

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



# BANGUI REPORT



**CAPACITY BUILDING CONFERENCE / WORKSHOP FOR CHRISTIAN  
AND MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS ON CONFLICT PREVENTION  
AND PEACE BUILDING AS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR DEVELOPMENT**

BANGUI, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC  
JM RESIDENCE HOTEL,  
25TH-26TH JULY 2013

<http://www.procamura-prica.org>



# Contents

<i>Abbreviations</i> .....	<i>iv</i>
<i>Acknowledgement</i> .....	<i>v</i>
<i>Introduction</i> .....	<i>vii</i>
<i>Objectives</i> .....	<i>ix</i>
<i>Expected Results</i> .....	<i>x</i>
<b>1.0 PREPARATIONS</b> .....	<b>1</b>
i. <b>PROCMURA DELEGATION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
ii. <b>THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
iii. <b>MEETINGS AND COURTESY VISITS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.0 THE CONFERENCE / WORKSHOP</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>DAY 1: Thursday, 25th July 2013</b> .....	<b>3</b>
i. <b>OPENING CEREMONY</b> .....	<b>3</b>
ii. <b>SET UP OF PRAESIDIUM</b> .....	<b>6</b>
iii. <b>PROGRESS OF WORK</b> .....	<b>7</b>
iv. <b>PLENARY PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
a. <b>First Submission: Catholic</b> .....	<b>8</b>
b. <b>Second Submission: Protestant</b> .....	<b>8</b>
c. <b>Third Submission: Muslim</b> .....	<b>9</b>
d. <b>Exchanges and debates</b> .....	<b>9</b>



<b>DAY 2: Friday, 26th July 2013.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>a. Fourth Submission.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>i. GROUP REPORTING.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>GROUP I.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>GROUP II.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>GROUP III.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>GROUP IV.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ii. ADOPTION OF THE FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>3.0 PERSPECTIVES AND CLOSING.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>i. CLOSING CEREMONY.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>ii. OUTCOMES.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>iii. OUTLOOK.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.0 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>i. BANGUI COMMUNIQUE.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>ii. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>iii. PHOTO GALLERY.....</b>	<b>26</b>

## Abbreviations

<b>AEC</b>	Alliance des Evangéliques en Centrafrique <i>Alliance of Evangelicals in Central African Republic</i>
<b>ANEB</b>	Association Nationale des Eglises Baptistes <i>National Association of Baptist Churches</i>
<b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
<b>CICA</b>	Communauté Islamique Centrafricaine <i>Islamic Community in Central African Republic</i>
<b>EPCR</b>	Eglise Protestante Christ-Roi de Centrafrique <i>Protestant Church of Christ the King in Central African Republic</i>
<b>PROCURA</b>	Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa
<b>RCA</b>	République Centrafricaine <i>Central African Republic</i>
<b>RFCE-RCA</b>	Réseau Foi, Culture et Education - Centrafrique <i>Faith, Culture and Education Network - Central African Republic</i>
<b>RFCMP</b>	Réseau des Femmes Croyantes Médiatrices de la Paix <i>Peace Mediators Network for Women's Believers</i>

## Acknowledgement

When it comes to matters of working for peace and peaceful coexistence, PROCMURA has always said that no one can do it alone. We always have to do it with others. This is not different from our capacity building conference/workshop for Muslim and Christian religious leaders on conflict prevention and peace building as a pre-requisite for development which we carried out in the Central African Republic.

We would in this direction like to acknowledge the contribution of Bread for the World which provided us with the financial means to carry out the entire activities that took place in the country as well as the conference itself. In this particular instance, it is worth mentioning that Dr. Hans Spitzeck who is in charge of Bread for the World relations with PROCMURA has been a true friend who understood the challenges that we had to go through and was patient with us when we mapped out the way forward.

We would also like to thank Réseau Foi, Culture et Education and Dr. Boris Yakoubou, the Permanent Secretary of the organisation who did the planning and organisation on our behalf.

It is important for us to make it clear that the Christian and Muslim leaders of that country who appreciate PROCMURA's efforts in working for peace between Christians and Muslims deserve our utmost gratitude. Their goodwill in making what the General Advisers calls "A Macedonian call for Help" encouraged us to take a bold step to move into a country that has been unstable for some time now.

As we acknowledge the religious leaders, so also do we acknowledge the goodwill of the politicians who accepted to meet the General Adviser for him to put forward a strong message for peace in the country. Please refer to the PROCMURA briefing on his visit to the Central African Republic.

The PROCMURA family at the Central Office need to be acknowledged as we

carefully discussed the risk factor of going to the Central African Republic at this time and agreed that it was a risk worth taking.

In all these, the ultimate acknowledgement is to God who has entrusted to us in PROCMURA the ministry of peace and reconciliation.

**Joy Wandabwa**

**Team Leader - Finance and Administration**



## Introduction

Two years ago, PROCMURA evaluated the African continent in terms of Christian and Muslim cooperation and collaboration towards conflict prevention and the promotion of peace for development. We came to the conclusion that if our activities have to cover the entire continent of Africa, then we would have to evolve a programme that would focus on the Francophone region of Central Africa and the Francophone region of West Africa.

