



## Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa



**CONFERENCE ON CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM COOPERATION FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION / MANAGEMENT,  
PEACE BUILDING & RECONCILIATION IN FIVE NORTHERN AND MIDDLE BELT STATES OF NIGERIA**

**6TH-9TH OCTOBER 2010  
JACARANDA RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTRE  
KADUNA, NIGERIA**

**Report Produced by Angèle Dogbé and Robert Mwanyumba  
Edited by Johnson Mbillah**

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**Conference on Christian and Muslim Cooperation  
for Conflict Prevention/Management Peace Building  
and Reconciliation in five Northern and Middle  
Belt States of Nigeria**

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## **Preface**

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We, members of the PROCMURA Area Committee for Nigeria North, have for some years now been concerned about how relations between Christians and Muslims grow from good to not so good, from bad to worse, and from worse to who knows what.

Our efforts to work towards Christian and Muslim constructive relations for peace and peaceful co-existence unveiled the complexity of the situation we are dealing with.

The complexity, it has to be said, defies the simplistic notion of the outside world who easily jump to the conclusion that violent conflicts in the northern part of Nigeria essentially religious conflicts. It is far from that. What can be said to be true though is that those who engage in such conflicts are people who profess to be Christian or Muslim and are sometimes known to use their religious labels as a rallying cry for support.

This landmark conference with the theme “Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders together for Peace Building, Conflict Management/Prevention and Reconciliation” was called by PROCMURA, to provide the religious leaders with a platform to openly and frankly discuss the causes of such conflicts with the objective of preventing future conflicts and managing existing one so as to bring about peace and reconciliation.

We would like to encourage all those who read the proceedings of the conference to pray with us and to journey with us in search of peace between and among people of religion and the wider society.

I would personally like to thank Cokkie van’t Leven, the Programme Officer, Mission Department of ICCO & Kerk in Actie, who took keen interest on the situation of Christian-Muslim relations in the Northern part of Nigeria and discussed with the leadership of ICCO & Kerk in Actie to raise the needed funds for the Conference.

It is our hope and prayer that the effect of this conference will go a long way to reduce tension and eventually bring about peace in our region.

***Rt. Rev. Josiah Idowu Fearon***  
***Chairperson of PROCMURA***

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## **Acknowledgement**

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When it comes to matters of peace, no one walks. We have to walk along with others since those who engage in conflicts even want others to join them to do their worst.

Since the West Africa Regional Peace conference in 2007, PROCMURA was always in contact with the Nigeria North Area Committee, especially the Chairperson Bishop Josiah Idowu Fearon, so that we may walk along one another to see what contribution we can put in together to prevent the conflicts in the area and to bring about peace and reconciliation. We are grateful to the Chairperson and his team for working hard to bring this important conference to fruition.

There is an African proverb which says the empty hands cannot put off fire. Our determination to organise this conference will have come to naught if we did not have the financial means to do so. For this we are very grateful to ICCO & Kerk in Actie who provided us with the financial means to fulfil our commitments. As the person assigned the financial responsibility of PROCMURA, it is worth acknowledging the commitment of Cokkie van't Leven, Programme Officer, Mission Department of ICCO & Kerk in Actie to walk with us to ensure that we succeed.

The ultimate thanks is to God who has given us the strength and the fortitude it took to make this conference a success.

***Ms. Joy Wandabwa***  
***Team Leader - Finance and Administration PROCMURA***

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## Introduction

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Undoubtedly after the West African Regional Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders Peace Conference organised by PROCMURA in the Ghanaian capital city of Accra in July 2009, the stage was set for participants to replicate it in their own countries. The impetus that was set pursuant to the recommendations of the conference was realised in Togo and Benin and it was now the turn of Nigeria to do the same. Nigeria, the most populous and divergent country in Africa could not have had a national conference since the cost would have been quite excessive.

As we have always said that when the whole body is itching the hand scratches where it itches most, the Nigeria North Area Committee of PROCMURA under the able leadership of Bishop Josiah Idowu Fearon chairperson of PROCMURA evolved a plan of action to ensure that the ideals and focus of the Accra conference are replicated in 5 Northern and Middle Belt states of Nigeria. The choice of region and states were informed by intermittent violent conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the area and a determination to get into the root cause or causes of the violent conflicts and what needs to be done to bring about peace and reconciliation.

The Accra Conference had come up with an ambitious plan of action aimed at rooting peace and peaceful coexistence among Christians and Muslims in the region and by extension peace in society in general. It had argued that if religious leaders have to be assets to peace in the region and work with political leaders and governments to make the region a hub of peace then Christians and Muslims who form the majority in the region must be seen to be living in peace. Christians and Muslims cannot give to the region what they do not have, the conference had argued.

On opting for the Northern and Middle Belt areas, Kogi, Bauchi, Kaduna, Plateau and Kano States were chosen to participate in the conference, with the understanding that it would be a beginning of movement for peace in the entire region. Kaduna State was chosen to host the conference by virtue of its ideal position as a state that had experienced violent conflicts between Christians and Muslims and which had worked out a formula that drastically reduced the violent confrontations.

As may be seen in the pages that follow, the conference lived up to its objectives when it brought together high profile religious leaders from the five states, the national leadership of the Christian and Muslim communities in Nigeria, as well as politicians who the Muslim and Christian leaders have to work with if the region has to achieve sustainable peace.

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All in all the conference provided PROCMURA the opportunity to facilitate the process grassroots efforts towards. We had the opportunity to sow seeds of peace where this has not been done and to nurse plants of peace where seeds of peace have already been sown.

***Dr. Johnson Mbillah***  
***General Adviser PROCMURA***



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## **1.0 Day One**

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### **1.1 Arrival of participants**

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September participants of the various states arrived settled in their various accommodations, ready for the start of the meeting the following day.

## **2.0 Day Two**

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### **2.1 Official Opening Ceremony**

The Chairperson of Nigeria North Area Committee of PROCMURA Bishop Josiah Idowu Fearon, who is also the Africa chairperson of PROCMURA called the meeting to order at 9.00 am. He welcomed participants, invited guests and eminent persons to the conference after which he requested a Muslim and a Christian to commit the conference into God's hands in prayer. Rev. Fr. Oscar Pam from Plateau State offered the Christian prayer while Alhaji Suleiman Usman of Kogi State offered the Muslim prayer.

After the prayers the Bishop then proceeded to introduce dignitaries that were present and asked the conference participants to introduce themselves.

### **2.2 Background to the Organisation of the Conference**

In providing the background of the conference Bishop Fearon indicated that PROCMURA has for many years been concerned about how bad relations between Christians and Muslims in Africa lead to violent conflicts. These conflicts, the chairperson of PROCMURA lamented, militate against the continent's spiritual and physical development. He intimated that at a General Council meeting of PROCMURA which took place in Kaduna over three years ago (2007) PROCMURA came up with a four-year strategic plan. The plan, explained the chairperson, mapped out a continental programme of action to prevent/manage violent conflicts between Christians and Muslims, to work towards peace and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims as well as foster peace and reconciliation within the wider society.

As a result of this stated objective, from July 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009, a sub-regional conference on conflict prevention, peace and reconciliation, was held in Accra, Ghana to discuss pertinent issues in the West Africa region. The conference brought together over 60 Christian and Muslim religious leaders, politicians, and peace activists. The Kaduna

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conference, said the chairperson, was in fulfillment of one of the recommendations. The conference participants had resolved to replicate the focus of that conference in the different West African countries. The chairperson stressed that this particular conference was aimed at looking into issues of peace and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in the Northern and Middle Belt states of Nigeria. The bishop emphasised that PROCMURA's prime focus in conferences of this nature was conflict prevention and not just conflict resolution/management. This commitment of PROCMURA, he said, falls within its stated principle of working towards a situation in Africa where conflicts between Christians and Muslims are resolved in a non-violent manner.

### **2.3 Rationale of the Conference**

For many years now, the Northern and Middle Belt States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria have seen sporadic violent confrontations between Christians and Muslims that have led to several losses of lives and destruction of properties worth millions of naira. The causes of the violence are multiple and range from economic, social, ethnic, land issues, political machinations and manipulations and last but not least religious extremism.

In spite of the multiple causes of the conflicts which are well known to Christians and Muslims alike, the media simply report such violent conflicts as religious conflicts simply because those who are involved in the conflicts are more often than not people who adhere to the Christian or Muslim faith. Bishop Fearon pointed out that the conflict that sent shock waves around Nigeria and within the international community was that of the Jos (Plateau State) conflict in November 2009 and February 2010. Scores of people were killed and several properties destroyed. Considering the gravity and the extent of the conflict, PROCMURA felt that there was need to meet as Christian and Muslim leaders of the five states, to discuss and work out the modalities of effectively preventing such conflicts especially when Nigeria goes to the polls in 2011.

Before concluding his address, the chairperson of PROCMURA highlighted the objectives of the conference as follows:

- ❑ To create a forum whereby Muslim and Christian leaders can openly deliberate on peace, peaceful coexistence, mitigation of conflicts as well as work towards reconciliation.
- ❑ To replicate the above principal objectives in the different states represented at the conference.
- ❑ To draw lessons from this conference so as to organise similar conferences or workshops in other states.

Having outlined the focus of the conference, the bishop concluded his address.

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## **2.4 Address by General Adviser of PROCMURA**

### **Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah**

Rev. Dr. Mbillah in his address lamented that Nigeria which is arguably the most religious country of Africa and export their brand of Christianity and Islam around Africa and in some cases around the world, could not export religious tolerance around the world because they do not have it. He lamented that whenever negative relations between Christians and Muslims are mentioned anywhere in the world, Nigeria is always mentioned.

