

# PROCMURA ANNUAL REPORT 2015



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# 1.0 Introduction

The five years (2014 – 2018) Strategic Plan of PROCMURA which has guided its work for two years now has a vision of an 'African continent where Christian and Muslim communities in spite of their differences, work together for justice, peace and reconciliation, towards the holistic development of the human family and the environment,' and its Mission of 'Faithful Christian witness to the Gospel in an interfaith environment of Christians and Muslims that respects the spirit of good neighbourliness.'

The Vision and Mission enable PROCMURA to work towards its overall goal of seeing an 'African continent where Christians and Muslims uphold the principles of religious freedom and all that it entails; constructively relate to promote peace in society and peaceful coexistence between the two communities; jointly respond to the environmental challenges that face the continent.'

This report of the second year of the Strategic Plan implementation process seeks to provide our partners and friends and indeed the reading public, an account of what we were able to do (sometimes in very difficult situations and circumstances). In all, however, we can look back at the year 2015 and say that 'the Lord has been our Ebenezer' – our help. He has watched over our going out and our coming in (Psalm 121:7) - indeed our total wellbeing. These words are true reflections of PROCMURA's life and work in 2015 which we now proceed to report.

# 2.0 Central Office

## 2.1 The New Central Office Block

Having moved into our new offices later in 2014, we are able to report with joy and thanks to God, our partners, constituencies, and friends of PROCMURA who did all they could to assist us to construct the offices. We have settled in well. The office provides a serene atmosphere for us to work as a nit and close working family as most of the staff are only separated by transparent glasses. The official dedication of the offices will take place during the General Council meeting which is scheduled to take place at the middle of the year 2016.



As most of our partners will not be able to come for the dedication ceremony, we intend to arrange a special dinner at our new Meeting and Conference Centre for all our partners who will be attending the AACC Partner's consultation in February. We shall, in consultation with the AACC, inform partners of the specific day for the evening dinner.

On the importance of the new offices as a financial sustainability project, we refer partners to the PROCMURA's 2015 Financial Report produced by the Team Leader – Finance and Administration, Joy Wandabwa. On servicing of the loan, we would like to reiterate that the interest of the Loan we secured to supplement partners and PROCMURA's contribution to the construction of the offices is very high. We (as always) would like to appeal to partners to assist us to pay off the loan. We are prepared to discuss the terms with partners who are able and willing to assist in this matter.

## 2.2 Staff

### Recruitment of a New General Adviser

The current General Adviser Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah leaves office on 1st January 2017 when he will have served PROCMURA for a period of 17 years. The Executive Committee has taken measures to find a successor and there is every indication that they have found one. The Chairperson will be reporting and writing a circular to inform partners on this very soon.

### Confirmation of Appointment of the Programme Officer

The Programme Officer of PROCMURA, the Rev. Lesmore Ezekiel Gibson has been confirmed as the substantive Programme Officer of the organization, after having served the mandatory probation period of six months. We are delighted and grateful to the Executive Committee for the confirmation and look forward to his full integration into the PROCMURA family of work. We have no doubt that he will add value to what PROCMURA already does.



LESMORE GIBSON

### Renewal of the Contract of the Team Leader - Finance and Administration

The Executive Committee at its meeting at the PROCMURA Meeting and Conference Room from 5th to 8th May 2015 renewed the contract of the Team Leader – Finance and Administration, Joy Wandabwa, for a period of three years beginning from 1st February 2016. The renewal of her contract was carried out after the chairperson and the General Adviser had intensive discussions with Ms Wandabwa, who had already made plans to leave PROCMURA after serving the organisation diligently for 9 years. We are pleased that she has accepted the renewal of her contract and will be an experienced hand in the transition period when the current General Adviser Dr. Mbillah leaves and a new General Adviser assumes office.



JOY WANDABWA

### Evaluation of Staff

As part of our commitment to assess ourselves and to motivate staff to put in their best, an evaluation of performance was carried out and some members of staff job descriptions realigned. There is also the possibility of staff changes. Further discussions are ongoing with staff that may be directly affected by such changes.

## e. Learning from Others

As part of its strategy to ensure that PROCMURA not only cooperate and collaborate with organisations whose goals and objectives are in part or in whole that of PROCMURA's, but also learn from them, PROCMURA accepted an invitation extended to the Programme Officer, Rev. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel by Tony Blair Faith Foundation (TBFF) and the Faculty of Religious Studies of McGill University, to participate in a training course which had the theme: "Education and Security: The Challenge of Religious Diversity".

The five days course took place at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, from 15th to 20th June 2015. During the course, participants had the opportunity to engage with experts and relevant government departments on how to garner global synergies to confront global security threats in humane ways.

## f. Upgrading of Staff Training

As part of its commitment to upgrade its staff training, the Team Leader - Finance and Administration, Joy Wandabwa, participated in a leadership conference on "Sustainable Leadership in the Context of Pluralism and Peace Building". The conference was organised by one of PROCMURA's partners, the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem. It took place in Jerusalem from 17th to 28th November, 2015. In her briefing to staff, Joy outlined the theoretical and practical lessons she learnt and informed staff that in consultation with the General Adviser, she will be taking measures that will help accelerate our financial sustainability programme based on practical observations she made during the Jerusalem conference.

We thank our Partner, Church of Sweden and the Swedish Institute for the opportunity granted us in PROCMURA, and implore them to continue to remember us in this yearly programme.



The Team Leader, Finance and Administration (3rd from right) with Leadership Training participants

## 3.0 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN AFRICA

**Christian-Muslim relations in some parts of Africa in the past few years have faced serious challenges due to an upsurge in radicalisation and violent extremism targeting anyone and everyone who do not subscribe to the ideology of the radicalised violent extremists.**

**In the year under review, we would like to provide a brief overview of challenges in Christian-Muslim relations in West, East and Central Africa and what PROCMURA has done in those places as part of its project oriented programmes on Christian and Muslim constructive engagement for peace in society and peaceful co-existence between adherents of the two religions.**



PROCMURA - Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders session in West Africa

## 3.1 West Africa

In the West Africa sub-region, Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and a section of Ansar al-Din are the main well organised groups known to be radicalised and violent in their extremist acts. Boko Haram continues to cause mayhem in North Eastern Nigeria and parts of Niger. This dreaded group has created fear and mistrust among and between Christians and Muslims. The violent activities of the group whose actual name is Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad which translates as "People committed to the propagation of the prophet's teachings and Jihad", have made it difficult for Christians to accept the disclaimer of the vast majority of Muslims that the group's action and focus are not Islamic even if they claim to be Muslims and acting according to Islamic teachings.