Our resolve was informed by a growing concern of emerging conflicts in Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. We were aware that the situation in Nigeria in the wave of “Boko Haram” activities coupled with reprisal violent attacks could spread to neighbouring countries such as Chad, Cameroon and the Republic of Benin all of which are French speaking countries sharing borders with Nigeria.

This evaluative thinking enabled PROCMURA to bring together Christian and Muslim religious leaders from twelve countries of Central and West Africa Francophone countries to Maroua in northern Cameroon in January 2013 for a conference on peace and development and to map out what programmes PROCMURA needs to organise in the various countries to promote this agenda of Muslim and Christian religious conference. It was this conference that produced the road map for PROCMURA's activities in countries of the two regions of which the Central African Republic was prime.

It was prime because conflict was already rife in that country and the Christian and Muslim religious leaders deemed it appropriate to send a message to the political leaders of that country to work for peace and avoid the outright violent conflict. We hardly concluded our plans for a peace conference in that country when war broke out and the government of François Bozizé was replaced by what was then known as the Seleka rebels now rulers of the country.

This report serialises the process by which PROCMURA intervened in that country by organising a Christian and Muslim religious leaders' conference and provide in some detail the proceedings and outcomes of the conference.

We urge our readers, who are able to go through the report and accompany us in whatever way possible to ensure that the seed of peace that we have sown blossoms to the glory of God and to the benefit of the people of the Central African Republic.

**Johnson Mbillah**  
**General Adviser**



## Objectives

The objectives of the conference were as follows:

- To provide a platform for Christian and Muslim religious leaders to discuss the reality of the situation in the country in order to unleash the potential of religion as a unifying factor.
- To enable participants reflect on the value of Christian and Muslim peaceful coexistence as a precondition for peace in the country.
- To develop good working relationships between Christians and Muslims in order to facilitate the dissemination of constructive information on the role of religious leaders for the development of society.
- To affirm the commitment of Christian and Muslim leaders in the country's development.
- To help participants seriously consider the damage that can be caused by religious extremists who would use or misuse religion to foment violence and thus stifle both the material and spiritual development of the country.
- To create a spirit of understanding religious differences and agree to live with such differences in peace.
- To witness that religious faith is not an obstacle to development, but an ally, by examining critically the ways in which religious leaders can work to prevent violent conflict and galvanize efforts towards peace and peaceful coexistence in society.
- To work for a better understanding of pro-life or livelihood concept so as to support the quest for peace and development, a necessary model that will dispel "negative solidarity" where people of faith are in solidarity with their brothers at any price, to the extent of being "accomplices".
- To focus on positive relationships between Christians and Muslims in all aspects of human existence and to emphasize that dialogue as conversation between Christians and Muslims on various aspects of life is real value in diapraxis –tangible action.

## Expected Results

1. To strengthen collaboration with PROCMURA with the peoples of Central African Republic
2. To see the revival of peace and development for African Christians and Muslims
3. To make presentations and hold discussions which will be guided by the overall objectives of the conference in the prevention of conflict and the promotion of peace and development and thus stimulate the thinking beyond the conference.
4. To publish memoirs and proceedings of the conference.
5. To ensure that the conference offers new opportunities in many areas of PROCMURA and thus expand its network in Africa and beyond.
6. To ensure that the impact of the conference has a multiplier effect across the country.
7. To provide platforms for Christians and Muslims to talk about peace, to live in peace, and advocate for the prevention of conflicts across the country.

## 1.0 PREPARATIONS

### i. PROCMURA DELEGATION

The Delegation from the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) arrived in Bangui on the night of July 21st, 2013 and received a warm welcome at the Bangui M'Poko airport by Dr. Boris Yakoubou, the Permanent Secretary of Faith Culture and Education Network (RFCE) and driven to the JM Residence Hotel where they spent their entire stay in Bangui.

They returned to Nairobi on Monday, July 29th, 2013. The delegation was made up of:

- Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, General Adviser
- Mr. Paul Mwalavu, Bilingual Assistant

### ii. THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The organising committee of the conference was composed of four (4) members of the Coordination Office of RFCE-RCA which included; Mr. Justin Patrick Oudafo; National Coordinator, Aimé Elian Batanga; Deputy Coordinator, Alain Wagaza; General Secretary and Herbert Samba-Tolo; Deputy in Charge of Communication. This committee was chaired by Dr. Boris Modeste Yakoubou; the Permanent Secretary of the RFCE-RCA.

This office worked closely with the PROCMURA team during preparations until the end of the conference. Also noteworthy was the availability of three religious leaders; Catholic, Protestant and Muslim, who proved their commitment to peace on behalf of their respective communities. Indeed, they were always present at the preparatory meetings, gave their opinion for setting the agenda of the conference and did not hesitate to meet the PROCMURA delegation and Permanent Secretary of RFCE-RCA.