The General Adviser said that he agreed with various speakers in various fora that violent conflicts in Nigeria are often misconstrued to be religiously motivated even though the causes are multiple and may not be necessarily religious. He, however, raised a rhetorical question when he asked: "If the conflicts are not religious why are churches and mosques often burnt down? Dr. Mbillah argued that it is the tendency of religious leaders to attribute such conflicts to anything else but religion because to say so, will be an indictment of the religious leaders as persons who cannot control members of their respective treasured religious faiths. He argued that if religious leaders do not take seriously the religious element in the conflicts they would seek a solution that excludes an aspect of the cause. 'Is the saying not true that a proper identification of a problem is part of its solution queried the General Adviser. He implored the religious leaders to accept the challenge that religion is part of the problem so that they may embark on a comprehensive approach to peace making, where religion and religious people will be involved and seen to be playing active roles.

Turning his attention to Christianity and Islam as religions that promote justice and peace, Dr. Mbillah emphasised that no one will take that statement seriously when in practice Christians and Muslims are seen to promote injustice and create situations of none peace. "It is high time Christians and Muslims in the north and middle belt areas of Nigeria demonstrated by what they do, and not merely by what they say about their respective religions."

The General Adviser lamented that Christianity and Islam in some parts of the north are polarised along ethnic lines thus making ethnicity to find an ally in religion and vice-versa. He wondered why religion could not be used to break barriers of negative ethnicism instead of perpetuating and strengthening it.

On the issue of importation of conflicts into Nigeria, Dr. Mbillah called on the religious leaders to examine carefully why conflicts perceived to be between the Christian West and Muslim East set Christians and Muslims in Nigeria against one another. Expounding on what he calls 'Negative Solidarity' the General Adviser explained that Negative Solidarity shows itself when one supports his or her religious group at all and any cost – even when

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they are in the wrong. ‘We need to take self-criticism seriously as a corrective measure, where we can look at our co-religionists in the face and tell them that they are wrong instead of supporting them and being partners with them in wrong-doing.’ He said that these were some of the important areas that needed urgent action and hoped that the Christian and Muslim leaders will consider them in their determination to work towards peace and peaceful co-existence.

In conclusion, the General Adviser pointed out that PROCMURA is looking forward to a fruitful conference guided by God. He said that such a forum ensures that participants do not leave the conference as they came in, but rather enriched by what they would have learnt and shared.

## **2.5 Addresses by Religious Bodies in Nigeria**

### **2.5.1 *The General Secretary of the Christian Associations of Nigeria (CAN) - Engineer Samuel Salifu***

The General Secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Engineer Samuel Salifu began his address by bringing greetings from the President of CAN Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor , who he said would have liked to be at the conference but other commitments have made it impossible for him to be present.

He expressed his appreciation to PROCMURA for organising the conference and said that the conference was very timely indeed considering recent conflicts that Muslims and Christians have been involved in. Expounding on religion in Nigeria, the General Secretary indicated that the people of Nigeria were very religious and that Christians and Muslims currently constitute around 90% of the country’s population. With such a large segment of the population, the peace of the country hinges on peace between Christians and Muslims. ‘The peace of this country is in your hands’ he told the Muslim and Christian leaders.

The General Secretary stressed that Christians and Muslims need to understand that they are one (Nigerians) in the country, and there is a need for a common understanding of that. “We as religious leaders need to work together for peace and ensure that our actions depict peace. This will set an example to those of our co-religionists who look up to us for direction. We have to work together and have a common focus on how to live in peace and embrace brotherhood and sisterhood so that we can move forward as a people created by God and put together to live alongside one another in this country called Nigeria.”

Turning his attention to the situation in the northern and middle belt states of Nigeria where Christian-Muslim relations is increasingly becoming volatile, Engineer Salifu recalled instances where he as a Christian leader, received assistance and support in open, from

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some Muslim leaders. He observed that he was shocked by reactions not because of the gesture of his Muslims brothers, but at the reaction of his fellow Christians and some Muslims. While some Christians strongly criticised him for receiving such help from Muslims and accused him of betrayal some Muslims wondered why the help should have been given to him at all since he is not one of their religious own. Even though the nature of the help was divulged he wondered how Nigeria can move forward if we cannot be supportive of one another across the religious divide or how we can only give and accept help from our co-religionists.

In conclusion, the General Secretary entreated Christians and Muslims to be conscious about the usage of language emphasising that inflammatory statements can and do lead to actual violent confrontations. He urged all to avoid at all cost, stereotypes and polemics and work had towards behaviour change, if a comprehensive and sustainable peace is to be realised in the country. Let us together be peace makers, he concluded.

### **2.5.2 The General Secretary of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) Sheikh Aminu Abubakar**

The General Secretary of *Jama'atu Nasril Islam* (JNI), also known as the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Sheikh Aminu Abubakar who represented the President-General of JNI/NSCIA, His Eminence Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar, popularly known as the Sultan of Sokoto took the platform to address the conference. In his address he reminded the Christian and Muslim leaders that we all need to remember that we share a common humanity and none of us can be regarded as anything else but human beings. He stressed that leaders of the two religions need to lead with reason, intellect and knowledge instead of by sentiments and emotions. The General Secretary further observed that the things that bring us together as Muslims and Christians are more than those that divide us. He pointed out that cooperation for conflict prevention is a step forward towards mutual respect amongst adherents of the two religions. This will in turn lead to a peaceful society where devotees of the Muslim and Christian faiths would live side by side in harmony.

Turning his attention to politics and politicians, Sheikh Aminu Abubakar said that unpopular politicians should stop using religion for their own interest. These politicians rally support by fusing politics and religion with the sole purpose of boosting their political status. Religion, he emphasised, plays a vital role in the society, and religious leaders should recognise this and lead by example. The Sheikh explained that it did not make sense to speak peace when our actions depict strife. He urged the religious leaders to work towards mutual tolerance arguing that failure to do so will give room to political manipulation that will promote mutual intolerance. 'This will not be in the interest of the two religions who form the majority in the Nigeria religious landscape', he stressed.

He concluded his address by registering the Sultan of Sokoto's delight and support for the prospect of replicating similar conferences throughout Nigeria. The General Secretary

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emphasised that if the conference was replicated in other areas it would help create and build a conflict-free northern and middle belt areas of Nigeria and thus promote peace and development. He praised PROCMURA and its chairperson, Bishop Fearon for organising the conference in this part of Nigeria where peace in the wider society and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims face several Challenges.

### **2.5.3 *The Permanent Secretary Bureau of Religious Affairs, Christian Matters, in the Office of the Kaduna State Governor Mr. John Woje Bagu***

Mr. Bagu begun his address by thanking PROCMURA for having invited him to such an important forum. He pointing out that given the closeness of the Nigeria General elections the conference was well timed. In his view, the conference will help mitigate Christian and Muslim conflicts by allowing for a fair and free election process. He praised the Northern and Middle Belt religious leaders for making time to attend this very important conference and hoped that this initiative will set in motion the resolve of the leaders to work together to make peace. He thanked PROCMURA for putting together the conference and urged the organisation to continue in the same spirit, and replicate such efforts across the country.

## **2.6 Address by the Guest of Honour His Excellency Alhaji Muktari Ramalan Yero, the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State**

The Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency Alhaji Muktari Ramalan Yero, who was the Guest of Honour at the conference, began his address by expressing how delighted he was by the spirit in which the Conference had been organised. He pointed out that it was very important and timely, given recent events in Jos and the impending elections scheduled for the coming year (2011). He stressed that the calibre of the participants not only showed how seriously the religious leaders and the academia had taken the conference and its focus, but how it will impact on the states from which they come. "It is great to see you all and great that you are here together to reflect on how to build and maintain sustainable peace in the region. This is already an important step forward".

The Deputy Governor assured the religious leaders that he was aware that most Christian and Muslim leaders in the country preached religious tolerance peace and peaceful co-existence. The, problem, he emphasised, is that some adherents of the two faith communities do not practise that which is preached. Instead they get involved in politically engineered and motivated violent conflicts.

On the issue of negative solidarity as raised by the General Adviser, the Deputy Governor said that no religion recommends or supports negative solidarity. He was quick to add though, that ignorance, manipulation and selfish interest engendered negative solidarity.

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People tend to involve themselves in that which does not concern them and by doing so met out violence of great proportion against others. He called for the intensification of education, and a resolve not to give in to extremist and bigots who seek to destroy rather than build good relationships across political, ethnic and religious divides. He emphasised that Nigeria as a country will remain a diverse and plural society of different ethnic and religious groups embracing political plurality.

Focusing on the Kaduna State, the Deputy Governor said that the state is like a 'mini' Nigeria since its diversity mirrors that of the entire nation. He was hopeful that the peace currently enjoyed by the people of Kaduna will be sustained so that it would be a model for the entire country.

After entreating the participants to ensure that what they discuss and resolve at the conference is implemented in the different states and especially at the grassroots level he declared the conference opened.

## **2.7 Vote of thanks**

After the address of the guest of honour, the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency Alhaji Muktari Ramalan Yero; the Chairperson of the session, Bishop Josiah Idowu Fearon called on Mrs Justina Ngwobia and Mrs Lantana Abdullahi to propose the vote of thanks. The two ladies thanked the Deputy Governor for making time to come and officially open the conference. They lauded him for his reflective address and assured him that the conference will work hard to ensure that it comes up with concrete proposals towards an action plan to mitigate the conflicts that have plagued the region.