In spite of the growing frustration encouraging signs of cooperation between Christians and Muslims are, however, evident. There are several ongoing programmes for the internally displaced and conscious moves by PROCMURA and others to ensure that well meaning Christians and Muslims, stick and work together to ensure that Boko Haram does not make them outright enemies of one another.

AQIM and a section of Ansar al-Din which translates as "Helpers or Defenders of the (Islamic) religion" operate in the Sahel and Sahara and have on a number of occasions caused havoc in Mali and neighbouring countries. They have been strongly anti-Sufi Islam which exists in several varieties in the Sahel region of Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal among others. The Sahel region (as it is well known) has Muslim majorities and important Christian minorities who peacefully co-exist. The activities of the violent extremists are creating so much anxiety and fear within the Muslim and Christian communities who are aware that if the extremists overrun the region no one who believes and acts differently from them will be spared

All partners and friends who are conversant with PROCMURA and its work will recall that in 2013, Christian and Muslim religious leaders from the Francophone Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Guinea and Benin as well as Central African countries of Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic were brought together in Maroua, Cameroon to deliberate on how to work together for peace and development amidst the growing radicalisation. Those who would like to remind themselves of this may visit the PROCMURA website at [www.procmura-prica.org](http://www.procmura-prica.org) and check on Maroua Communiqué and Maroua Report.

As radicalisation and violent extremism is on the increase in the West Africa sub-region, PROCMURA organised a conference of Christian and Muslim religious leaders from Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia to carefully look at the situation and plan on what to do. The details of the said conference are reported below. On the Sahel region where AQIM and related violent extremists groups are becoming very active, PROCMURA is planning to bring together Christian and Muslim religious leaders of the greater Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Cote d'Ivoire and possibly Guinea, to look at how to counter radicalisation and violent extremism.

A break-away group from AQIM who refer to themselves as Jamā at al-tawhīd wal-jihād fi gharb afrīqiyā translated as "Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa" (MOJWA) has indicated that it intends to spread violent jihad across a larger section of West Africa. There is a lot of concern about the group, but not much has been heard about them since their declaration of intent.



Participants in one of West Africa's PROCMURA sessions



In a separate development, incidences in Niger that caused a stir in the country was the eruption of violence and burning of churches as well as looting of properties of Christians in the capital Niamey and neighbouring counties. This was a reaction of a section of the Muslim community to the Charlie Hebdo magazine's negative portrayal of Muhammad the Prophet of Islam. It needs to be made clear, however, that most of the Muslim communities assisted the Christians and granted shelter to some of them when the violence raged on. Others tried to prevent the Muslim mob from causing more havoc to Churches and properties of Christians.



Participants in one of West Africa's PROCMURA sessions

Our persons in Niger, both Christians and Muslims wrote to inform us of the situation and asked what PROCMURA could do in the circumstance to re-establish confidence between the minority Christian communities and the majority Muslim population. "The government of Niger is doing its best but we as religious leaders have to provide education" one of contacts wrote. PROCMURA in this particular instance could only offer advice as we had no resources to directly intervene and help provide education

## 3.2 East Africa

As is case in West Africa, the greatest challenge to Christian-Muslim relations in East Africa is also the growing radicalisation and violent extremism as perpetuated by Al-Shabaab. The greatest tragedy of the year took place at the Garissa University College in Garissa, Northern Kenya on April 2, 2015. On that fateful day, Al-Shabaab militants besieged the university and took over 700 students hostage. They freed those who profess Islam and killed 148 who were non-Muslims - almost all Christians

This tragedy (as may be expected) created so much rage among Kenyans with the Christian Community expressing anger that Christians were again the target as was the case in other attacks in the past few years. The Muslim leaders condemned what had happened and accelerated measures within their communities to curb violent extremism. Tanzania was also put on alert when it was revealed that one of the attackers was a Tanzanian.



Memorial Service in Eldoret for victims of Al-shabab violence / Daily Nation Kenya

A positive sign that Christians and Muslims in Kenya are working hard to protect one another in the midst of the Al-Shabaab selective ambush killings when it involves civilians, came in December 22, 2015 when a bus travelling through North Eastern Kenya to Mandera was ambushed by suspected Al-Shabaab militants. They sort to separate the Muslims and Christians as they did a few years back and killed the Christians. The Muslim passengers refused to be separated from the Christians. Though two passengers were killed in the incident, more would have been killed if the Muslims in the bus were not in solidarity with the Christians and refused the identification request made by the attackers.

## 3.3 Central Africa

In 2015, the Central African countries of Cameroon and Chad encountered the reality of Boko Haram radicalisation and violent extremism in major proportions as the group accelerated their activities in the two countries. Violent attacks followed by the use of female suicide bombers created a lot of fear and anxiety in the northern parts of the country that share borders with north eastern Nigeria where Boko Haram is most active. The target of the group in the two countries is anyone and everyone of any religion or even no religion (if there are people of that nature) in the two countries.

In 2014, PROCMURA had planned workshops in Chad to conscientise the Christian and Muslim communities to keep their guard and work together to counter violent extremists elements that were infiltrating the country. The Muslim and Catholic leadership saw reason to carry out such workshops while a section of the churches that refer to themselves as evangelicals saw no need as they argued that they already do some things together as Christians and Muslims and that violent extremism will not be able to penetrate the country. As a result of that understanding PROCMURA withdrew from holding the workshops since in all its activities it only proposes but does not impose.

Apart from Boko Haram's violent activities, the other worrisome issue that impact on Christian-Muslim relations in the region is the well-known Séléka and anti-Balaka violent activities in the Central African Republic. A political solution is envisaged as presidential and parliamentary elections took place. There was no outright winner so a runoff is planned for 2016.



**H.E Paul Biya (left)  
President of Cameroon  
and H.E  
Muhammad Buhari (right)  
President of Nigeria meet to confer on Boko-Haram**

As may be seen on the 'Garoua Briefing' at the PROCMURA website and later in this report, PROCMURA carried out a consultation on countering radicalisation and ensured that the three countries (Cameroon, Chad and the Central African Republic) were represented.

Plans are being put in place to ensure that a sub-regional consultation involving Cameroon, Chad, the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville and Gabon are brought together to deliberate on how to counter violent extremism and radicalisation.