### iii. MEETINGS AND COURTESY VISITS

Before and during the conference, Dr. Mbillah and his assistant Paul Mwalavu accompanied by Dr. Yakoubou, Permanent Secretary of the RFCE were received warmly by the three religious leaders; Protestant, Catholic and Muslim. The purpose of these visits was first to meet the religious leaders so as to listen, learn and share ideas that will give insight during the conference. H.E Nicolas Tiangaye; The Prime Minister and Head of the Transitional Government and Aristide Sokambi; The Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization also warmly granted courtesy hearings to the PROCMURA delegation.

On both visits, the PROCMURA delegation was accompanied by the Permanent Secretary of RFCE.

The purpose of these visits was to formally introduce PROCMURA and its activities to the Head of the Department of Religion and the Head of Government. During the meetings, PROCMURA reminded the authorities of the urgency in preventing conflict and the danger that good relations between Christians and Muslims are faced with and the risk of an interfaith conflict with adverse consequences in the country. Finally, it was the turn of political authorities to give information on what the government is doing to restore peace and security in the Central African Republic.

During the visit to the Prime Minister, the three religious leaders who were present at the meeting include; Archbishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga; The Archbishop of Bangui, Imam Oumar Kobine Layama; The President of the Islamic Community in Central Africa Republic (CICA) and Pastor Nicolas Guerékoyame Gbangou; President of the Alliance of Evangelicals in Central African Republic (AEC).

## 2.0 THE CONFERENCE / WORKSHOP

### DAY 1: Thursday, 25th July 2013)

#### i. OPENING CEREMONY



Hon. Joel Parefa, Representative of the Minister for Territorial Administration and Decentralisation as he officially opens the religious leaders' conference

After prayers by a Christian and a Muslim, four addresses marked the official opening of the conference.

The conference began with a word of welcome by Dr. Boris Yakoubou the Permanent Secretary of Faith, Culture and Education Network (RFCE-RCA) to officials and participants present. During the address, he recalled the challenges that religious denominations are faced with, including the relations between Christian and Muslim in the Central African Republic.

He emphasized on the importance of the theme of the conference and the urgent context of the crisis in the Central African Republic and the challenge that the various religious groups are faced with, therefore making such a conference / workshop as timely.

Dr. Yakoubou thanked PROCMURA for making the long journey to Bangui for the second time and for its multifaceted support in the effort to prevent conflict and promote peace building in the CAR. He closed his remarks by inviting all participants and encouraging them to leave the conference with good lessons that will help restore peace in the Central African Republic.



Dr. Boris Yakoubou formally makes a brief on the religious leaders' conference and welcomes participants





Pastor Nicolas Guerékoyame-Gbangou stressing a point during the meeting

The President of the Alliance of Evangelicals in Central African Republic (AEC), Pastor Nicolas Guerékoyame Gbangou, was chosen by his fellow religious leaders to speak on behalf of all religious confessions; Catholics, Protestants and Muslims. During his speech, he focused on the politico-military crisis in CAR which has seen the arrest of several leaders

of different faiths. Pastor Guerékoyamé informed participants that several meetings were held during and after the coup d'état and thanks to this, the threat of Christian-Muslim conflict was averted.

He reiterated that the PROCMURA initiative had tremendously reinforced the efforts already undertaken by the various faith communities. In closing remarks, he called upon PROCMURA to continue with their support even after the conference so as to contribute to development of peace and reconciliation reminding participants that “the country is in the hands of God”.

On his part, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, the General Adviser of the Programme for Muslim-Christian Relations in Africa (PROCMURA), extended his gratitude to the authorities for allowing the holding of the conference and the Faith, Culture and Education Network for the collaboration and notably Dr. Boris Yakoubou for his efforts and working tirelessly in bringing together religious leaders, men and women, Christians and Muslims of the Central African Republic. Also, he thanked participants for sparing their time to attend the meeting and offering their valuable input on the quest for peaceful coexistence and development.

Dr. Mbillah stressed that his presence in Bangui was part of the framework



Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah (right), PROCMURA General Adviser, addressing participants and presenting the Conference Rationale

of PROCMURA activities He informed participants that the organisation has been in existence since 1959 and the reason for its emergence at a time when most African countries were clamouring for independence. It was recognised already in independent Africa, that there was the coexistence of Christians, Muslims and practitioners of traditional religions. And all these entities must live in peace. And if they are not at peace, Africa will not be at peace. He informed participants that PROCMURA is operational within thirty (30) countries and now in the Central African Republic.

Before his arrival in the Central African Republic, Rev. Dr. Mbillah said that the information he received was alarming and it was unthinkable to see all the different religious groups together in discussions. “The various meetings we have had with religious leaders were encouraging insofar as they were unanimous in peace and the question that arises is whether all participants are in this spirit” he said. That’s why I came to meet you, maintain and to realize that we are African Christians, African Muslims and that we are Central African Christians and Central African Muslims and if we work together, we will achieve peace, reconciliation, justice and development.



The last speech was made by the representative of the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization. After the apologies of the Minister, he focused on the problem of unity in the Central African Republic saying that the unity of the Central African people is one of the key issues that has always driven the country forward and that the Sango language is understood as the cement, the base, the foundation of this unity.