## **2.8 Case Studies of conflicts and Peace building from the 5 States**

After acknowledging the importance of the presence of the deputy governor and how he personally feels honoured that the Deputy Governor made time from his busy schedule to come and address the conference the chairperson of PROCMURA called on the delegates to prepare themselves to make their states presentations. He reminded the presenters of the guidelines that should govern their presentations as was communicated to them in the concept paper and which required each state to have two presenters - a Muslim and a Christian. He further emphasised that as communicated to them by PROCMURA, the presentations should focus on issues and not personalities, what went wrong and not who or which community is wrong. He said that finger pointing could lead to recrimination that will in turn work against the spirit of the conference. The chairperson made participants to understand that the caution against finger-pointing was not a censorship on truth but a call for tolerance, adding that he was aware that the presentations were bound to hurt one group or the other even if there was no explicit apportioning of blame. He explained that

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it was only in being transparent with one another in our presentations and discussions that we can identify what the challenges and difficulties are, and find ways and means of dealing with the issues appropriately.

After deliberations on the format and the order in which the presentations were to be made the chairperson invited the presenters from each state to consult among themselves as they begin to make the presentations.

### **2.8.1 Presentation from Kano State**

Sheikh Kabir Hamisu Kura who made the presentation of the State began by providing a historical overview of violence and conflict by people of religion and emphasised that since Christians and Muslims have many shared values such values could be harnessed to build an alliance of conscientious people striving for justice, peace and tolerance.

Turning his attention to the state and Nigeria as a whole he said that ethno-religious conflicts have become the fulcrum to social non-cohesion where ethnic or religious affiliations have led to discrimination and superiority complexes developing in certain regions where both religious and ethnic dominance is evident. This is breeding contextual discrimination in the country given its wide variations, both ethnic and religious. Sheikh Hamisu proceeded to provide a historical analysis of ethno-religious conflicts and how it continued to persist in Nigeria for decades. He recounted the unfortunate situation where ethnic conflicts or religiously instigated conflicts develop and overlap one another with disastrous consequences.

On the causes of the ethno-religious conflicts he asserted that accusations and counter accusations, allegations and counter allegations of neglect of some communities by political actors on the one hand, and a feeling of oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry by one community or the other are the most cited. These claims are underlined by social pressures that easily militate against those who feel affected. They in turn cling to ethno-religious ideology coined by themselves with the understanding that it will provide them liberation. This feeling of animosity is compounded by a breakdown of social institutions e.g. family, police, government et cetera and thereby lead to violence of magnitude proportions

In projecting a solution the cleric argued that in Islamic tradition there has always been peaceful coexistence with Christians right from the Prophet Muhammad's time through to the Ottoman Empire. There is a legacy of peace and tolerance that can be emulated by both Muslims and Christians. He called for an integrated proactive alliance of like minded Christian and Muslim leaders with a commitment to work towards peace and reconciliation. He said that such leaders could recruit youth from both sides of the religious divide to



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embark on forming an alliance with media houses to spread the message of peace and reconciliation since the media in Nigeria is a powerful force of dissemination of information.

The cleric wound up his presentation emphasising that Christian –Muslim relations in Nigeria has always been complex, but emphasised that that such complexity can be ameliorated by Muslims and Christians honestly espousing the peace tenets of their religions and ensure that they live by it. He specifically, called on Muslims to draw lessons from the Quran and apply them as God allowed the existence of both groups. For the full text of this presentation see annex III

### **2.8.2 Presentation from Bauchi State**

The Rt. Rev. Musa Mwin Tula, begun his address by reading from the Bible, outlining the point that conflict emanated from selfish desires. He then proceeded to give a brief historical overview of Christian-Muslim relations in Nigeria between the 1980's up to 2010. His paper demonstrated that the period was characterised by ethnic and religious conflicts instigated by extremists and a pathetic state of affairs within the country. This *modus operandi* was a reflection of political and economic downward spiral that left social institutions spiralling downwards. He however cited that the introduction of Sharia Law went a long way in propelling tensions and violence in various states and nurturing fundamentalism. He pointed out the failure of the security agencies to stop the violence and punish perpetrators of the criminal offenses. Turning to the root causes of the violent conflicts, he blamed it on divergent religious opinions and beliefs, misinterpretations of the Bible and Qu'ran and struggle for scarce resources.

He wound up his presentation by clearly stating that conflict prevention is less costly than conflict management and urged PROCMURA to step up its efforts on conflict prevention. He went further to detail a formula that can be applied to analyse a particular conflict to not only get to its root but also find a lasting solution. He recommended that Christian-Muslim cooperation be fostered through regular interactions as was evidenced by the meeting. He told Christians to follow the statutes prescribed in Matthew 5:9, they have been called to be peace makers and not the contrary. He concluded by outlining three specific agents of conflict, what we at PROCMURA christened as Agents Ms.: mis-information, mis-interpretation and mis-application.

For details of this presentation see Annex IV

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### 2.8.3 *Presentation from Plateau State*

#### ***Christian Perspective on Problems to Peace among Christians and Muslims***

Father Oscar took the podium on Plateau State and after observing protocol, went straight to outline the problems that are crippling Plateau State with concern to peaceful coexistence among Christians and Muslim. He remarked how perturbing the causes were and pleaded the attention of the leaders in order to not only pick out thorns in relations but also ponder on solutions.

He listed the causes as follows:

- ❑ **Indigene Problem** - the Muslims claim that Jos belongs to them, because of their long stay and warm reception by the indigenes at the beginning.
- ❑ **Political Power** - the Muslims feel that they are left out in the policy and decision making.
- ❑ There have been a lot of nocturnal killings and attacks with the intention of wiping out the indigene population.
- ❑ The use of the media negatively has also contributed to fuelling crisis in Jos.
- ❑ Muslims seem to be carrying out an expansionist agenda. Where they are numerically stronger, they cause conflict in order to take over the place.
- ❑ The society is being polarized, where tribe and religion are the key players, individuals thereby have to choose sides which met out violence against the other i.e. silent killings.
- ❑ **Revenge Killings** - As a result of the arbitrary killings, the Hausa-Fulani seem to be on a revenge mission thereby furthering the scope and length of the crisis or conflict.
- ❑ **Negative Solidarity** - The issue of negative solidarity as outlined by the General Adviser is one that spills over to other areas that were previously not involved in the conflict.

#### ***Muslim Perspective on Problems to Peace among Christians and Muslims in Plateau State***

In the same vein, Murtala Sani Hashim spoke on problems facing the Plateau State from a Muslim perspective. He outlined the problems as follows:

- ❑ **Inter and Intra-religious differences:** i.e. Among the Muslims JIBWIS against the Daiqa, Sunni against the Shiite. Among the Christian groups the Catholics against Churches of Christi in Nigeria (COCIN), the Anglican against the

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Evangelical Church of West Africa ( ECWA) and CAN

- ❑ In some instances the government gets into tussles with community groupings: Plateau State Governor/ and the Hausa Community, Plateau State Governor and some Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs): Plateau State Governor and the Youth for instance the Beroms and the Hausa or Afizere, and the Anagata and the Beroms
- ❑ Security Personnel have also been known to clash with different groups sparking off conflicts: Police and the Youth, Soldiers and Christian youths; Muslims against the Police.
- ❑ Polarisation of settlements within and outside. For example in Jos, the Plateau State Capital for instance the settler killings.
- ❑ Media distortion of information, mis-reporting, under-reporting or economical use of mass media.
- ❑ Mobilisation of arms and ammunitions by both sides and the government. i.e. gyang and his men in Borno
- ❑ Politics: People's Democratic Party (PDP) vs. Hausa Community./ All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and other appointments on government side.
- ❑ Indigene and Settler syndrome, which alienates the settler community and the indigenous people, this causes tensions along religio-ethnic lines.
- ❑ Negative solidarity (according to reports more than 30 lives were lost because of groupings based on religious and ethnic affiliations).

## **LUNCH BREAK**

After the presentation of Plateau State participants went for lunch and returned to continue with the state presentations.

## **Case Studies of Conflicts and Peace Building from the 5 States (Continued)**

### **2.8.4 Kogi State**

#### ***Muslim Perspective on State of Affairs in Kogi State***

Barrister Suleiman took up the mantle in giving an overview of the state from a Muslim Perspective. In his submission Kogi is one state where Christians and Muslims have lived together side by side as citizens for most of their upbringing. People's lifestyles are interwoven.

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The Council of Ulama, Kogi State Branch, is the umbrella body of the Muslim societies. Barrister Suleiman's presentation focused on the events that have transpired in the state:

- ❑ The Ajaokuta appointment of Imam, an issue that almost caused an uproar in the town
- ❑ The Kabawa Mosque building where the Council of Ulama took over the Mosque to avoid any sectarian domination.
- ❑ The crisis of building a Mosque around the old central Mosque at Lokoja by the Izalat sect. The Council again took over the mosque.
- ❑ The Lokoja Crowder Memorial College crisis. Students that failed exams took advantage under the guise of religion to burn down the church in the school. It was not a religious crisis but a student's protest.
- ❑ The council has resolved to encourage interreligious meetings for harmonious relationships.
- ❑ Politicians sponsor thugs who are normally youth and young children to disrupt the peace. They are normally supplied with weapons and ammunition to fight during elections and voting periods. These political thugs use those weapons to cause inter-clan crisis and robbery in the society.
- ❑ Kogi state is centrally located serving as a gateway to big towns in Nigeria e.g. Abuja, Enugu, Benin, Minna etc.
- ❑ Most of the crises are embedded in clanships amongst the tribe(s) of traditional rulers.

### ***Christian Perspective on State of Affairs in Kogi State***

According to Pastor Kayode Ajibade, who presented the Christian Perspective, Christianity has strong roots on the ground given that the first schools were Christian. Christians and Muslims live as partners in progress and have always done so. Most of the crises that have been experienced have not been religious. Clanship is usually the cause of crises. Crises that erupt in other states often affect other states in terms of food supply and business in general.