## 4.0 Programme Focus

### CORE PROGRAMMES

123

Promote awareness and build capacity of Church Leaders, Women and Youth

4

Litrature and Communication

5

Research and Docummentation

6

Personnel Development

7

Reinvigoration of Area Commitees

8

Networking and collaboration

9

Visionary Leadership

10

Finance and Administration

The strategic priorities of PROCMURA as embodied in its current Strategic Plan divides its activities into two broad spectra. The first is its Core Programmes, and the second, its Designated Programmes or Projects. The Core Programmes (to remind ourselves) are focused on strengthening the capacity of the churches in witness and constructive engagement with Muslims for peace & peaceful co-existence. Generally speaking (with few exceptions), these programmes are carried out with pool funds from partners based on PROCMURA's strategic focus for any given year. Designated Programmes or Projects on the other hand are focused on Christian and Muslim cooperation and collaboration to attend to specific issues of mutual concern that negatively impact on relations between the two communities and the wider society at large. To that extent, PROCMURA's peace and conflict prevention, reconciliation, countering radicalisation and violent extremism among others, fall into that category. Designated Programmes and Projects also aim at working with civil society, the African Union, regional bodies and governments to attend to the above issues and also embark on religious diplomacy in the African Union and its related bodies and sometimes with the European Union and international state actors if conflicts, for example, assume international dimensions. Designated Programmes and Projects are usually carried out with donor funds with express additional financial support from some of our partners who, in addition to their general support for PROCMURA's Core Programmes also set aside funds designated for specific projects within any given year. These partners will normally ask for specific project proposals and specific reports for such projects.

***‘the first is its Core Programmes,  
and the second, its Designated  
Programmes or projects’***

Having laid out the different aspects of PROCMURA's Programmes and Projects we now proceed to report on our activities for 2015. The report, apart from providing information on what we were able to do last year, also serves as an account of our stewardship of resources that we were able to raise in the reporting period.

### DESIGNATED PROGRAMMES

1

Conflict Prevention

2

Capacity building on gender issues in Christian-muslim relations

3

Advocacy an Religious Diplomacy towards Peace and Developement

#### 4.1 CORE PROGRAMMES

We are pleased to acknowledge that in 2015, PROCMURA was able to meet its target of planned Core Programmes activities by over 90%. This was made possible as a result of subsidies of local travel expenses of participants by churches, and reduced accommodation and lecture halls fees in all the programmes that we carried out within Church-related conference centers. Country programmes that had to be postponed with the understanding that they will be carried out in 2016 were those of South Sudan and Malawi. A one-day workshop for the leadership of continental ecumenical organizations on radicalisation and violent extremism was also postponed to 2016.

## 4.1.1 Awareness Raising and Capacity Building/Enhancement

### a. CHURCH LEADERS

In its quest to reach out to the leadership and would-be leadership of the churches on the growing need for most, if not all of them, to understand the basics of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations, PROCMURA listened to, and responded positively to Church denominations that required training for their clergy. This move helped us to expand PROCMURA's activities beyond the existing structures of Area Committees. This report therefore captures denominational as well as Area Committees programmes.

#### i. Cameroon (13th – 16th January 2015)

At a PROCMURA National Conference that was held in Kribi, on 16th and 17th May 2013 to reintroduce PROCMURA to the leadership of the churches in Cameroon, and to form a new Area Committee, a number of church leaders that participated in the conference, pledged to replicate the contents and lessons learnt in their church denominations.

The first church to live up to this pledge was the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. It committed itself to get its theologians and pastors immersed on the subject of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. As a result of that commitment the church's Continuing Education Initiative coined "Areopagus" organised a workshop in Makon, Bamenda from 13th to 16th January 2015 on Christian-Muslim relations. PROCMURA co-funded the workshop. In all, fifty nine (59) theologians and pastors participated.

The General Adviser who was expected to be the principal resource person at the workshop encountered visa problems and had to return to Nairobi having arrived at the airport in Yaoundé. He however provided material for Rev. Emmanuel B. Masok, President of the Areopagus Forum, and a participant at the Kribi conference to make the presentations on his behalf. Reports received from the conference suggested that the four-day programme provided a viable platform for the participants to deepen their knowledge on Christian constructive engagement with Muslims in witness and for peace in the society and peaceful coexistence between members of the two communities. Evaluation reports received at the PROCMURA Central Office indicates that the programme was adjudged to be educative and successful by all the participants.



Participants at Makon, Bamenda workshop in Cameroon

## ii). Kenya (11th February 2015)

The Orthodox Church Seminary of Africa has been warming up to PROCMURA since the past two years with the objective of getting the future leadership of the church to understand what it means to work towards Christian constructive engagement with Muslims as they prepare for the ministry. As a result of that, 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 Room. The students who participated in the programme were from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi, Malawi and Madagascar.

The faculty and students were taken through the principles that guide PROCMURA's operations; its theology and understanding of interfaith relations with specific focus on Christian-Muslim relations; complexities of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa, and the commitment of PROCMURA to work with Christian and Muslim communities in order to ensure that the African spirituality of live and let live is lived out while respecting our religious differences.

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 immediate outcome of the seminar which both faculty and students described as insightful and stimulating was the request that PROCMURA:

Comes up with a plan that will make such a seminar an annual academic activity for the seminarians of the Orthodox Church.

Assist the seminary to get a member of their faculty trained in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations so as to enable the subject to be taught at the seminary as part of its academic programme.

At the time of writing this report, we are pleased to acknowledge that an appeal sent out to partners on the request has received positive results. EMW through St. Paul's University has committed itself and provided funds for a member of the faculty to be enrolled for the Masters in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations offered at St. Paul's University in Limuru.

The General Adviser has held discussions with Prof. Esther Mombo of St. Paul's University and the leadership of the Orthodox Seminary. As a result of the discussions a faculty member has been enrolled and now pursues the Master's programme at St. Paul's University.

In another development, the Orthodox Seminary organised a "National Christian and Muslim Youth Conference" on countering radicalisation and violent extremism. They invited PROCMURA to be the resource organisation and to make presentations on the subject. PROCMURA's Programme Officer, Rev. Lesmore Ezekiel and Programme Assistant, Florence Iminza, facilitated the conference on behalf of the organization on 14th November 2015.