With regard to religion, the foundation of faith in one God and love of one's neighbour, require the quest for peace and the genuine peace with everyone. "Peace is not a word but a behaviour that must be proved daily, Peace comes from God and faiths must be grown in all areas especially as the Central African Republic is a secular country. To do this, Christians and Muslims must maintain a loving relationship and social cohesion" he reiterated. The representative of the government, remained optimistic and was convinced by the efforts of religious groups in the CAR to bring peace and assured participants that the government will spare no effort to bring its support to this work. With that, he officially open religious leaders' conference.

## ii. SET UP OF PRAESIDIUM

On resumption, the conference communication team was set up. It is was composed of the following:

**Chair:** Mr. Ismaïl Bezo (Islamic Community)

**Vice-President:** Father Cédric Kongbo-Gbassinga (Catholic)

**Rapporteur:** Dr. Enoch Tompte-Tom (Protestant)

**Associate rapporteur :** Sister Sophie Edith Kamandji (Catholic)

### iii. PROGRESS OF WORK

After the establishment of the Presidium, the General Adviser of PROCMURA presented in plenary the conference rationale.

Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah began by presenting the historical situations that can cause conflict and how to promote peace and development. He highlighted the role of religious leaders as agents of peace. He also spoke of peace between religions as a prerequisite for religious leaders to promote peace in society. He emphasized on four main challenges relating to peace and peaceful coexistence. These he highlighted as negative religious expansionist policies, politicisation of religion, negative solidarity and the challenge of translation good precepts of religion into good practice in everyday life.

He ended his presentation with emphasis on the principle of peace by example and concluded on this note: “At the end of this insight, the crucial question that we must ask ourselves is whether peace and peaceful coexistence which are very important values in the two communities are being put into practice”.



Participants in session

#### iv. **PLENARY PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In the second plenary session, three papers were presented by the various religious denominations on the theme: “The involvement of religion in the current crisis in the Central African Republic. Challenges and opportunities for religious leaders as agents of peace and reconciliation.”

##### a. **First Submission: Catholic**



Father Dieu-Béni Mbanga

On the Catholic side, Father Dieu-Béni Mbanga, Chancellor in the Archdiocese of Bangui was the first to make his submission. He started with a focus on the theme of the conference and especially the involving concept in his approach on preliminaries. Thereafter, he spoke of commitment of the Catholic Church according to the Pauline affirmation in 1 Corinthians 12.26 in regard to Central African Republic crisis. This commitment is at all levels of the hierarchical structure alongside those who live in the countryside. Recalling the various messages from bishops, he noted that the bishops did not hesitate to condemn all abuses. He ended his presentation by highlighting challenges and suggestions.

##### b. **Second Submission: Protestant**



Pastor Anatole Banga

Speaking on behalf of Protestant Christians, Pastor Anatole Banga started with the definition of “religion” concept highlighting on the role of religions in times of crisis on the international and country level.

For the pastor, crises are inevitable and can be opportunities if properly exploited and religious leaders are catalysts, and by their actions, they can induce a

climate of tolerance and mutual understanding. Pastor Banga concluded by highlighting the issues and challenges at all levels: political, economic, financial, cultural and existential, psychological, spiritual and relational. Similarly, he raised some perspectives and concluded his submission by quoting Paul Ricoeur.

### **c. Third Submission: Muslim**



The last speaker was His Eminence Imam Oumar Kobine Layama, President of the Islamic Community in the Central African Republic. He began his submission by explaining to the audience, the role that the Muslim Community played during this crisis in the Central African Republic. The community role has been and still is to denounce any political talk against the Christian and Muslim communities. Imam Kobine said that the Muslim community has always called for tolerance during the events and Imams every Friday preached on the role that Muslims are called to play in peace-building.

Subsequently, he said that the relationship between Muslims and Christians is primarily a relationship of citizen to citizen because both experience the same events and work together to serve the same cause reminding participants that the relationship between Muslims and Christians is a relationship between believers in God. Faith in God, the imam emphasised is the foundation of the relationship of citizens in a country. Quran 2.62.

### **d. Exchanges and Debates**

After the break, a session for discussions and exchanges on three (3) presentations followed.



These discussions were very fruitful and saw the input of each participant.

However burning topics such as the question of marriage between Christians and Muslims and the problems on the prohibition of rearing of pigs. Dr. Mbillah took the floor to caution against a deviation on the focus of the conference. He however asked the Christian and Muslim leaders to look into the rearing of pigs' issue which could be potential for conflict. The leaders promised to discuss it.

Afterwards, he gave direction to the formation and distribution of groups for discussions. Three groups were formed to discuss the following:

1. Identify the problems / challenges hindering peace in Central African Republic and propose solutions to these challenges.
2. Discuss the ups and downs of Muslim-Christian relations in the Central African Republic and what should the Christian and Muslim leaders do to prevent conflict and promote peaceful coexistence and reconciliation.
3. Resolutions: What's next after the conference / workshop? What are the serious resolutions to be taken so that there is a consensus on a final communiqué?

At 17:30, the first day ended and was closed with the prayer by a pastor and an imam.