Relations between Christians and Muslims are normally cordial, nonetheless, given the current wave of events a committee had been set up to discuss the issue of security vis-à-vis religious harmony in the state. The state is more traditional than religious in terms of causes of conflict, the issue of religion is secondary.

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### **2.8.5 Kaduna State**

Sheikh Mahdi Shehu of the Bridge Builders Association made the presentation on Kaduna State together with Bishop Idowu Fearon PROCMURA's Chairperson. Sheikh Shehu elaborated on the causes of crisis in the State, while Bishop Fearon spoke of the challenges and the way forward.

On the main causes of conflict in the State, Sheikh Shehu gave some historical background saying that at independence, the Christians who lived in the North lived under the control of Muslims, but as the Christian population grew, they began to express their desire for freedom and control from the Muslim Emirs and this sparked conflict.

Furthermore, in early 2000, when Muslim leaders here first proposed the introduction of Islamic Sharia law, a legal system that allows some crimes to be punished by amputation or stoning, there was an explosion of violence. Christians and Muslims destroyed each others' places of worship and hundreds died. Sheikh Shehu however pointed out that nine out of every ten crises in the State are not religious. It is politics playing on religion. Meanwhile, in the southern part of the North there is ethnic stigmatization that takes on a religious dimension. "Even the crisis in Jos is about politics, economy and land..", he proclaimed, "It's all about who controls the resources from the Federal Government and the State Government". Sheikh Shehu concluded by saying that since 1987 to date, the horrible damage religious riots have done to Kaduna is unquantifiable. Every part of the state has its own story or experience to share; and as such, it is believed that one has learnt one thing or the other out of such crises. It is high time people of the State thought about how to work, cooperate and collaborate with each other despite their religious/ethnic and economic background to ensure that such crises are not repeated in the State.

On the challenges, Bishop Fearon stated that ignorance is perhaps the greatest challenge one will confront in trying to bring Christians and Muslims together. He explained that this state of affairs has made it rather difficult to educate a population that seems set in its ways. Adherents of Christianity and Islam need to first understand tenets of their respective religions, both support social responsibility and positive development in the society not to mention peace. In Kaduna state, people are religious but the question is; are those bearing Christian and Muslim names practicing their religious teachings? Unfortunately, the answer to that question is not positive. Devotees practice a selective obedience. Christianity and Islam say love your neighbour, regardless of his religion. In Kaduna people selectively apply this principle, favouring instead kin folk. Another major challenge according to Bishop Fearon is that many Christian leaders, specifically the Evangelicals, have not been doing a pristine job in adhering to this mantra of loving your neighbour, and as a result do not approve of the commitment to tolerance. They look at Christian-Muslim relations from a political point of view.

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As a way forward, Bishop Fearon stated that there is need to promote understanding, because with understanding and grace, Christians and Muslims can begin to live together in peace.

He also pointed out that by the grace of God, Nigeria is privileged enough to have two main bodies aimed at promoting dialogue. There is the Nigerian Interreligious Council, which will hopefully have opportunities to expand in the future. Secondly, there is also the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) that has an interfaith branch. It is hoped that both of these institutions will expand to local and state levels. Furthermore, these institutions provide opportunities to promote dialogue and tolerance. Thus far only a single workshop under the theme '*Knowing Your Muslim Neighbour*' has been organised to get the leadership of CAN together. The meeting which was very well attended was graced by the Sultan of Sokoto who addressed the participants during the meeting. The Muslim leadership replicated this program by hosting a conference on the theme "Islam through the eyes of a Christian." To this end, he reiterated that without increased understanding on both ends, Christian and Muslim, Nigeria will not develop.

### **2.8.6 Plenary Discussions**

At the end of the case studies, the Chair of the day opened the floor for questions, comments and discussions. Participants engaged each other in very vibrant discussions which were very interesting with objective observations and comments being made.

## **2.9 Group Discussions**

Participants were then split into groups according to the 5 different states for further discussions. In the groups, participants were to identify the problems, establish issues of concern, then come up with possible solutions and the way forward.

Participants were encouraged to continue with their discussion until 6:30pm when they will break for supper and have a rest. They were informed that the group reports will be received the next day.

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## Day Three

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### 3.0 Prayers

The day started off with prayers from Alhaji Bala Lifid and Rt. Rev. Musa M. Tula from Bauchi State. Both committed the last day of the conference into God's hands, asking for insight on the way forward and for journey mercies for those travelling on the day.

### 3.1 Group Report

#### *Report by the Kogi State Delegates*

##### Problems

- ◇ Political manoeuvrings
  - ◇ Ethnic affiliations
  - ◇ Religious affiliations
- } Negative Affiliations

##### Solutions

- ◇ There is need for the government to strike a balance in the distribution of amenities between Christians and Muslims. For example, the provision for mosques and churches in public places.
- ◇ Organising of awareness programmes for the traditional rulers on their roles towards their subjects and on issues that affect the generality of their various communities with regard to peace and stability.
- ◇ The government and the people of the state should as much as possible uphold fair, and free elections in the next dispensation as this would enhance good governance and credibility that will further build on and strengthen peace.
- ◇ We have the enlightened; the informed/knowledgeable as the gatherers in the society while the scatters are the opposite. More awareness programmes should therefore be organized by the gatherers to share their knowledge. There is the likelihood of a multiplier effect because it has to do with peace. Members should be very objective and sincere in their participation.
- ◇ Sensitization programmes should be organized using the media e.g. in the publication of journals, use of the electronic media like radio, television, internet etc. This is supposed to create more awareness and **SHOULD** be **STRICTLY** devoid of governmental influence or interference.

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- ◇ Participants at this forum should identify themselves as the focal persons and therefore constitute the steering committee of members of the forum at the state level.

The various Non-Governmental Bodies should also be invited to collaborate with the above bodies for a concerted effort towards achieving peace e.g. the Government House, Chapels and State Secretariat

## **REPORT BY THE BAUCHI STATE DELEGATES**

### **Identified Problems**

1. Ignorance
2. Poverty
3. Unemployment
4. Security lapses/Lack of prompt action
5. Lack of trust amongst members of the society specifically between Christians and Muslims.
6. Religious intolerance
7. Lack of quality education and illiteracy
8. Drug abuse
9. Lack of respect or spirit of good neighbourliness among different groups.
10. Religious extremism/fanaticism
11. Moral decadence

### **Solutions**

- ◇ Need for seminars, workshops and dialogues in order to educate or create awareness.
- ◇ Facilitation of the creation of small scale industries which in turn create more job opportunities.
- ◇ Enhancing skills acquisition programmes such as vocational training, farms training and poverty eradication schemes.
- ◇ Prompt action should be taken by government and religious leaders so as to avoid escalation of conflicts.
- ◇ We should open our minds to each other, be sincere and truthful to ourselves and encourage interfaith interactions within our locality.



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- ◇ Religious tolerance should be addressed through educating the youth and encouraging them to become self reliant.
  - ◇ The Government should educate the youth on the importance of education and self reliance
  - ◇ Sensitize the youth against drug abuse through organisations such as National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency (*NDLEA*) etc.
  - ◇ Religious leaders should guide their followers/people properly.

## **WAY FORWARD**

Seminars, symposiums and workshops should be organized regularly at the grassroots. The members of the group resolved to organise similar forums when they got back to their respective states.

## **REPORT BY KADUNA STATE**

### **Problems**

- 1) Poverty (Socio-Economic in general)
- 2) Lack of proper understanding between many Muslims and Christians about each other's faith.
- 3) Prejudices and stereotypes
- 4) Unfounded rumours and gossip
- 5) Provocative preaching
- 6) Political manipulation of religions and their people

### **Solutions**

Ref. Problem (1)

- ◇ Good governance should give priority to job creation and the respect of the rule of law
- ◇ There should be an active youth and community empowerment campaign.

Ref. Problem (2), (3), (4) and (5)

- ◇ Awareness creation campaigns, adherence to religious teachings and interactive forums between religious people.

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Ref. to all problems

- ◇ A joint religious consultative body of top-level religious leaders should be formed in order to hold government and other religious leaders accountable to justice and to the rule of law

Those who gather are the same people/groups that scatter since they are the leaders and are influential i.e. religious leaders, traditional leaders, politicians, elites, women leaders, youth leaders.

### **How to bring in dissidents?**

- ◇ Confront dissidents at the grassroots where they have access to vast populations.
- ◇ Religious leaders should bring them on board to enlighten them with messages espoused by this forum.

### **Way Forward**

- ◇ This is an ongoing process. This conference is a step in the right direction. Hence we must continue to organise such forums so as to raise awareness among more people.
- ◇ A Joint Religious Consultative body with the same objective as the conference should be set up at state level to enlighten, hold government and religious leaders accountable.