A section of participants following the proceedings of the seminar

## Ghana (14th - 18th July 2015)

The Area Adviser of PROCMURA in Ghana, Bishop Nathan Samwini teamed up with the Northern Presbytery Chairman of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule Saa, to organise a Christian leader's conference on the subject of Christian-Muslim relations for the clergy and laity of the 3 Northern regions of Ghana. The conference was sponsored with special designated funds from ICCO Cooperation and facilitated by the General Adviser Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah and the Area Adviser Bishop Nathan Samwini. In all, 97 pastors, priests and lay persons participated

*On-the-spot evaluation of the proceedings of the conference demonstrated that the impact was massive and the experience was very stimulating. Individuals and Christian organisations from the northern part of Ghana, have written letters requesting to partner with PROCMURA in the area of understanding Islam and how to relate with the Muslim communities who are overwhelming majorities in some parts of the three regions.*

### Church Leaders Conference in Ghana



*It is our hope that there would be follow-up programmes of that nature at district levels in the three regions of the north. The Area Adviser, Bishop Samwini has already made a formal request to that effect, and urged PROCMURA Central office to help raise resources for the follow-up.*

# WOMEN ISSUES

PROCMURA's Strategic Focus in its core programmes for women is based on its understanding that in Christian-Muslim relations, it is difficult from the contextual framework of many countries, for a Christian man to carry out programmes with Muslim women. Apart from this reality, there are issues of particular concern to women in Christian-Muslim relations which Christian women are more disposed to take up with Muslim women. To this end, PROCMURA has evolved programmes aimed at empowering Christian women in their quest for self-assertion towards constructive relations with Muslim women. In the reporting period, the following programmes for Christian women were carried out.





## i. Kenya (23rd - 27 February 2015)



Growing extremism and radicalisation in Kenya precipitated by the activities of Al-Shabaab made Christian-Muslim relations a prime subject for discussion at the Presbyterian Church of East Africa Woman's Guild National Leadership Conference in Mombasa from 23rd to 27th February 2015.

The General Adviser and the Programme Assistant, Florence Iminza facilitated the sessions with a focus on the role of women in Christian constructive relations with Muslims in witness and for peace in society and peaceful co-existence between the two communities.



Woman's Guild Participants in session

The women leaders were also taken through the disturbing phenomenon of radicalisation, violent extremism and religious intolerance in the East Africa sub-region and other parts of Africa, and how women have important roles to play in promoting tolerance, peace and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims.

The immediate past Moderator of PCEA, Most Rev. David Riitho Gathanju sat through the sessions. He commended the work of PROCMURA and prayed for the PROCMURA team to continue the good work. The women leaders on their part, pledged to ensure that lessons learnt from the conference are shared with other women at different levels of the church. They also pledged to invite PROCMURA to their regional programmes to share such valuable insights in Christian-Muslim relations.

## ii. Togo ( 8th - 9th June 2015)

An intensive capacity enhancement workshop was organised for 20 Christian women leaders drawn from 7 churches in the Republic of Togo on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The workshop was held at *Lauriers de l'agora Senghor*, a Catholic Centre in Lomé. It was aimed at taking the women through the growing dynamics of Christian-Muslim relations in the West Africa sub-region and what the women need to do to continue to constructively relate with their Muslim counterparts. The seminar was facilitated by the General Adviser, and Rev. Dr. Désiré Adraké, the Area Adviser of PROCMURA for Togo.



*Togo Christian women participants*

The Rev. Dr. Drake provided a critical assessment of Christian-Muslim relations in Togo and the West Africa sub-region with the aim of strengthening women's role on Christian constructive engagement with Muslims in witness and for peaceful co-existence. On his part, the General Adviser took the women through the philosophy of different radical groups in the West Africa sub-region and informed the women that PROCMURA was embarking on series of workshops and conferences for Christian and Muslim religious leaders on the subject. He intimated that Lomé will host a regional conference later in the year and urged the women to be part of it as none residential participants since only four of them will be official delegates. He hoped that such a conference will help provide grounds for proactive measures to tackle radicalisation and violent extremism. For a detailed report on this, please visit the PROCMURA website.

.... "the General Adviser took the women through the philosophy of different radical groups in the West Africa sub-region and informed the women that PROCMURA was embarking on series of workshops and conferences for Christian and Muslim religious leaders on the subject."



# Uganda

A two day workshop for Christian women leaders of churches associated with the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) was held in Namirembe Guest House in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was facilitated by Canon Joyce Kabuba, an alumnus of the St. Paul's University programme on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. The General Adviser, who was in attendance with the Programme Officer to carry out Church leaders and youth leaders workshops, took the women through PROCURA's philosophy of Christian-Muslim relations. Canon Joyce Kabuba then took the women through general issues of women in Christian-Muslim, such as interfaith marriages and its attendant challenges, Christian and Muslim women cooperation to attend to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), gender based violence (GBV) and the sensitivity needed to handle those issues.

On radicalisation and violent extremism which appear to be on the increase in the region, the General Adviser provided valuable information on the subject and explained that the extremists are the few that cause havoc on the many. He made it clear to the women that it was important for them and their Muslim counterparts to look at the issues more carefully together since both Christians and Muslims are vulnerable when violent extremism erupts.

## iii. Uganda (10th and 11th July 2015)

An evaluation carried out thereafter, called on PROCURA to come up with a programme that would bring both Christians and Muslims together to look at various issues related to women in Christian-Muslim relations especially the growing radicalisation in the region and women contribution to counter the alarming trend.



A section of Women Church Leaders Participants

# YOUTH

In Christian-Muslim relations, PROCMURA like many other organisations believe that the future belongs to the youth. PROCMURA's Strategic Focus, states clearly that 'the development of the youth for tomorrow's world begins in today's world.' It is this belief that informs PROCMURA's focus on equipping the youth on the complexity of Christian-Muslim relations with the understanding that they will grow to continue what PROCMURA has been doing in an innovative manner commensurate with the challenges of the times. As a result of this, PROCMURA carried out youth educational workshops and seminars in Togo, Uganda and Cameroon.



Youth in Cameroon Presenting on Peace

# i. Togo

Togo (9th and 10th June 2015)

As part of its commitment to equip Christian youth leaders to be abreast with emerging issues in Christian-Muslim relations, PROCMURA organised a seminar for 25 Christian youth leaders drawn from 7 churches at Lauriers de l'agora Senghor, a Catholic Centre in Lomé. The objectives of the seminar was to take the youth through what PROCMURA is and stands for, and discuss contemporary issues in Christian-Muslim relations.

PROCMURA's mission and vision were carefully explained to the youth by the General Adviser. He outlined growing radicalisation and violent extremism among youth in the region. The youth were made to understand that they need to be vigilant and not allow themselves to be influenced by the violent radical groups. The General Adviser also outlined the importance of Christian youth working alongside well-meaning Muslim youth to promote peace and positive religious tolerance that will enable them to accept and respect differences. The General Adviser emphasised that peace, tolerance, mutual respect in spite of religious differences are prerequisites for the spiritual and material development of society.

On the PROCMURA's guidelines on Christian witness in an interfaith environment of Christians and Muslims that respects the spirit of good neighbourliness, the General Adviser made them to understand that Christian witness is what it means to be Christian. He elaborated that such witness must be carried out in a manner that respects and not violates the spirit of good neighbourliness. It is about Christ and not about self. It is about how good the Christian faith is and not about how bad the Islamic faith is.