## DAY 2: Friday, 26th July 2013

The day began with a prayer by a priest and an imam. Before the fourth communication, deputy rapporteur summarised the activities of Thursday, July 25th.

### a. *Fourth Submission*



Dr. Boris Modeste Yakoubou; Permanent Secretary of RFCE-RCA making his presentation

Dr. Boris Modeste Yakoubou, Representative of RFCE-RCA made a presentation on “strategies for the consolidation and promotion of peace for development.”

In his introduction, he focused on Article 8 of the Constitution of the Central African Republic which guarantees freedom of religion and prohibits any form of religious fundamentalism and intolerance. Thus making the Central African Republic a secular state.

In presenting the statistics of religions in Central African Republic, it reached a rate of 95 % all religions, combined. This allowed him to say that the country is religious, and all these groups live peacefully.

But the question raised was: what strategies are in place to consolidate

Christian-Muslim relations to promote peace and development of our country? To this, the need for holding numerous sensitisation meetings for faith communities, encouraging and promoting citizenship education, the organization of joint activities, mobilizing believers, having a common stance against some political social injustices, promoting the defence of the dignity of the human person in accordance with the values of justice, truth, freedom and love, the creation and development of synergies, dynamic networks across the country between religious leaders.

In conclusion, he urged religious groups to promote peace and development. Exchanges, debates and contributions that followed the presentation helped to further enrich this topic.

## **i. GROUP REPORTING**

After the break, the groups presented in plenary the results of their work.

### **GROUP I**

#### **Question 1:**

*Identify the problems / challenges hindering peace in the Central African Republic and propose solutions to these challenges.*

#### **Answers:**

The challenges are multifaceted and their solutions can be categorised as political, social, cultural and economic.

#### **Political:**

##### *Challenges:*

- Lack of state authority, with the result of tribalism injustice and impunity;
- Power for selfish interests;



- No renewal of contracts for officers and employees of the State and administration.

### ***Solutions:***

- Promoting skills and equity as criteria for employment
- Respect for the pensionable age;
- Avoid monotony and discrimination in appointments;
- Education of youth in political parties in order to prepare the next generation for governance.

### **Social:**

#### *Challenges:*

- Social Injustice = health and justice,
- Bad education system,
- Phenomenon of street children,
- Juvenile Delinquency.

### ***Solutions***

- Respect for human rights,
- Civic education and promotion of civic values
- Revitalization of support structures for the vulnerable in society.

### **Cultural:**

#### *Challenges*

- Depravity of morals,
- Loss of moral direction,
- Lack of nationalism and patriotism,
- Culture of violence.

### ***Solutions***

- Education in patriotic and nationalistic sense,
- Promotion of education through art and culture,
- Punishment for crimes and violence.

## **Economic:**

### *Challenges*

- Misappropriation of public funds
- Corruption

## **Solutions**

- Setting up a control and monitoring of state assets.
- Application of the law to punish any perpetrator of corruption.

## **Question 2:**

*Discuss the ups and downs of Muslim-Christian relations in the Central African Republic and what should the Christian and Muslim leaders should do to prevent conflict and promote peaceful coexistence and reconciliation.*

### Highs:

- Peaceful Coexistence,
- Sharing of certain cultural and linguistic values and same nationality

### Lows:

- Disregard for others
- Difficult interpersonal relations,
- Prejudice,
- Intolerance
- Exogamy

### Leaders must promote:

- Respect for the choice of state of life of every citizen,
- Respect the religious beliefs of each communities without confusion between Islam and Christianity, without distinction and discrimination

**Question 3:**

*Resolutions: What's next after the conference / workshop? What are the serious resolutions to be taken so that there is a consensus on a final communiqué?*

**Answer:**

We have three strong resolutions:

- The replication of the workshop by the seminarians in their respective religious denomination.
- The establishment of a monitoring committee.
- The creation of funds to subsidize and sustain this exchange and dialogue.

**GROUP II****Question 1:**

*Identify the problems / challenges hindering peace in the Central African Republic and propose solutions to these challenges.*

- Nepotism
- Lack of love
- Lack of collaboration between different faiths
- Hypocrisy
- Lack of peaceful communication between religions
- Lack of disclosure of the facts by some religions
- Intolerance
- Impunity creates a spirit of vengeance
- The politicisation of religion
- Selfishness based on individualism
- Lack of peaceful coexistence between neighbours

- Inter-denominational division
- Poor administrative structures and infrastructure in some parts in the countryside
- Free movement of persons and goods
- Lack of social dialogue
- Indiscipline in the armed groups
- Not keeping promises
- No respect for the Constitution and the recommendations of certain agreements
- No respect for human rights and growing culture of impunity
- Marginalization of ethnic minorities that creates frustration and encourage violence
- Lack of civic education

## Proposals

- Encourage Christian and Muslim prayers for peace
- Educate and promote the culture of peace and non-violence
- Avoid behaviours and discriminatory remarks against different faiths communities
- Rehabilitation and creation of road and administrative infrastructure in some parts of the countryside
- Prevent all forms of discrimination
- Re-appropriation of our positive cultural values
- Respect for the individual rights, for example: justice for all
- Awareness on free conscience to vote for responsible leaders
- Reorganization of defence forces and national security
- Introduction of religion to other faiths

## **Question 2:**

*Discuss the ups and downs of Muslim-Christian relations in the Central African Republic and what should the Christian and Muslim leaders do to prevent conflict and promote peaceful coexistence and reconciliation.*

### **Strengths**

- Sango 'the local language'
- Attendance in same schools and university
- Area of cultural, economic and social exchanges; example : RFC

### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of appreciation cultural and religious values of the other
- No reciprocity in marriages where Muslim men are allowed to marry Christian women, and Christian men are not allowed to marry Muslim women.