## **REPORT BY PLATEAU STATE**

### **Problems**

- ◇ Indigeneship/settlership issues
- ◇ Politics and political appointments
- ◇ Land disputes
- ◇ Traditional/ chieftaincy disputes
- ◇ Ignorance/illiteracy/unemployment
- ◇ Poverty

### **Solutions**

- ◇ Review of section 143 of the Nigerian Constitution as it relates to Indigeneship
- ◇ Increase Orientation/Awareness campaigns with regard to Christianity and Islam

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- ◇ Increased capacity for Non-State Actors
  - ◇ Equitable representation in political and administrative matters
  - ◇ Free and fair elections
  - ◇ Clear definition/understanding of geographical boundaries i.e. chieftaincies
  - ◇ Government should limit its interference in traditional/chieftaincy affairs
  - ◇ Massive public awareness campaigns beyond religious peoples
  - ◇ Job creation/skills acquisitions for the youth

### **Gatherers**

- ◇ Religious Leaders
- ◇ CSO's (Non-State Actors)
- ◇ Security Agencies
- ◇ Media Outfits
- ◇ Community Gatekeepers
- ◇ Youth

### **Scatterers**

- ◇ Politicians
- ◇ Media
- ◇ Youth
- ◇ Religious Leaders

### **Way Forward**

- ◇ Transmitting of principles shared at the conference down to family, organizational and community levels
- ◇ Formulation of interfaith peace committees at community levels
- ◇ Improve government relations/support for Non-State Actors
- ◇ Increased funding for peace building activities
- ◇ Engagement of Youth in employment and social activities
- ◇ Constant dialogue between Muslims and Christians
- ◇ Capacity building for practitioners of the faith and propagators of peace
- ◇ Establishment of effective mechanism that will bring Christians and Muslims together.

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## **Methodology**

- ◇ Advocacy
- ◇ Sensitization through seminars/workshops, media etc.
- ◇ Capacity building for both religious leaders, religious people and the youth specifically

## **REPORT BY KANO STATE**

### **Problems instigating violence**

- ◇ Ignorance (2 way-traffic both Christians and Muslims)
- ◇ Moral decadence/lack of role models
- ◇ Poverty(not only socio-economic but also a poverty of minds and hearts)
- ◇ Political interests
- ◇ Unemployment and underemployment
- ◇ Negligence on the part of the authorities e.g. police
- ◇ Rampant rumours
- ◇ Drug abuse among youth

### **Solutions**

- ◇ Positive tolerance (one with the other)
- ◇ Patriotism being inculcated in the society
- ◇ Societal re-orientation
- ◇ Holistic approach to fight poverty
- ◇ Promotion, fairness, justice and tolerance
- ◇ Interfaith dialogue
- ◇ Rigorous community dialogue (too open and much)
- ◇ Having structures in place to coordinate interreligious dialogue and fora
- ◇ Positive youth engagement
- ◇ Identify gatherers to these solutions
- ◇ Government, traditional leaders, youth leaders, media, civil society, organizations, community gate keepers and religious leaders.

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## Challenges

- ◇ Implementation
- ◇ Getting the attention of the people
- ◇ Sustainability of the programmes
- ◇ Logistical support
- ◇ Sincerity of purpose (Truthfulness and openness)

## Methodology

- ◇ Friendliness
- ◇ Involvement of interested personnel
- ◇ Workshops and seminars
- ◇ IEC materials

## Comments on Group Reports.

The Chairperson of PROCMURA thanked that groups for exhaustively discussion the issues and coming up with recommendations that essentially maps out what each state is supposed to do when they return home. He urged participants to keep the recommendations in mind when they come up with action plans for their states.

## 3.2 Reading of the Final Communiqué

At the beginning of the conference a committee was entrusted with following the proceedings and articulating the main points of concern and resolutions of the conference. Their mandate was based on drafting a communiqué that reflected the views and aspirations of the religious leaders and conference ideals. The Committee after putting together a comprehensive document, read out an initial draft to participants who expressed their views and made amendments openly in the plenary. A final document was then agreed upon and endorsed publicly at the conference, serving as an official communiqué for the event.

*For the adopted communiqué kindly see the Annex II.*

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### 3.3 Mapping out the Way Forward

The way forward was drawn from the different state presentations that were based on consultations made by both PROCMURA staff and a consensus built during the conference. The recommendations for the way forward are hereby tabulated:

- ❑ Instituting training workshops for Christian and Muslim Leaders at the state and grassroots levels, replicating the conference in the different states.
- ❑ Formation of a consultative body for Christian and Muslim leaders who will monitor the what is going on and put stakeholders to task on actions or inactions that may disturb community peace
- ❑ Engagement with other religious groupings and Traditional Leaders and different government agencies.
- ❑ Youth and women empowerment in getting involved in matters of peace and development. It is about time that they were included in the agenda and even start setting it.
- ❑ Capacity Building for Religious Leaders with a focus on peace building and mutual coexistence
- ❑ Advocacy campaigns that will raise awareness on the need to preach and live peace and a determination to work towards peace by all sectors of religious groupings.
- ❑ Transmission of a code of ethics for both Christian Evangelism and Muslim Da'wah which PROCMURA can facilitate through training.

### 3.4 Evaluation

The evaluation of the project was carried out through a sample questionnaire of a select number of participants. The responses emanating from the participants reflected an appreciation of the conference which they qualified as being timely and very well focused on the contemporary situation in Nigeria. They further explained that the specific issues that were covered endeared on the very concerns of the Christian and Muslim leaders and were adequately addressed even though challenging. They also appreciated the communication system that was facilitated by the Central Office together with the Area Committee that enabled them to have all the necessary information about the conference.

They pleaded with PROCMURA not to let this conference to be one off thing but assist them to replicate it in the various states represented at the conference.

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## 4.0 Closing Ceremony

During the Closing Ceremony, the leaders from Kaduna, Kogi, Bauchi, Plateau and Kano states committed themselves to making sure that what started in Kaduna continues at the State levels. These resolutions and recommendations are expected to be passed down to the grassroots so as to have more people sensitised on the need for mutual coexistence and acceptance for the development of their common environment. It is also during this occasion that Certificates were awarded to the participants as an appreciation and reminder of the mandate with which the conference had conferred upon them at the state level.

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# Annexes

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## Annex 1: Concept Paper

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### **CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM LEADERS CONFERENCE ON CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM COOPERATION FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION/MANAGEMENT, PEACE BUILDING AND RECONCILIATION**

#### **Conference Background**

The Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) has for many years been concerned about violent conflicts in Africa and how such conflicts militate against the continent's spiritual and physical development. The Central Office in consultation with its Area (Country) Committees, developed a continental plan aimed at bringing together Christian and Muslim leaders together to consciously work alongside one another to prevent/manage violent conflicts and foster peace and reconciliation within the wider society and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims. The plan, which was exhaustively discussed and adopted by the PROCMURA governing council, was informed by the reality that even though Africa prides itself as being a religious continent with Islam and Christianity claiming to be wielding the largest following, the continent has had no sustainable peace.

PROCMURA in its 50 years of existence has always believed that if Christians and Muslims cooperate and collaborate to work towards the prevention of violent conflicts in the continent, they will be able to make a great contribution towards peace.

In line with this assumption, PROCMURA in the past few years embarked on a series of Christian and Muslims leaders' conferences in and around the continent aimed at promoting Christian and Muslim collaboration for peace and peaceful co-existence. One of these conferences for West Africa brought together over sixty (60) Christian and Muslim leaders from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, to Accra, Ghana, from 20 to 24 July 2009 to look at the issues stated above. Also present at the conference were members of the civil society and politicians. The outcome of the conference was a resolution by the 10 countries that participated, to replicate the aims and principles of the conference in their respective countries.



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It is in light of this, that PROCMURA Nigeria North Area Committee in conjunction with the Central Office in Nairobi, Kenya, deemed it most appropriate to organise this conference in Kaduna, Nigeria.

## **Rationale**

PROCMURA has always held the view that Africa is a religious continent and its people, therefore, a religious people. This religious continent we have always contended, can have peace if adherents of the two main religions (Christianity and Islam) which have the largest following in the continent are able to translate the good precepts of their respective religions into practice. These ideals appear to fall apart as inter-communal violence, erupt from time to time thus making many wonder whether Christians and Muslims are incapable of working together to prevent violent conflicts and manage or mitigate conflicts where they arise, as well as embark on peacebuilding and reconciliation. We recognise that the two religions cannot promote peace within the wider society unless and until there is peaceful coexistence between them.

For many years now, the northern and middle belt states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria have seen sporadic violence between Christians and Muslims. The causes of the violence are multiple. They range from economic, social, ethnic, land issues, political machinations and last but not least religion. These multiple causes of the conflicts are often portrayed in the media as religious conflicts simply because those who are involved in the conflicts are more often than not people who adhere to the Christian and Muslim faiths.

As the north and middle belt states are many, five (5) states which experience perennial conflicts have been selected to participate in the conference as a pilot project. This will help us to ascertain the effectiveness in dealing with these conflicts with the hope that other states would be covered later. The states selected are Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi, Kano and Kogi.

The most recent conflict that sent shock waves in Nigeria and within the international community is that of the conflicts in Jos in November 2009 and February 2010, where scores of people were killed and several properties destroyed.

PROCMURA hopes that the conference will serve as a rallying point towards which the journey to conflict prevention, peace and peaceful coexistence, and reconciliation will be accelerated.

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## Objectives

The objectives of the conference are threefold:

- i.) The creation of a forum whereby Muslim and Christian leaders can openly deliberate on peace, peaceful coexistence, mitigation of conflicts as well as work towards reconciliation of broken societies.
- ii.) To replicate the above principal objectives in the different states represented at the conference.
- iii.) To draw lessons from this conference so as to organise similar conferences or workshops in other states.

