with other Liberians) call 'Evil Blinking, Over, Liberia, Again (EBOLA). With Financial support from Bread for the World, a partner of PROCMURA, they accelerated their relentless efforts which they began in 2014, to combat the virus and provide support for its victims.

The activities they carried out included education through radio talk shows that always concluded with a memory phrase that read: "Let us all join in Stopping the Spread of Ebola in Liberia, Protect ourselves, others, adhere to the Ministry of Health (MOH) preventive measures to stay alive". In the affected areas and counties that bordered them, they distributed hygiene kits, electronic thermometers that help to identify the presence of the virus in a person, and relief items. Dr. Benjamin D. Lartey, PROCMURA Executive Committee Member for West Africa repeatedly called on Liberians/Residents "to stop

religious and cultural practices that will expose people to the Ebola virus infection" while the secretary of the PROCMURA Area Committee, Mrs Rebecca Tarpeh-Major provided training on the use of the electronic thermometers.

Commenting on the intervention of the PROCMURA Liberia Area Committee Task Force, the town Chief Imam Mohammed Jalieba stated that "Your presence, your gifts and the education you provided have revived our lost hopes" In Dorleyla town, Pastor David Kollie a survivor of the of the Ebola virus thanked the Task-Force for bringing Christians and Muslims in the town together to engage each other in what he termed "an Ebola awareness dialogue" and prayed that this gesture of coming together of Christians and Muslims will continue even after Ebola is eradicated.

The Head of the Women Organization, Famatta Dorley in her remarks emphasised that the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) hit the women of Dorleyla town seriously and that eight (8) women died leaving their children motherless and faced with serious challenges of trauma. She thanked the PROCMURA Task Force for the relief items which she said will go a long way towards assisting the orphans.

For more information, visit the PROCMURA website

http://procmura-prica.org/files/PROCMURA_Liberia-Area-Committee-Intervention-Campaign.pdf



PROCMURA Executive Committee member, Dr. Benjamin Lartey (left) and members of the Liberia Anti-Ebola Task-force with relief supplies destined for the Ebola victims and survivors

CAMEROON

Theologians and Pastors Resolve to take Christian-Muslim Relations Seriously

Members of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and participants pose for a group photo

The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon Continuing Education Initiative coined "Areopagus" which meets yearly to reflect on emerging issues that affect the Church and the wider society, decided to focus on Christian-Muslim relations this year. Their decision was informed by the PROCMURA's national conference for Churches in Cameroon that took place in Kribi from 16th to 17th May 2013. In that conference all churches that participated resolved to take Christian-Muslim relations seriously.

The Areopagus Forum took place from 13th to 16th January 2015 at the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon Church Centre Makon, Bamenda, Cameroon. The Rev. Emmanuel B. Masok, President of the Areopagus Forum who was at the Kribi conference, led the team of resource persons at the Forum in which fifty nine (59) theologians and pastors attended.

The four-day programme provided a potent platform for the participants to deepen their knowledge in thematic areas on constructive Christian engagement with Muslims for life affirming relations towards peaceful coexistence in the face of religious radicalisation and extremism in neighbouring Nigeria which is beginning to spill over into Cameroon. Unfortunately, the General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah who was expected to serve as lead resource person of the programme could not attend for reasons beyond our control. The programme which was sponsored by PROCMURA was adjudged successful by all that attended as reflected in the end of activity evaluation. PROCMURA contributed financially to the organisation of the forum.

GHANA



Bishop Samwini (second left) accompanied by his wife (second right), Priscilla Mbillah (left) and Ms. Joy Wandabwa (right), PROCMURA Team Leader, Finance & Administration

PROCMURA Area Adviser Consecrated Bishop in the Methodist Church, Ghana

The PROCMURA Area Adviser for Ghana, Rev. Dr. Nathan Iddrisu Samwini was consecrated Bishop of the Northern Ghana Diocese of the Methodist Church, Ghana on Sunday 9th November, 2014 in Tamale, the Northern Regional capital. PROCMURA was represented at the consecration by Joy Wandabwa, PROCMURA's Team Leader, Finance and Administration.