### **Prevention**

- Good direction from religious leaders to their followers
- Work together to prevent the politicisation of religion

### **Suggestions**

- Media coverage of reports and platforms in various Christian and Muslim media stations
- Place particular emphasis on young people who are often the first victims in the event of conflict

## **GROUP III**

### **Question 1:**

*Identify the problems / challenges hindering peace in the Central African Republic and propose solutions to these challenges.*

### **Problems**

- The proliferation of arms
- Poor governance
- Corruption
- Poverty
- Illiteracy
- Social Exclusion
- The lack of dialogue

### **Solutions**

- Regulations and implementation of the harmonized adapted law
- Awareness of the general interest and the account taken of citizenship
- Cultivate honesty and integrity
- Equitable redistribution of resources
- Promotion of a culture peace
- Education
- Reforming the education system and make planning for future
- Give inclusive integration policy
- Increased awareness
- Promote a dialogue policy

## **GROUP IV**

### **Question 1:**

*Identify the problems / challenges hindering peace in the Central African Republic and propose solutions to these challenges.*

#### **Problems**

- Ignorance
- Prejudice
- Lack of regular interfaith meetings

#### **Solutions**

- Establishment of a platform for dialogue
- Establishment of network for women believers
- Respect for the principles guiding a secular state
- Religious leaders must ensure compliance of the separation of political power from religious leadership
- More open youth believing
- The promotion of joint activities
- Cultural exchanges
- The promotion of education and culture against impunity

### **Question 3:**

*Resolutions: What's next after the conference / workshop? What are the serious resolutions to be taken so that there is a consensus on a final communiqué?*

#### **Answers**

- Taking into account the resolutions by religious leaders and sensitisation
- The establishment of a follow-up committee



## ii. ADOPTION OF THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE

After lunch, the final communiqué was adopted [see Appendix].

### 3.0 PERSPECTIVES AND CLOSING

#### i. CLOSING CEREMONY

The reading of the final report of the joint statement was done by Dr. Tompte Tom, the main rapporteur of the conference. This reading was followed by the reading of three (3) motions of gratitude addressed to religious leaders, PROCMURA and the Central Government.

Three speeches were made: First, by the Representative of the Catholic religious leaders, Protestant and Muslim, then by Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah for PROCMURA and finally by Hon. Joel Parefa; The Representative of the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization. A group photo was taken followed by a cocktail which marked the official closing of the conference / workshop.

#### ii. OUTCOMES

- The establishment of a platform composed of Christian and Muslim religious leaders to discuss the problems facing the country in order to unleash the potential of religion as a source of unity for people.
- The participants reflected on the value of Christians and Muslims, peaceful coexistence as a precondition for peace in the country.
- Christian and Muslim leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the development of the country and its regions.
- Participants exchanged on the damage that can be caused by religious extremists who would use or abuse religion for political purposes.
- A spirit of understanding religious differences and commitment to live

with such differences in peace was nurtured.

- Participants worked for a better understanding of the concept of pro-life or subsistence to support the quest for peace and development, a model is needed to dispel “negative solidarity” where people of faith are in solidarity with their brothers at any price to the extent of being “accomplices”.
- The focus was on constructive relations between Christians and Muslims in all aspects of human existence and that building relations, dialogue and conversation between Christians and Muslims on various aspects of life is real value. Real action together was formed.
- PROCMURA and cooperation with the peoples of Central Africa, particularly with the Central African Republic for peace and development was thorough.
- Reflections and courses of action beyond the conference room were stimulated and initiated.
- New prospects with PROCMURA in many areas have been explored.

### iii. **OUTLOOK**

Avenues were explored by participants during the workshop activities which include among others:

- Meetings of young Christians and Muslims
- Meetings of Christian and Muslim women
- The awareness programs in radio room and other means of broadcasts information.

These meetings will take place around specific activities that will discuss the challenges of participation targeted as key actors for peace and development groups. The RFCE-RCA is responsible for maintaining contact with PROCMURA and between different faith communities, and propose an agenda for short-term monitoring and evaluation of the ideas developed in the workshops of the conference.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The RFCE-RCA wished to thank all those who have contributed their knowledge and expertise to the successful holding of the conference / workshop. It is hoped that there will be a multiplier effect of the results to permanently save the risk of interreligious conflict in Central African Republic. That religions continue to play the role of peacemaker in the politico-military crisis that shook the Central African Republic.