## Assumptions

The need for this conference is based on the following assumptions:

- ❑ That Nigeria is a religious country and its people a religious people and therefore sustainable peace in the country can be achieved through the active participation of religious leaders especially Christians and Muslims.
- ❑ That from time immemorial, Africans listened to their religious leaders and looked up to them for guidance to bring about peace in conflict situations, and that such remains the same today, and therefore religious leaders are an asset to peace in Nigeria.
- ❑ That the Christian and Muslim faiths have peace as one of their central focuses and if harnessed properly, can be an asset to peace.
- ❑ That religion is an emotive issue that touches the heart and soul of the human being, and should not be denigrated by another since history has shown that when people's faith/religion is denigrated they will do everything to defend it – even die for it.
- ❑ That religious extremism is on the ascendancy and something must be done to curb it.
- ❑ That Christians and Muslims for a long time talked negatively about each other and it is high time they talked positively with each other on issues of mutual concern.
- ❑ That Christian and Muslim leaders can play intermediary and mediating roles in conflict situations to manage and eventually eradicate violent conflicts and bring about peace and reconciliation.

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- That Churches and Mosques can work towards peace in society and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims since generally speaking, people engaged in conflict can and do profess to belong to one religious group or the other.

## **Participants**

As a pilot program, participants shall be drawn from five states five states, namely Kaduna, Kogi, Kano, Bauchi and Plateau.

## **Expected Outcome of Conference**

It is expected that after the conference the Christian and Muslim leaders will accelerate their quest for peace in states from which they come. PROCMURA shall on the success of this conference ensure that it expands same activities in the other states that are not represented in the conference.

***Bishop Josiah Idowu Fearon***  
***Chairman of PROCMURA***

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## Annex II: Kaduna Communiqué

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### KADUNA COMMUNIQUE

We, Christian and Muslim religious leaders from 5 Northern and Middle Belt States of Nigeria namely: Bauchi, Plateau, Kano, Kogi and Kaduna, assembled together by the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) Nigeria North Area Committee, at the Jacaranda Retreat and Conference Centre in Kaduna from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2010, under the theme '*Christian and Muslim Co-operation for Conflict Prevention/Management, Peace Building And Reconciliation*'

**Concerned** that these 5 states among others in the region, are experiencing intermittent violent conflicts that militate against the peace of the states and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims.

**Recognising** that Islam and Christianity wield the largest following in our regions and constitute the 2 major religious faiths in Nigeria.

**Certain** about the multifaceted causes of violent conflicts that range from political, economic, social, ethnic, religious and various machinations bordering on land ownership and power struggles.

**Wary** that in spite of the multiple causes, violent conflicts are often portrayed in national and international media as Christian and Muslim conflicts to the exclusion of all other causes.

**Conscious** of the need for justice, peace and reconciliation for the development of the region.

**Aware** that the solution to violent conflicts of any kind in our states and in Nigeria at large, cannot appropriately be resolved without the active involvement of the leadership of Church and Mosque.

**Perturbed** by polemical utterances from both Christians and Muslims emanating from prejudices, stereotypes, militancy and extremism, political incitement and misinterpretations of the Bible and Quran, as well as the traditions of the two religions.

**Alarmed** by the infiltration of internal and external forces outside the area of violent conflicts, exacerbated by ethno-religious negative solidarity and how ethnicism easily finds an ally in religion.

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**Determined** to uphold the principles of justice, peace and reconciliation rooted in our respective scriptures and traditions.

**Convinced** that ethnic, religious, social, cultural and political diversities are part and parcel of our African heritage which if harnessed properly can be more enriching and not divisive as is currently the case.

**Do hereby:**

**Commit** ourselves to engage with one another to set in motion proactive measures to uphold justice, safeguard peace, foster reconciliation and promote development.

**Resolve** to team up with all stakeholders and all people of goodwill within our dear country and others who have Nigeria at heart, to ensure that collectively we work towards sustainable peace in our states.

**To this end we call on:**

**The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria**

- To take stern action against inciters and perpetrators of violence
- To work towards the entrenchment of equality and social justice
- To comprehensively address the issue of indigene and settler, as embodied in the Nigerian constitution and which is interpreted in a manner that militates against national unity.
- To uphold the principles of good governance
- To be in the front line in supporting peace initiatives providing necessary fora for arbitration, peacebuilding and reconciliation.
- To strongly reprimand the perpetrators of violence without fear or favour.

**Christian and Muslim Leaders**

- To facilitate Christian-Muslim cooperation and collaboration for peace and peaceful coexistence.
- To translate the good precepts for peace in Christianity and Islam into everyday living.
- To look introspectively and address the issue of negative perceptions, prejudice and stereotypes that exists between Christians and Muslims.
- To avoid in all manner and forms polemical preaching and inconsiderate language used against one another.

- 
- ❑ To condemn publicly perpetrators of violence in the name of Islam and of Christianity.
  - ❑ To facilitate knowledge-exchange forums to dispel notions of negative solidarity.
  - ❑ To constantly engage with government, traditional rulers and all stakeholders to prevent violent conflicts and set up a mechanism for peace making.

**Christian and Muslim Women as the primary caregivers in the homestead and society and the bulk brunt bearers of violent conflicts;**

- ❑ To establish a women's network for support and advocacy, predisposed to further root the crucial role of family in the community.

**Youth**

- ❑ To refuse and avoid being used as tools for violence.

**Non-governmental Organisations**

- ❑ To take initiatives and support proactive measures to forestall conflict in the region

Adherents of the two religions

- ❑ To embrace the principle of unity in diversity and to demonstrate love, sacrosanct value for life, good neighbourliness and respect for the other's religion.

**Media**

- ❑ To play a unifying role in the country through the dissemination of information that promotes nationhood, rather than promulgating conflict creating information.

We articulate our sincere gratitude to PROCMURA for organizing such an invaluable forum and implore her to continue to engage with Nigeria to foster capacity building at the grassroots and national level with regards to Christian-Muslim constructive engagement for peace and development. In addition, to accompany us as we commit ourselves to replicate the values of this conference in our various states.

**Signed by:**

**The participants from the Northern and Middle Belt States in Nigeria at the 'Christian and Muslim Co-operation for Conflict Prevention/Management, Peace Building and Reconciliation' Conference.**

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## Annex III

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### **Muslim - Christian Cooperation for Conflict Prevention/Management, Peace Building and Reconciliation in Northern Nigeria**

By

Kabir Hamisu Kura

Executive Director

Community Development Initiative (CDI)

No 11 Sokoto Road, Nassarawa GRA,

P. O. Box 14089, Kano.

E-mail: [kabirkura@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kabirkura@yahoo.co.uk)

GSM: 0803 314 4162, 0808 554 2212

A Presentation during the 2010 Christian and Muslim Leaders Conference on Christian and Muslim Cooperation for Conflict Presentation/Management, Peace Building and Reconciliation.

**Theme: Christians & Muslims Cooperation for Conflict Prevention/Management,  
Peace Building and Reconciliation.**

Organized by the Programme for Christian – Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA)  
Nigeria North Area Committee

Held between 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 at Jacaranda Conference Centre, Kachia Road,  
Kano.

#### **Preamble**

***“Believers’ harbouring hostile feelings to other people who have faith in God is a moral weakness that displeases God, who prohibits all believers from displaying such feelings. He calls on people to establish peace, tolerance and friendship”***

We are living in an era in which we desperately need peace, friendship, and solidarity for peaceful coexistence and sustainable development. The tensions and conflicts that so defined the twentieth century continue in this new century, and innocent people all around us continue to suffer from them. Despite the urgent need for solidarity and cooperation, certain circles are perceived to be inciting ethno-religious conflict, particularly between the two greatest and deep-rooted religions (Islam and Christianity). This issue needs to be

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scrutinized, as the war of religions that they envisage is having disastrous consequences on us. One of the best ways of preventing such a disaster is to strengthen the dialogue and cooperation between these religions.

This is not a hard task, as there are no fundamental differences between Islam and Christianity. To the contrary, there is much common ground between them. Considering the current situation and the nature of the problems, we need shared values that will make cooperation necessary for solving the problems, promote understanding, tolerance, conflict prevention/management, peace building, reconciliation and further the cause of a society dominated by morality, happiness, tranquillity, security, and prosperity. This can be achieved by forming an alliance of all conscientious people, namely, sincere and religious Muslims and Christians who will come together and unite in this common cause.

## Introduction

There are many nations in the world with different colours, creeds, and languages. These differences have been a cause of enmity throughout history. The perceived wisdom is that people can never manage to co-exist and that disputes arise wherever such differences exist. However, this is a great misconception and the facts are otherwise. In fact, it is God in his own infinite mercy that created human beings in different communities and in the Qur'an, he calls ***all people to peace and security***:

**God calls to the Abode of Peace and He guides whom He wills to a straight path. (Qur'an, 10:25)**

It is a known fact that, in some parts of Northern Nigeria, there have been reoccurring conflicts and disputes between members of the two religions in recent past, and these can be linked to the erroneous reasoning and evil motives of certain states, nations, and individuals who pursued their own economic and political gain instead of the central beliefs and teachings of the two religions (Christianity and Islam). One of the common aims of these divinely revealed religions is to ensure the happiness, security, peace, and tranquillity of all people by opposing conflict.

A sincere believer is one who quest for justice, peace, tolerance, and support for all people to attain peaceful coexistence. There is therefore, the need for cooperation and tolerance through dialogue and alliance among us the believers of the two religions. This dialogue and alliance should not be restricted to meetings and conferences alone, but rather put into practice the promotion of unity in diversity between people who advocate common values, fight for the same cause, and seek permanent solutions to common problems.



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## Manifestations of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

By ethno-religious conflict, it means a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious group and another of such group in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear, and a tendency towards violent confrontation. In Nigeria, it is interesting to note that ethnicity and religious bigotry have become a fulcrum of various forms of nationalism ranging from assertion of language, cultural autonomy and religious superiority to demands for local political autonomy and self-determination. All these sometimes lead to some forms of contextual discrimination of members of one ethnic or religious group against another on the basis of differentiated systems of socio-cultural symbols and religion.