Rev. (now Bishop Samwini) served as PROCMURA Area Adviser since 1995 and was elevated to the position of Anglophone West Africa Regional Coordinator – a position he held for a period of four years. Bishop Samwini also worked with the Christian Council of Ghana as Director of Programmes. At the time of his appointment he was head of the Religious Department and senior lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana

Bishop Samwini is deeply appreciated for his immense contribution to the work of PROCMURA in Ghana, West Africa, Africa and indeed the wider world of Christian and Muslim cooperation for peace and peaceful co-existence. We pray for wisdom and insight as he assumes this important ministry in the northern part of Ghana.

NIGERIA

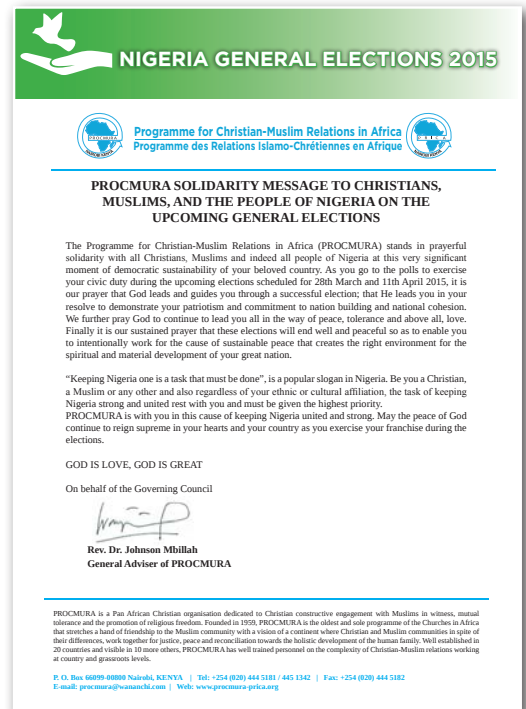
“Keeping Nigeria one is a task that must be done”

In the wake of the Nigeria polls to elect their President and members of the National Assembly on 28th March 2015, PROCMURA sent a solidarity message to Christians and Muslims and indeed the entire people of Nigeria urging them to eschew violence so as to ensure that they have peaceful elections.

The message which was a combination of appeal and prayer, reminded Nigerians of their popular phrase “Keeping Nigeria one is a task that must be done” and urged them to live up to it. It prayed God to lead the people of Nigeria through the way of peace, tolerance and love. The message was sent to identified religious, political and community leaders before the commencement of the elections. Many of the leaders acknowledged having received the message and thanked PROCMURA for identifying itself with the people of Nigeria.

To read the message in its entirety go to:

http://www.procmura-prica.org/files/Nigeria_Elections_Message_EN.pdf



PROCMURA Chairperson for Burkina Faso Named Peace Ambassador

The chairperson of PROCMURA for Burkina Faso, Pastor TAPSOBA Issaka Flavien received the honour of being conferred with the title “Peace Ambassador” by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) for his exemplary work on promoting peace in his native country and what UPF called ‘Living For Others’.

In the citation, UPF described the PROCMURA-Burkina Faso chairperson as one who has devoted his life to ‘activities that promote universal moral values, strong family life, interreligious cooperation and harmony among nations and the establishment of a culture of peace’.

They commended Pastor Tapsoba (as he is called in PROCMURA circles) as one whose commitment to the welfare of fellow human beings ‘transcends racial, national and religious barriers’.

The UPF are known to confer the title ‘Ambassador for Peace’ to those whose lives and actions contribute to the fulfilment of the immemorial dream of humanity to see a world united in peace and ensuring that the spiritual and material dimensions of life are in harmony.



The Universal Peace Federation is an international and interreligious network of individuals and organizations, including representatives from religion, government, civil society and the private sector, dedicated to achieving world peace. It has a consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, and supports the work of the United Nations, particularly in the areas of interfaith peacebuilding, peace education, and the strengthening of marriage and family.



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