The Rev. Dr. Désiré Adraké, Area Adviser of PROCMURA for Togo took the youth through the principles of interfaith marriages between Christians and Muslims and its attendant challenges.

**25**  
Christian  
youth leaders

At the end of the seminar It was resolved that a separate meeting needs to be organised by the Area Committee to restructure the youth leadership of PROCMURA in Togo. Tentative dates were set for such a meeting to take place, and its outcome communicated to the Central Office. This was later done and the report is with the Central Office.



Equipping Christian youth leaders on emerging issues in Christian-Muslim relations

(9th July 2015)

## ii. UGANDA

At the request of the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) and in line with PROCMURA's strategic focus for the East Africa sub-region, where radicalisation and violent extremism targets the youth, PROCMURA organised a Christian youth leaders workshop at Namirembe Guest House in Kampala Uganda on 9th July to raise the capacity of the youth leaders on pertinent issues in Christian-Muslim relations.

The choice of Uganda in the East Africa region was informed by incessant appeals from the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) for PROCMURA to come over to help them work towards the reinvigoration of the Area Committee and bring on board the Christian youth who interact with Muslim youth on daily basis. The concern was on radicalisation and violent extremism which is a concern of the East Africa sub-region. The General Adviser and the Programme Officer travelled to Uganda to facilitate the conference.

The General Adviser took the youth through guidelines on Christian-Muslim relations, what PROCMURA is and stands for, interfaith marriages and their attendant challenges and issues related to radicalisation and violent extremism in the East Africa region and what the youth needs to do not to be radicalised and instead work with their Muslim counterparts to counter its impact and influence.



Awareness raising and capacity building /Enhancement workshop

(24th - 26th July 2015)

## iii. CAMEROON

## Capacity Building workshop for Christian Youth

As part of its commitment to strengthen PROCMURA's work in Cameroon which is a pioneer in PROCMURA but relapsed for many years and only got revived in 2013, the Area Committee asked PROCMURA to conduct a capacity building workshop for Christian youth leaders on the principles guiding Christian constructive engagement with Muslims and the involvement of the youth in that endeavour..

The importance of this workshop, hosted by the Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon (CPC) in their conference hall was set against the backdrop of Boko Haram violent attacks in northern Cameroon. Two days before we travelled from Nairobi to Yaoundé a lady suicide bomber blew herself up in a market square in Maroua, northern Cameroon, and killed so many innocent people. On arrival in Yaoundé another lady suicide bomber did the same in the same town, thus creating so much tension in the country. As a result of the situation, the focus of the workshop had to be adjusted to ensure that peace and countering radicalisation and violent extremism took centre stage. A special youth group advocating for peace and peaceful resolution of conflicts came in their numbers to participate in the workshop and to mount various platforms advocating for peace among people of religion and the general society. The over 30 Christian youth leaders who participated in the workshop spoke their hearts out on what needs to be done to promote peace between Christians and Muslims amidst the provocation of Boko Haram. The shout, "we want peace!" from the youth continues to resonate in our minds.



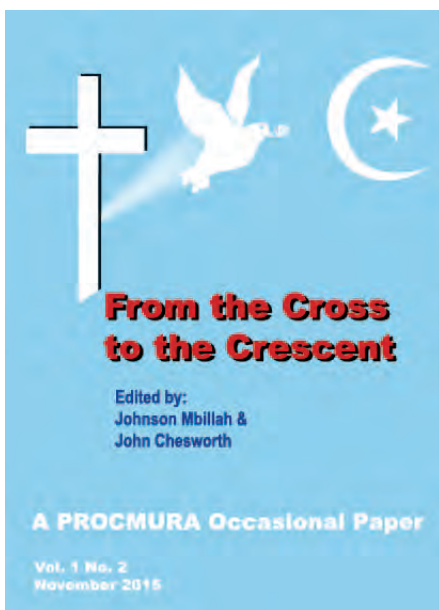
The General Adviser after taking the youth through on guidelines guiding PROCMURA's work and the role of the youth in it, turned his attention on radicalisation and violent extremism as perpetuated by Boko Haram. He took the youth through who Boko Haram is and what philosophy they operate on and made them to understand that the young are the ones susceptible to being misused to perpetuate violence. In the end the youth pledged to work with their Muslim friends to attend to violent extremism in the land. Funds for the workshop was specifically provided by the Norwegian Mission Society

## 4.1.2 Literature and Communication

### Revival of the Occasional Paper

Through the support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg, we have been able to mobilise Area Advisers and Christian scholars of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa to produce articles for publication on the PROCMURA Occasional Papers series "From the Cross to the Crescent". A workshop for the West Africa group of writers was held in Lome, Togo on 24 & 25 August 2015, to finalise the articles for publication. We are delighted that the 'occasional paper series' which has proved educational in the past is able to be published again.

In a separate development we have produced hard copies of our Strategic Plan in both English and French for our constituencies, partners and donors who would want to keep abreast with the journey that we wish to undertake in the years to come. We have, also produced a peace programme report in Swahili to promote our work in the Swahili speaking countries of East Africa, especially Tanzania.



In the reporting period we have beefed up our communication by producing promotional materials in the form of new brochures with updated information on our Mission, Vision and Core Values as well as produce role up banners that promote who we are and what we do. Plans have been put in place to come up with a separate brochure on PROCMURA's designated projects and programmes that will focus on matters related to peace.

## 4.1.3 Research and Documentation

PROCMURA's commitment to carry out research and document the findings to ensure that the organisation is abreast with relevant and important issues in Christian-Muslim relations in Africa has not yet taken off. It is the hope of PROCMURA that the outgoing General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah will give this a thought and perhaps help the organisation to document important events in its life and witness and contemporary issues on Christian-Muslim relations in Africa.

## 4.1.4 Personnel Development

PROCMURA continues to embark on the creation of resource pools around Africa to boost its personnel development and to assist the churches in their quest to have persons who are specialised in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. In the reporting period, the following students have completed their masters in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations (ICMR) at St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya.



i. **Rev. Margarate Salli Ndombo**, Presbyterian Church of Cameroon.

She successfully completed her course work and was adjudged to be one of the best students in her class. She has obtained her Master's degree. On the intimation and formal request of her church that they would want her to pursue a PhD in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations so that she may teach in one of the theological colleges of the Church in Cameroon, we contacted Mission 21 and they have agreed to sponsor her for a PhD at the Catholic University of East Africa (CUEA), Nairobi, Kenya. At the time of writing this report, we are pleased to say that she is preparing to begin the research in January 2016. The Rev. Ndombo, is currently that Acting Area Adviser of PROCMURA Cameroun.



ii. **Rev. John Shettima**, Methodist Church in Nigeria

He successfully completed his course and has obtained a master's degree in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations at St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya. He has returned to Nigeria to continue to continue as principal and lecture at the Hassan Odukale Theological College, Zankwa, Kaduna State. He has been active in assisting PROCMURA as an Associate Area Adviser for Nigeria North, and actually arranged for PROCMURA to carry out its diapraxis programme among the Boko Haram victims who are internally displaced. He was sponsored with funds from the Methodist Church in Britain.



iii. **Rev. Robert Yodam Pangani**, The Moravian Church in Tanzania.