Therefore, in a multi-ethnic and religiously diverse society like Nigeria, with some forms of contextual discrimination, relationships between people may be characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear as it is the case among the ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria. In fact, this mutual suspicion and lack of cordiality among the various ethnic components explains why ethno-religious conflicts have become a permanent feature of Nigeria as a nation as far back as 1980s to date.

Thus, before the present democratic experiment in Nigeria, there were ethno-religious conflicts that claimed so many lives and property (Mohammed, 2005). Notable among such crises are the maitatsine religious disturbances in parts of Kano and Maiduguri in the early 1980s; Jimeta-Yola religious disturbances (1984), and Zango Kataf crises in Kaduna State (1992). Others are Kafanchan College of Education Muslim-Christian riots; Kaduna Polytechnic Muslim-Christian skirmishes (1981,1982); and the Cross vs the Crescent conflict at the University of Ibadan (1981-1985). Yet other early ethno-religious conflicts include the Bulumkutu Christian-Muslim riots (1982); Usman Danfodio University Sokoto (1982); and the Muslim-Christian Clash during a Christian procession at Easter in Ilorin, Kwara State (1986).

Against the background provided above, it then means that since a long time ago, many parts of Nigeria have become theatres of war, characterized by an increasing number of ethnic and religious crises. The spate of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria has however, increased with the birth of the Fourth Republic. The frequent occurrence of ethno-religious conflicts with the coming of democracy is due to freedom provided by democratic rule. The first leg of ethnic and religious riots in Nigeria in recent time was in July 1999, when some Oro cultists in Sagamu, in Ogun State accused a Hausa woman of coming out when the cultists were outside with their gnome. This led to some altercations, which eventually led to a full-blown crisis. Many people, majorly of Hausa and Yoruba tribes lost their lives. The infamy was however, temporarily put to check only when a dusk to dawn curfew was imposed on the sleepy town of Sagamu. Unfortunately, however, as the infamy was put off in Sagamu, reprisal killings started in Kano, a major Hausa city. As a result, many people

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died and property worth billions of Naira destroyed. Kano residents of Southern extraction who had lived, all their, adult lives in the ancient city of Kano had to return to their native land to count their losses. When Kano City was settling down for peace, Lagos erupted with another orgy of violence, visibly as a mark of vengeance of the Kano mass killings of the Yoruba tribes men. This time, the O'dua People Congress moved against the Hausa/Fulani traders in the popular 'mile 12 market' and for two days, the area was turned to a killing field. Another ethno-religious conflict that left a remarkable mark in Nigeria was the Kaduna/Enugu riots. The root cause of this set of riot was the introduction of the Islamic Legal Code (Sharia) by some governors of the northern states of Nigeria. Governor Ahmed Yerima of Zamfara State first introduced the Islamic Legal Code in October 1999, which was greeted with pockets of unserious protest. Initially, not many harms were committed as a result of the protests over the introduction of the Sharia code.

However, the hitherto subdued fire was ignited when Governor Mohammed Makarfi of Kaduna State tried it in February 2000. Because of the deep seated animosities between the Muslims and Christians in Kaduna State in general and the state capital in particular, coupled with the fact that both are almost at par in population, the two went for their swords and many were slain in cold blood.

In the Kaduna riots, the Igbo tribe (a predominantly Christian ethnic group) was mostly affected. However, like the Sagamu incident, and as it should be expected, Enugu and other Igbo cities erupted in violence when many Igbo returned dead and those who were lucky to escape had tails of woe to tell, as they too were targets of attack by the Hausa/Fulani in Kaduna. It is important to note here that the Kaduna/Enugu ethno-religious riots present some features that look like the prelude to the 1967-1970 civil war in Nigeria. In other words, the riots constituted sufficient force that could lead to a civil war as law and order collapsed in the two areas.

In October, 2000, another ethno-religious conflict occurred. This was the Lagos-(Idi-Araba/Oko-Oba) Kano mayhems. The cause of this was the misunderstanding between the Hausa residents and the Yoruba in Idi-Araba in Lagos over the use of a convenience by a Hausa resident, as a result of this misunderstanding many Yoruba residents of the area were killed with bows, arrows and machetes. Responding; the O'dua People Congress (a Yoruba militia) came into the picture and things worsened. Later, Oko-Oba, another Lagos suburb with a high population of Hausa/Fulani stock joined the fray of madness. The violence later spread to Kano and as expected the southerners were mostly the victims.

In September 2001, the ethnic tension between the Tivs and Iunkuns in Plateau State reached a head after decades of fighting. The September 2001 ethnic tension was caused by what can be called a mistaken identity. What this means is that some Tivs took some nineteen soldiers to be Iunkuns but in fake army uniform. The Tivs youths captured them

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and slaughtered them one by one. The reprisal attack by the men of the Nigerian army in Zaki Biam was devastating. Also in the same month Jos, the Plateau State capital city, joined the madness. The cause of this was the appointment of a Christian as a Local Council Chairman. It is interesting to note that by the time sanity found its way back to the city, more than hundred and sixty (160) lives had been lost in the mayhem.

In the following month of the same year, that is October, 2001, there was another 'mayhem' in Kano. This was, however, caused by an international event when some terrorists attacked the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in the United State of America. Shortly after the United States launched an offensive against the Taliban government in Afghanistan, Kano erupted with another round of ethno-religious conflict. In this case, some Islamic fundamentalists who felt that the United States of America had no reason to bombard Afghanistan decided to set the city of Kano on fire. Like the earlier crises in the city, the Southern tribes in Nigeria were mostly the victims of the Kano ethno-religious conflict. All the crises events presented above and which occurred before and since the coming of democracy in 1999, remain stark reminders that the conflict hotbeds around the country are always steaming and ready to explode at the slightest provocation. From the various examples of ethno religious conflicts cited, it can be seen that there is no sharp distinction between ethnic conflict and religious conflict. What this means is that a conflict that begins as an ethnic 'conflict may end up as a religious crisis and vice-versa. This explains why ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria are always devastating in their effects.

## **Causes of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria**

The events of ethno-religious conflict that have pervaded the country as reported above are also stark reminders that the conflict hotbeds around the country are many and may still be waiting to explode – **May Allah prevent it**. This shows that, the ethno-religious conflicts are evils that are always around us and which as claimed by Jega (2002:36) tend to always stretch the bounds of unity to a potentially snapping point. The most logical question that arises from the above is what are the causes of these ethno-religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria?

As we have seen so far in these discussions, ethno-religious conflict is distinguished from other types of social conflict in that it involves ethnic groups, which are of different religions. In discussing the causes of ethno religious conflict in Northern Nigeria therefore, it is important to mention at this point that both religious and ethnic factors are present in the majority of social conflicts the Northern Nigerian people have witnessed. Religion and ethnicity as they present themselves in Nigeria have therefore become critical factors in ethno-religious conflict. At different levels and times people experience religious or ethnic discrimination, people complain of past and present religious and ethnic discrimination, people demand for religious or ethnic rights in their state, and more importantly, the state

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uses religion or ethnicity in political discourse or action. What the above means is that ethno-religious conflict is a multi-causal variable. For effective discussion of the causes of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria therefore, there is a need to put this into consideration.

A major cause of what we now see as ethno-religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria has to do with the accusations and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry. In every nation (Nigeria inclusive), there is no complete agreement on how wealth, power and status are to be shared among individuals and groups. There is also no agreement on how to effect necessary changes and reforms. This is because, different groups and individuals have diverse interests in which case, some groups will have their aims met, while others will not. What this means is that conflict (ethno religious ones inclusive) usually occur when deprived groups and individuals attempt to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology. Thus, in Nigeria and going by the various examples of ethno-religious conflicts cited earlier. There seems to be a divisive interplay of politics, ethnicism and religions, which has consequently led to the rising nationalism and militancy of various ethnic and religious movements.

It is interesting to note that the overall consequence of this is the escalation of various ethno-religious conflicts that are witnessed all over the country today which are meant to correct any perceived form of marginalization, oppression or domination.

It is important to note here too that the failure of the Nigerian leaders to establish good governments, forge national integration and promote what can be called real economic progress, through deliberate and articulated policies, has led to mass poverty and unemployment. This has resulted into communal, ethnic, religious and class conflicts that have now characterized the Nigerian nation. Poverty and unemployment have therefore served as nursery bed for many ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria because the country now has a reservoir of poor people who warmongers recruit as mercenary fighters. What this means theoretically is that poverty and unemployment increase the number of people who are prepared to kill or be killed for a given cause at token benefit. This explains why all ethno-religious crises that ever occurred in Nigeria have a large turnout of people (including the under-aged) as fighters.

A very important cause of ethno-religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria is the breakdown of such vehicles of social control that characterized the traditional African societies such as: the family, education, law, religion and political system that cared for the well-being of all citizens. Indeed, the malfunctioning of all these important institutions has actually increased ethnic and communal conflicts in Nigeria. For instance, the inability of many homes to make ends meet with the family income, tends to increase immorality, broken fatherless/motherless homes, divorces and drunkenness, leading again to a large reserve of youths who could be employed for execution of ethno-religious conflicts. It is also

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important to note that the school system in Nigeria today is in shambles and cannot impart even sound knowledge, let alone instill discipline and desired type of morality. The religious institution is also not playing its expected roles, while the law enforcement agents indulge in crimes, demand bribes and collect illegal levies from motorists openly and, shamelessly. All the above constitute a wrong signal to the society and encourage social vices within it thereby laying the foundation for conflicts in general.