PROCMURA is highly appreciated for its commitment to working for peace and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in all Africa and for coming to the Central African Republic to meet religious and political leaders at this time of need. It is praised for making the conference possible. The General Adviser is praised for his insight and commitment to peace in Africa and in the Central African Republic and urged to continue to support the peace process in the country.

**Bangui, 30th July 2013**

**The secretariat**

## APPENDIX

### BANGUI COMMUNIQUÉ

On the invitation of the Réseau Foi, Culture et Education (RFCE), and with the multi-faceted support of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA), a Conference / Workshop on capacity building for Christian and Muslim religious leaders for conflict prevention and Peace Building as a prerequisite for development, was held in Bangui from 25th to 26th July 2013.

More than 30 participants selected equally between the three religious groups (Catholic, Protestant and Muslim) took part in the conference / workshop. Considering the change of the political regime which occurred on 24th March 2013;

Considering that one of the consequences of this change resulted in insecurity throughout the country;

Considering also that the Central African Republic is under real threat of interreligious conflict that threatens the Central African society;

Considering the need to prevent conflict and restore peace as a prerequisite for development;

Considering the important role of the leaders of the three (3) faiths (Catholic, Protestant and Muslim) to work for peace in the Central African Republic and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims.

Participants committed:

- 1) to work together and contribute to the education and training of the faithful of the three (3) faith for conflict prevention and peacebuilding;
- 2) to face any initiative that would be to undermine the peaceful coexistence between the three (3) religious groups;

- 3) to further promote the momentum of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding that characterizes our religious communities in the Central African Republic;
- 4) to oppose any form of manipulation of religious confessions for political purposes;
- 5) to denounce their prophetic role in all forms of abuse and injustice aimed at undermining the dignity of the human person;

Participants call the Central African political and administrative authorities to:

- 1) Disarm and repatriate foreign combatants and mercenaries their countries of origin;
- 2) Reorganize and deploy defence and security forces;
- 3) Preserve the republican principle of the Central African Republic being a secular state and to end all forms of discrimination and violence.

**Done in Bangui, July 26, 2013**

**Participants**

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<b>N°</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>ORGANISATION/ RELIGIOUS GROUP</b>	<b>CONTACTS / E-MAIL</b>
1	Abdoul 'Aziz Magba-Gackara	CICA	77 08 29 87 - 72 04 37 52
2	Father Cédric Kongbo-Gbassinga	Catholic	75 43 00 00 cedricgbassinga@yahoo.fr
3	Father Nicaise Poukre	Catholic	75 50 77 74 - 77 50 77 74
4	Father Dieu Béni Mbanga	Catholic	75 05 71 11
5	Pastor Anicet Bissebangue	AEC	75 03 88 02 -77 08 38 08
6	Roger Dec-Kong	AEC	75 00 05 67 - 77 88 79 15
7	Rachida Mamba	CICA	75 05 36 78 - 77 05 36 78
8	Clarisse Martiale Manehou	Catholic	75 54 61 71
9	Simone Clara Kossianga	AEC	75 05 45 95 - 72 50 45 95
10	Adam Aboukhar Nguendji	CICA	75 33 92 68
11	Sis. Sophie Edith Kamandji	Catholic	75 89 26 96
12	Kaltouma Idriss	CICA	75 02 99 00 - 77 88 79 15
13	Mrs. Rosalie Yabada	Catholic	75 05 71 29
14	Benjamin Ngounda	AEC	77 89 45 77 bengounde@yahoo.fr
15	Abel Ngbanda	AEC	75 05 73 89 - 77 89 13 79
16	Gérard Merlend Ouambou Guela	Catholic	75 58 09 44 - 70 80 99 17
17	Imam Hassan Issa	CICA	75 04 17 92
18	Pastor Franco Mbaye-Bondoï	AEC	75 50 87 22
19	Raïssa Melaine Ngoko Yassangou	Catholic	75 20 68 74 - 77 48 59 66
20	Father Jerry Martial Koyaouili	Catholic	75 72 57 56
21	Pastor Mathias Toffio	ANEB	75 03 40 22- 77 09 53 02
22	Pastor Anatole Banga	AEC	75 50 40 72
23	Brigitte Isabelle Andara	AEC	75 50 58 08
24	Pastor Jean Serefio	EPCR	75 50 58 08
25	Imam Oumar Adoum	CICA	70 18 26 25
26	Ismaël Bezo	CICA	70 80 52 09
27	Gilles Dibert-Bekoy	Catholic	75 05 05 37 - 77 05 05 37
28	Marie-Thérèse Boubande	AEC	75 50 16 36 action_compassion@yahoo.fr
29	Augustine Ouambou	RFCMP	75 56 39 38 - 75 05 17 41
30	Séraphin Mbarapas	AEC	75 50 05 67
31	Imam Omar Kobine Layama	CICA	75 05 15 59