He has successfully completed his coursework at St. Paul's University and has embarked on his research to write his dissertation. He is sponsored with funds from Mission 21.





**iv. Rev. Isa Bowman Dalatu**, The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN).

He has successfully completed his coursework at St. Paul's University and has embarked on his research to write his dissertation. He is also sponsored with funds from Mission 21.



**v. Rev. Ukoha Ngwobia Ukoha**, Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

He has successfully completed his coursework at St. Paul's University and has embarked on his research to write his dissertation. He is sponsored with funds from ICCO & Kerk in Actie.

Apart from the master's students, PROCMURA also sponsored two PHD students. The two are:



**vi. Rev. James Bol Obwonyo**, Presbyterian Church of South Sudan

He continues his PhD programme at the University Of KwaZulu-Natal South Africa. He is in his second year. His studies is progressing well. He is co-sponsored with funds from EMW and Mission 21



**vii. Margaret Makafui Tayviah**, Methodist Church, Ghana.

She is pursuing a PHD in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology under the supervision of Bishop Nathan Samwini, Area Adviser of PROCMURA for Ghana and until recently, lecturer at the University. She is in second of study.

# Reinvigoration of Area Committees

As part of its strategic direction to ensure that all Area Committees are vibrant and live up to the challenges that relations between Christians and Muslims face in Africa as a result of radicalisation and growing violent extremism to which religion has (in many ways) been implicated, PROCMURA came up with a road map to reinvigorate its Area Committees. Countries targeted for reinvigoration in the 2014/15 financial year were Ghana, Ethiopia, Togo, Uganda and the Republic of Benin.

The reinvigoration exercise will be followed by radical changes in its Regional Coordinators and Area Advisers' work. The Regional Coordinators positions will be empowered in a manner that will give them more time to do PROCMURA's work than is currently the case. Area Advisers who have served too long and become less efficient will be retired and replaced by young and more energetic Area Advisers. With this background, we now proceed to elaborate on the reinvigoration exercise in different countries.

# i. Ghana

Ghana (7th June 2015)

Following the elevation of Rev. Dr. Nathan Iddrisu Samwini to be Bishop of the northern regions of Ghana, the Area Committee of Ghana needs some restructuring. The General Adviser and the Team Leader, Finance and Administration arranged a meeting with the General Secretary of the Christian Council of Ghana Rev. Dr. Opuni Frimpong and Bishop Samwini at the Christian Council of Ghana conference room in Accra, to discuss the restructuring. The meeting was also to discuss a growing debate in Ghana on whether or not Muslim girls in Christian schools should be allowed to wear the hijab (Muslim head scarf) or rather strictly comply with the dress code of the schools that they attend. The meeting was also scheduled to enable the General Adviser to provide a briefing on growing radicalisation and violent extremism in the West Africa sub-region and what the churches need to do in collaboration with the Muslim leadership to counter it.

The General Adviser in his briefing to the General Secretary and his staff made it clear that Boko Haram's violent activities in north eastern Nigeria, northern Cameroon, Chad and Niger, and the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) activities in the greater sahel region, especially Mali was of grave concern to all. He urged the leadership of the Christian Council of Ghana to look into the issue seriously.

On his part the General Secretary briefed the General Adviser and the Team Leader, on the Council's contribution to reducing tension caused by the hijab controversy. He assured the General Adviser that the council was working closely with the Ghana Peace Council to resolve the hijab issue amicably.

After the briefings, discussions then shifted to reconstituting the Area Committee where Bishop Samwini will play a different role since his busy schedule as Bishop of northern Ghana will make it virtually impossible for him to continue to serve as Area Adviser of the country. It was agreed that the Area Committee will be reconstituted before the end of the year to reflect the current reality facing the Area Adviser so that a new Area Adviser will be appointed. At the time of writing this report the Area Committee had not yet been reconstituted and the appropriate changes made.



PROCMURA Team with some of the Christian Council of Ghana Staff

## ii. ETHIOPIA

11th to 16th October 2015

On 6 and 7 February, the General Adviser visited Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to hold discussions with the President of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church (Mekane Yesus), Rev. Dr. Wakseyoum Idosa and his senior staff about reconstituting the Area Committee of Ethiopia to make it broader and more inclusive.

The discussions were very fruitful. It was agreed that in order to broaden the outlook of the Area Committee, a national Christian religious leaders conference needed to be held later in the year for the General Adviser and his team to take participants through what PROCMURA is and stands for, and thereby reconstitute the Area Committee.

Following this preparatory meeting, the General Adviser returned to Addis Ababa from 11th to 16th October 2015 where he made personal contacts and eventually held a two day workshop that brought together over 30 Church leaders who were taken through What PROCMURA is and stands for, and guidelines for the formation of an Area Committee. PROCMURA's theological position on interfaith relations as it relates to Christian-Muslim relations was carefully expounded and a lively discussion engendered. After intensive discussions, the leaders asked for time to consult further and reconstitute a more inclusive Area Committee that will be representative of the churches in Ethiopia. True to their word a new Area Committee of 11 members has been reconstituted.

It is hoped that the zeal at which the committee was formed will ensure that its work grows from strength to strength.

## iii. TOGO

Initial discussions about the reinvigoration of the Area Committee began in June 2015 when sitting Members of the Area Committee informed the PROCMURA Central Office that a sizeable number of members of the Area Committee had assumed different positions in the Churches and were no longer active as they were rather fully engaged in their elevated positions.

After visiting Togo and holding various discussions in June, a two-day (17 and 18 July) workshop was convened by the Area Committee at the Protestant College Meeting Centre in Lome, to map out a process by which the Area Committee would be reinvigorated. The workshop was very representative as it brought together Church leaders, women and youth leaders of the churches who are conversant with PROCMURA and its work. After the Area Adviser of PROCMURA for Togo, Rev. Dr. Drake made presentations on PROCMURA and how to make its work in Togo active, the 60 participants appointed an 11 person Area Committee to preside over PROCMURA's presence in the country.

We are delighted about this move even as we hope that it will help spread PROCMURA's work in the country.



