



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



LOMÉ COMMUNIQUÉ

**West Africa Regional Consultation on Conflict
Prevention and Peace Building**

Hôtel Acropolis, Lomé, Togo

August 24–28, 2015

We, Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders from seven (7) West African States of Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Togo met in Lomé, Togo at the invitation of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) for a “West Africa Regional Consultation on Conflict Prevention and Peace Building” at the Hôtel Acropolis from August 24-28, 2015.

HAVING considered that:

- there is a dire need to build firm relations between Christians and Muslims for life-affirming encounters;
- within the Religions, there are differences and we must accept, respect, and be tolerant of such differences;
- in the midst of our multiple ethnic and religious identities, it is critical to remain true to our national identities and work towards the wholistic development of our nations;
- Negative Solidarity which in the context of Christian and Muslim relations means being in solidarity with your co-religionist even when they embark on criminal acts must be condemned and utterly discouraged;
- Politicisation of Religion and Religionisation of Politics is divisive and destructive of our communities;
- the Complexity in Conflict Prevention is a fact that must be critically looked at in Peace building initiatives;
- intra-Christian and intra-Muslim deliberations on curbing radicalisation and violent extremism is imperative;
- Importation and Exportation of Conflicts into African countries must be discouraged, rejected and halted;
- Religious Leaders’ role towards eradicating radicalisation and religious extremism is non-negotiable for peace and peaceful co-existence in the sub-region;
- the entrenchment of a Culture of Peace should be the norm and not an exception;
- a roadmap towards Sustainable Peace is vital for the survival of nations.

HAVING worked together in Group Discussions with in-depth analysis and discussing examples from individual Countries and recognise the importance of translating good precepts in religion into good practice in everyday life;

AWARE that religion and religious differences have in many ways been exploited for political, economic, communal and personal interests which have caused death and displacement of thousands of our brothers and sisters, massive destruction of

properties and sources of livelihood;

VERY CONCERNED at the surge in violent confrontations and intolerance in our respective Countries in which religion has directly or indirectly played a role or at least implicated;

RECOGNISING that there are some improvements in relations between Christians and Muslims in some countries, much work still needs to be done to prevent violent conflicts;

UNDERSTANDING and ACCEPTING that as Religious Leaders we must strive at all times to live by example;

DO HEREBY RESOLVE and reaffirm our willingness and determination to remain in Solidarity with each other in the furtherance of working to prevent violent conflicts and working for sustainable Peace in West Africa in particular, and Africa in general;

ACCORDINGLY, as Religious Leaders coming from the two major Religions in West Africa, and representing millions of persons of faith;

RESOLVE as follows, that we would:

- lead by example and take responsibility to work to prevent violent conflicts and to promote sustainable peace;
- respect and appreciate each other's religious values, beliefs and practices;
- intentionally put in place mentoring programmes for our youth;
- be proactive in designing and disseminating counter-narratives that will nullify extremists' religious ideologies;
- not relent in our efforts to increase awareness and sensitization within the religious communities on working for peace and peaceful co-existence;
- continue to be prophetic and proactive in the pursuit of peace at all times without fear or favour;
- be politically impartial and refrain from partisan politics so as to ensure that we play effective roles to prevent violent conflicts and entrench a culture of Peace in our respective countries and the sub-region at large.

WE CALL ON OUR GOVERNMENTS, THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS) AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN THE SUB-REGION TO:

- make the promotion of peace and peaceful co-existence a priority in their National and Regional policy actions and strategic programmes;

- practice and uphold the principle of good governance for political stability, economic growth and sustainable development for the greater good of all people;
- halt the indiscriminate importation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons;
- design and implement disarmament framework and amnesty for those who voluntarily submit illegal arms in their possessions to the authorities;
- put in place robust counter-terrorism mechanisms to be jointly implemented by member states;
- respond to the increasing needs and challenges of Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

We further **CALL** on Religious Leaders and Governments to **RECOGNISE** the importance of involving **WOMEN** in proactive conflict prevention and building sustainable peace in the sub-region.

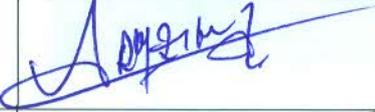
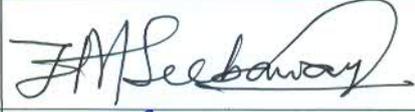
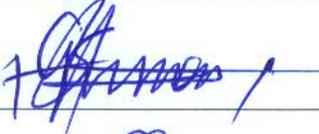
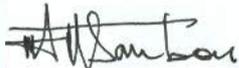
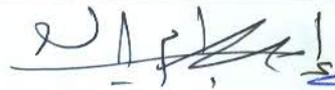
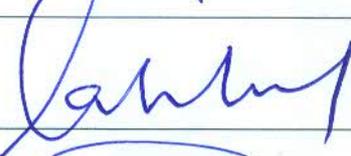
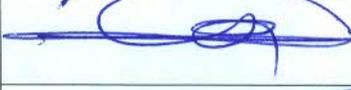
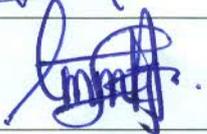
Similarly, we urge governments and **ECOWAS** to **EVOLVE** Youth Empowerment Programmes as **STRATEGY** of countering radicalisation and violent extremism, which the youth are susceptible to being exploited.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS AND APPRECIATION

- Special thanks and appreciation to the Government and People of Togo for warmly welcoming all the participants to Lomé;
- Special thanks and appreciation to members of the PROCMURA Area Committee of Togo for hosting the Consultation; Special thanks and appreciation to the Religious Community of Togo;
- Special appreciation to the PROCMURA Central Office in Nairobi, Kenya for organising this consultation at this critical time when religious leaders and governments within the sub-region are concerned about Peace and Security for Development.

Issued in Lomé, Togo this 27th day of August 2015.

SIGNED BY :

1. BENIN		
2. GHANA		
3. LIBERIA		
4. NIGERIA		
5. SIERRA-LEONE		
6. THE GAMBIA		
7. TOGO		
8. WOMEN REPS		
9. WOMEN REPS		
10. YOUTH REPS		
11. ATTESTED BY PROCMURA	