32	Bishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga	Catholic	75 04 20 29
33	Pastor Nicolas Guerékoyame-Gbangou	AEC	75 50 92 87
34	Khadîdja Syba	CICA	75 03 79 02
35	Bouba Yaya	CICA	75 72 17 80
36	Moussa Barde	CICA	-
37	Dr. Énoch Tompte Tom	AEC	75 50 93 68
38	Herbert Samba-Tolo	RFCE-RCA	75 55 31 51 sambatolo@yahoo.fr
39	Juste Patrick Woudafo	RFCE-RCA	75 56 05 65 woudaf59@yahoo.fr
40	Dr. Boris Modeste Yakoubou	RFCE-RCA	75 03 06 12 yacboris@yahoo.fr
41	Aimé Elian Batanga	RFCE-RCA	75 03 49 07
42	Alain Evrard Wagaza	RFCE-RCA	72 68 42 95
43	Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah	PROCMURA	procmura@wananchi.com
44	Paul Mwalavu	PROCMURA	procmura@wananchi.com

## PHOTO GALLERY

### OPENING PRAYERS AND OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY





### **CONFERENCE ROOM**



### **RAPPORTEURS AT THE COMMUNICATION DESK**





## MEETINGS WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERS



Meeting with the President of the Alliance of Evangelicals in Central African Republic (AEC), Pastor Nicolas Guerékoyame Gbangou (second left)



Meeting with the Archbishop of Bangui, Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga (right)



Meeting with the President of the Islamic Community in Central Africa Republic (CICA), Imam Oumar Kobine Layama (right)



**MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL LEADERS**

Meeting with the Minister for Territorial Administration and Decentralization, Hon. Aristide Sokambi (second left)



Meeting with the Prime Minister and Head of the Transitional Government, H.E Nicolas Tiangaye(middle)



### PARTICIPANTS IN PLENARY





## PARTICIPANTS IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS





## PARTICIPANTS MAKING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS





## INTERVIEWS BY LOCAL MEDIA : RADIO NDEKE LUKA



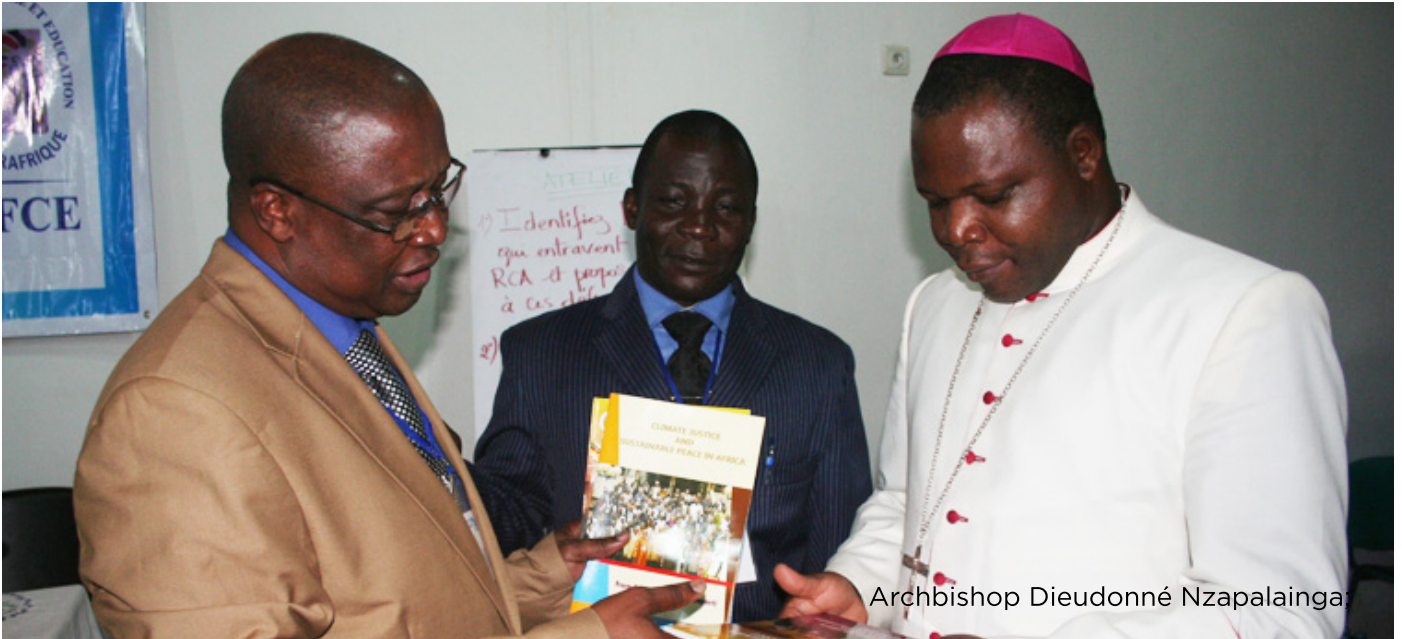
Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, General Adviser of PROCMURA



Dr. Boris Yakoubou, Permanent Secretary of RFCE-RCA



**THE GENERAL ADVISER GIVING THE ADDIS ABABA & CLIMATE JUSTICE REPORTS TO RELIGIOUS LEADERS**



Archbishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga



Imam Oumar Kobine Layama



Pastor Nicolas Guerékoyame-Gbangou



### GROUP PHOTOS