Church Leaders in Ethiopia Workshop

## iv. Uganda

7th and 8th July 2015

The Uganda Area Committee of PROCMURA has been dormant to near none existence even though the country continues to participate and patronise PROCMURA's programmes.

On the request of the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC), PROCMURA organised a two-day church leaders' workshop at Namirembe Guest House, Kampala to take them through the guidelines that govern PROCMURA's work in the different countries and PROCMURA's primary focus on Christian-Muslim relations. Other areas of concern which were carefully considered and presentations made was violent extremism which is of grave concern in the East Africa region.

The leaders extensively discussed what they need to do to ensure that PROCMURA's vision, mission and core values are spread throughout the constituencies of Catholic, Anglican and the Orthodox Church which are members of the UJCC.

At the end of the workshop, the leaders and the General Secretary of the UJCC Rev. Fr. Dr. Silvester Arinaitwe, pledged to work towards the reinvigoration of the Area Committee.



Church Leaders workshop in Uganda

## v. Benin

17th September 2015

The Area Committee of the Republic of Benin which used to be the most active committee in the Francophone West Africa sub-region when Paul Sai, one time Francophone West Africa Development Officer of PROCMURA was active, became dormant after Sai's retirement.

After several meetings on the reinvigoration of the Area Committee, a meeting was finally organised on 17th September 2015 at the Christian Guest House and Training Centre in Porto Novo, to deliberate on the reinvigoration of the Committee. At the end of the meeting a 9 person Area Committee was formed with Rev. Dr. I. Nicodème Alagbada, President of the Methodist Church in Benin as Chairperson.

There is every indication that the new Area Committee will bring PROCMURA's work in Benin back to where it was before and possibly do better.

We are delighted with this development and look forward to assisting the newly constituted Area Committee to carry PROCMURA's work forward.

## 4.1.6 Networking and Collaboration

### i. Peace For Life (PFL) (8th – 10th April 2015)

In recognition of PROCMURA's pioneering role in promoting peace within and among religions with a speciality in Christian and Muslim constructive engagements for peace and peaceful co-existence, Peace for Life (PFL) requested PROCMURA to host its working group and programme team meeting from 8th to 10th April, 2015.

PROCMURA warmly accepted the request and hosted the group at its new Meeting and Conference Centre. The meeting took place at a time that Kenya was mourning the massacre of 148 students at Garissa University in Kenya, by the militant group Al-Shabaab. PFL issued a statement condemning the killings and called on Kenyans to remain united.

The Moderator of PFL, Prof Yong-Bork Kim from South Korea and the General Secretary, Ms Omega Bula from Zambia expressed their appreciation to PROCMURA for accepting to host them in the first place and for the warm welcome and contributions that PROCMURA made towards the success of the meeting and sharing of ideas on peace. The two organisations pledged to explore ways and means by which they can work together to promote a culture of peace in Africa and in different parts of the world where PFL is active. The members of the PFL team came from six different countries, namely; Kenya, Zambia, Philippines, South Korea, Tanzania and India.



A group of Participants in the Peace for Life Programme at PROCMURA in Nairobi

## ii. Lutheran Communion in Africa

19th – 25th May 2015

The Lutheran Communion in Africa (LUCA), which is the Africa regional expression of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) held its Africa leadership consultation and 60th anniversary celebration of its formation in Africa from 19th to 25th May 2015 at Moshi, Tanzania. The event had the theme: “Marangu to Wittenberg: Being a Reforming Church in a Changing African Context” with a focus on the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation which will be celebrated in 2017.

In recognition of the expertise that PROCMURA wields when it comes to Christian-Muslim relations in Africa, the General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah and the Programme Officer, Rev Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel were invited as ecumenical guests and resource persons. The General Adviser was asked to be one of the lead persons in a panel discussion on the topic: “The Lutheran church in the context of ecumenical and interfaith encounters in the public space”, while, Rev. Ezekiel facilitated a workshop on “interfaith and intra-faith relations in Africa today and the role of the church.” Lesmore also moderated a panel discussion that focused on “Lutheran identity and renewal of the church; church sustainability and good governance; and the role of partnership in the renewal of the church in Africa”. The event brought Lutheran church leaders from all over Africa.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Area Secretary for Africa, Rev. Dr. Elieshi Mungure appreciated PROCMURA for identifying and partnering with the Lutheran communion at different levels. Similarly, the Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation for Africa and the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Rt. Rev. Dr. Alex Malasusa, who is also the Chairperson of the PROCMURA Area Committee of Tanzania, expressed deep gratitude to PROCMURA Central Office for accepting to be part of the event.



Lutheran Church Leadership Consultation, Tanzania

## 5.0 DESIGNATED PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

### 5.1 Diapraxis: Tangible Action and being in Solidarity with Others

As part of its commitment to embark on tangible action (diapraxis) that involves practical ways of Christian and Muslims working together to attend to issues that require less talking and much doing, PROCMURA embarked on two projects – one in Liberia and the other in the northern part of Nigeria. It is these projects that we turn to report on.



#### i. Liberia (January and February 2015)

##### Action on Ebola

The Area Committee of PROCMURA in Liberia Anti Ebola Task-Force for the second year running embarked on what they (along with other Liberians) call 'Evil Blinking, Over, Liberia, Again (EBOLA). With Financial support from Bread for the World and the PROCMURA Central Office, they accelerated their relentless efforts to combat the virus and provide support for its victims in January and February 2015. Led by its chairperson, Rev. Emmanuel F. Johnson, its secretary Mrs. Rebecca Tarpeh-Major and the Area Adviser, St. John York, the committee embarked on educating the general public through radio talk shows. The shows always concluded with a memory phrase that read: "Let us all join in Stopping the Spread of Ebola in Liberia, Protect ourselves and others, adhere to the Ministry of Health (MOH) preventive measures to stay alive".

In the affected areas and counties that border them, they distributed hygiene kits, electronic thermometers that help to identify the presence of the virus in a person, and other relief items. Dr. Benjamin D. Lartey, the 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 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 Imams Mohammed Jalieba stated: "Your presence, your gifts and the education you provided have revived our lost hopes."



## ii. Nigeria

(27th - 30th April 2015)

### Visiting and Providing Support for Boko Haram Victims

PROCMURA has over the years worked tirelessly with religious communities in Nigeria for peace and wellbeing of the country. Conferences and consultations are held to help strengthen systems and networks that will safeguard peace and ensure that the two main religious groups of Christians and Muslims live in peace and at peace with one another. In its determination to embark on diapraxis, and its clarion call for specific support to embark on this invaluable intervention, the Methodist Church in Britain provided us with funds to carry out what was regarded as 'a great and innovative experiment'.

Encouraged by this gesture, PROCMURA Central Office added additional funds and set in motion a planning committee headed by its Area Adviser for Nigeria North, the Venerable Joshua Mallam who is also the Regional Coordinator for Anglophone West Africa, and its newly trained Associate Area Adviser for Nigeria north, the Very Rev. John Shettima. Preliminary visits to affected areas and to the internally displaced persons were carried out by John Shettima. He informed them of our intended visits to interact with them.

When all was set, the General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah and the Programme Officer, Rev. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel travelled to Kaduna and together with the Venerable Mallam and the Very Rev. Shettima visited the Internally Displaced Camps at Zankwo in Kaduna State, Dikko in Niger State, Kuje-Pegi in FCT Abuja, and Loko in Nasarawa State. Notably, all the victims we met came from the three States most affected by Boko Haram's violent extremism, namely: Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. The internally displaced persons (IDPs) we met shared their painful stories of loss of families, and destructions of homes, while others showed us their wounds when they narrowly escaped death. Their were lamentations about the kidnapping of the Chibok school girls and many more who no one knows their whereabouts.



General Adviser (middle in white) in solidarity with IDPs

The General Adviser on behalf of PROCMURA presented relief items and monetary support to the victims and their households. He commended them for living in support of one another as Christians and Muslims sharing the same fate of Boko Haram's violence. He encouraged them to continue to support one another and assured them that PROCMURA will continue to accompany them at "this difficult period of their lives".

The IDPs through their spokesperson's thanked PROCMURA for remembering them practically and supporting their material needs as well as providing encouragement and prayer.

## 5.2 Focus on Conflict Prevention, Peace and Countering Radicalisation

The situation of Christian-Muslim in Africa as outlined earlier in this report calls for a concerted effort on conflict prevention, peace and reconciliation as well countering radicalization and violent extremism.

In the year under review, PROCMURA had a strong focus on these but could not raise more resources to do more. In reporting this aspect of our work, we propose to summarise what we have been able to do since more detailed reports were sent to partners earlier, and can also be found in the PROCMURA website. We also standby to send such reports to partners and friends who may want to read them.



Participants at the Garoua Conference

### 5.2.1 Cameroon (27th to 31st July 2015)

As a result of the increase of violent extremism perpetuated by Boko Haram in northern Cameroon and Chad, coupled with the activities of Seleka and Anti-Balaka in the Central African Republic, PROCMURA decided to organise a national conference of Christian and Muslim religious leaders of Cameroon with participants from Chad and the Central African Republic to attend to the various situations. The decision was informed by various recommendations from participants who attended similar conferences organised by PROCMURA, and recognised the impact of such conferences on Christian and Muslim joint action to counter radicalisation and violent extremism.

The Area Committee of PROCMURA in Cameroon under the chairmanship of the Very Rev. Robert Goyek, who is also the President of the Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon (CPCC) and the President of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren of Cameroon (CBLC) took charge of the on-the-ground preparations. The conference took place at Bénoué Hotel, Garoua, northern Cameroon, from 27th to 31st July 2015. In all 57 participants made up of Christian and Muslim religious leaders, government officials, security

forces and representatives of civil society organizations participated. The media was present to cover the proceedings of the Conference. Dramatic events of suicide bombings before and during the conference, and a more detailed reportage was sent to the partners immediately after the conference. For those who may not have received such reports, please visit PROCMURA website at [www.procmura-prica.org](http://www.procmura-prica.org) and look for the subject "Garoua Briefing" or otherwise write to us and ask us to send it to you.

The topics that the conference deliberated extensively on and which the General Adviser took participants through and allowed extensive plenary and group discussions on included:

- i. Why radicalization and violent extremism are on the rise in Africa.
- ii. Identifying tendencies of growing extremism in Cameroon, Chad and some parts of Africa which religion is implicated.
- iii. The understanding of religious leaders on the phenomenon of violent extremism and what can be done to curb it.
- iv. Acknowledging the complexity in conflict prevention and what needs to be done about it.
- v. What religious leaders can and should do to limit the spread of radicalisation and violent extremism and eventually eradicate it.

A communiqué issued after the conference called on the government of Cameroon, Chad, the Central African Republic, the African union among others to do all that they can to neutralise all actions that sow seeds of insecurity and violent extremism and restore peace and security. For a detailed version of the communiqué, please also visit PROCMURA's website and read the "Garoua communiqué". Resolutions and commitments to ensure that the Garoua conference proceedings and decisions have a multiplying effect were taken. Partners who would want to support those resolutions and assist the Area Committee to carry them out are welcome to do so.

## 5.2.2 Togo

### 24th – 28th August 2015

The West Africa sub region, arguable is the place where radicalisation and violent extremism is more widespread than other regions in sub-Saharan Africa. For example in the region, we have Boko Haram, Ansar al-din, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and more recently an emerging new group called MOJWA “Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa”.

As a result of this growing extremism, PROCMURA decided to bring together Christian and Muslim religious leaders from Nigeria, Ghana, the Republic of Benin, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the host country Togo for a consultation on how to approach the growing violent extremism in the region. This move constituted the first phase of PROCMURA’s planned action in the region. The second phase is planned to take place in Burkina Faso that will bring together Christian and Muslim religious leaders from Mali, Cote d’Ivoire, Senegal, Niger and the Republic of Guinea.

In the Togo consultation, participants were taken through the identity and focus of violent extremist group, their agenda and what the religious leader, governments, civil society and the media need to do to curb the influence of these groups on the youth.

On reasoning together, the religious leaders came up with a road map on how to work together in the different countries represented to provide education on de-radicalisation of the minds of those who have already been radicalised and take measures to prevent further radicalisation of some religious leaders and the youth.

The evidence that radicalisation is real, donned on participants a new when news came out that a university graduate from Ghana had left the country to join ISIS.

For a detailed report on the Togo conference, we refer Partners and our constituencies to the PROCMURA website where the “Lome briefing” is available for reading. A resolution by the Christian and Muslim religious leaders calling on governments, civil society and religious leaders to join hands working together to deal with the threat of violent extremism was issued. This can also be found on the PROCMURA website under the heading “Lome Communiqué”.



A section of participants in session

# CONCLUSION

We have in our review of PROCMURA's work in 2015 provided you our partners and friends, and those who care for the wellbeing of PROCMURA a gist of our activities for the year. We realise as usual, that there's more to say and to write about but believe that what we have written is sufficient for your understanding of PROCMURA and its focus.

It is our prayer that God will continue to guard and guide us in this ministry which is difficult but a necessary one for us to do in fulfilment of our vocation.

**PRESENTED BY**

**Johnson Mbillah  
General Adviser**