Our security operatives' orientation tends to encourage and legitimize the use of force and violence as instruments of social change and attainment of set goals and demands. From this, it is customary to see that, the use of coercion and force in settling conflicts has become a tradition in the Nigerian body politics. Strongly related to this is the uncontrolled arms supply, which has quickened the outbreak of; conflicts, and encourage belligerents to go on fighting rather than find peaceful settlement to disputes.

As noticed by Ikejiani Clark (2005) over the years, many events in Nigeria have led to the politicization of mistrust, intolerance, violence and acrimonious relations between the mainly Moslem north and the Christian south of Nigeria. To this extent, Ikejinai-Clark contended that there has been an unfortunate insertion of ethno-religious discrimination and incompatibility in the structures of the Nigerian State since the colonial period. In 1931 for instance, the colonial administration under the leadership of Governor Donald Cameron did not encourage intermingling of religions. An advice given by the governor is indicative of this. The Governor advised the Christian missions to tread softly in Moslem areas so as to maintain the stability of indirect rule. The political events of the January 15, 1966 coup and the July 1966 counter-coup further entrenched ethno-religious confrontation in Nigeria. This is because the killings and counter-killing that follow the coups which took ethnic and religious colorations as the Muslim dominated tribes in the north were set against the Christian dominated tribes of the southern region.

## **Islam and the Promotion of Peace**

Islam, a religion of peace, tolerance and acceptance, requires believers to treat all people with justice and respect. Devout Muslims are tolerant, forgiving, modest, understanding, gentle, genuine, and honest. In fact, God commands them to be just even when it is not in their own interests or those of their families to be so; to feed orphans and prisoners of war first, even if they are hungry themselves; and to be selfless, patient, and firm in virtue. Such Muslims are far more accepting of non-Muslims, for they know that compulsion is disallowed in religion. When dealing with non-Muslims, they do their best to show the way to the right path, address the other person's conscience, and become the means of this person's acceptance of a virtuous life, which is only possible if God grants him or her faith.

It is a known fact that, throughout Islamic history, the People of the Book have been always treated with tolerance in Muslim societies. This was particularly evident in the Ottoman

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Empire. It is a well known fact that the Jews, whose rights were denied and were exiled by the Catholic Kingdom of Spain, took refuge in the lands of the Ottoman Empire. When Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror captured Istanbul, he granted both Christians and Jews all their fundamental rights. Throughout Ottoman history, Jews were regarded as a People of the Book and enjoyed peaceful coexistence with Muslims.

## **Non-Muslims in the Period of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)**

When we examine the relations of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with the people of the Book during the first years of Islam, we see that he co-operated with Christians. When Muslims were subjected to cruelty by pagans in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) told them to migrate to Ethiopia, a place where Christians lived at that time. King Negus, the Christian ruler of that country, accepted the migrant Muslims and protected them against oppression.

The Qur'an also gives the example of Jesus' disciples to other believers for their loyalty to God and His messenger. There are also striking similarities between the first Muslims and the first Christians.

The tolerant attitude adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) towards Jewish communities also sets a good example for all believers. During the period of the Constitution of Medina, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) treated Jews kindly and tolerantly. He encouraged that there be co-operation, counseling and goodness between Muslims and Jews. Indeed, this was put into practice in daily life. This just and tolerant attitude of the Prophet (pbuh) surely applied to all people from all religions and races. Despite treachery, attacks and plots, the Prophet (pbuh) always forgave the perpetrators in compliance with the verse **"those who pardon other people"** (Qur'an, 3:134). And as the verse suggests, **"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and kindly instruction, and discuss (things) with them in the politest manner..."** (Qur'an, 16:125), he always summoned people to Islam with gracious advice.

## **Recommendations**

In view of the aforementioned, it is my sincere hope that this forum with Allah's guidance and help will achieve lasting peace and peaceful coexistence in Northern Nigeria and by extension Nigeria. I therefore offer the following recommendations:

- Need for more integrated and articulated programmes of conflict prevention. Such programmes should be able to effectively resolve and prevent ethno-religious conflict as the case may be. Emphasis should be on Early Warning Signals (EWS) monitoring and detection.

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- ❑ Encourage the formation of effective and functional platforms like PROCMURA for ethno-religious leaders so that through them it would be possible to establish a network for conflict prevention and management at the grass root.
  - ❑ The youth and in particular in school and out of school should be targeted education and sensitization on conflict prevention/management, peace building and reconciliation.
  - ❑ Media sensitization for wider societal reach.

## Conclusion

Given the deplorable state of Northern Nigeria in development indices, Muslims and Christians have opportunities to engage in programs that will alleviate poverty, advance the freedom of the citizens of the country.

The dialogue of action is an important means of curbing religious violence in Nigeria. Both Islam and Christianity preach peace, social justice, and charity.

In both the Muslim and Christian tradition, there exists a deep spiritual heritage. Dialogue can exist at this level. Muslims and Christians can share their religious and mystical experiences with each other. Muslims can learn from Christians as well as Christians learning from Muslims. This will help to clarify the false positions held by both Muslims and Christians.

Muslim – Christian relations in Nigeria are a very complex set of relations given the many Islamic and Christian sects in Nigeria. The history of the country as well as the history of the religious groups is complicated.

This discussion is in no way exhaustive but a reflection on some of the major events in the history as well as the major issues involved in a deliberation of Muslim – Christian relations in Northern Nigeria.

Muslims have an honourable past with justice, mercy, tolerance, compassion, conscience displayed and the noble values they possessed. A God fearing Muslim avoids all kinds of behaviour which will not be pleasing to Allah.

The social life marked by peace and tolerance during the administration of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the caliphs succeeding him and other Muslim administrators, depended on commitment to the Qur'an. There is therefore, nothing to prevent the Muslims of today drawing lessons from past experiences and re-establishing cooperation, peace building, conflict prevention and reconciliation for peaceful coexistence brothers and sisters whom God created and put an end to cruelty and promote unity.

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## **Annex IV**

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**A PAPER PRESENTED AT THE CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM COOPERATION FOR  
CONFLICT PREVENTION/MANAGEMENT, PEACE BUILDING AND  
RECONCILIATION IN FIVE NORTHERN AND MIDDLE BELT STATES OF NIGERIA  
AT JACARANDA RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTRE, KADUNA, NIGERIA,  
OCTOBER 6-9, 2010 BY THE RT REV MUSA MWIN TULA, CAN CHAIRMAN  
BAUCHI STATE CHAPTER/ BISHOP ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF BAUCHI.**

### **PREAMBLE**

Protocol – permission to stand on all the existing protocol.

Greetings - in the name of God the Father, and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Appreciation – I stand to appreciate the effort of the organizers of this timely and important conference of pulling together enlightened, educated and experienced Christian and Muslim leaders from some of the most conflict prone states/zones for the purse of mutual understanding and how to work together to prevent/manage the recurrent crisis/conflicts, now and in the future.

Before I proceed, permit me to read from the Holy Bible;-

***“What causes quarrels and conflicts among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want, you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask. You do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”(James 4:1-3; NIV).***

This paper would like to present; (a) a brief highlight of some signals of threats to National Peace, Co-existence and Unity in the five Northern, Middle Belt States and Our Nation Nigeria (b) general view of the causes of conflicts / quarrels amongst us, (c) a brief catalogue of conflicts/ terrorist acts for three decades (1980 – 2010) within these label zones some parts of Nigeria, (d) Conclusion.



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## **SIGNALS OF THREATS TO NATIONAL PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE, UNDERSTANDING AND UNITY.**

After independence in 1960, Nigeria continued to face the following challenges; 1) Ethnic conflicts, 2) religious conflicts caused by Islamic Fundamentalists and Jihadists Sects like; Maitatsine, Izalatul, Kala-Kato, Boko-Haram, etc. 3) Insecurity in different parts of Nigeria, 4) political and leadership struggles for power, 5) poverty and economy crisis, 6) human assignments and injustice, 7) child trafficking and child abuse, 8) discrimination and marginalization of Christians in Northern Nigeria, 9) corruption and mismanagement of public funds, 10) Youth and family delinquencies due to broken homes or marriages, 11) Fallen standard of Education and increase of dropout from schools, 12) The uncertainty of the future of our nation (Nigeria), 13) civil wars, 14) boundary adjustment problems, etc

In 1978, 87, Constitutional Assembly for constitution drafting deliberations came to a standstill over the controversy on the provision for Sharia Courts. The intemperate, inciting utterances and threats by members from various regions and religions raised tensions all over the country.

The recurrent experiences of religious conflicts/crisis in Northern Nigeria for the past 29 years that has been identified that these religious violence are spearheaded and fuelled by some Islamic Fundamentalists, Jihadists and Terrorists, namely; 1) Maitatsine Sect, 2) Shiites Sect, 3) Kala-Kato Sect, 4) Boko-Haram etc. They used machine guns, bombs and other dangerous weapons to kill and to carry out destructions. The question is how do these people acquire these weapons? Who supplied the weapons to them? Where are our security agencies when these weapons are being imported into these areas or brought in and distributed to the people from state to state, Local government to Local government, community to community and from house to house? This resulted to the loss of millions of lives and property worth billions of naira. There was no serious or concrete action ever taken by the Federal and State government to investigate, arrest and punished/dealt with these shameless perpetrators of evil in our society.

The Niger Delta crisis that has been lingering for years that claimed both natural and human resources. The Federal government is trying to down play this issue. It is a warning signal of greater disasters unforeseen/ahead. Bribing in other to ret rift arms/weapons from them is a fire Brigade work, real investigations needs to be made to what is the brain behind /causes of Niger Delta crisis? Have the people been marginalized? Discriminated against? And, neglected in one way or the other? How do they start to recruit/organize themselves for trainings and execution of such mission/activities within the area? How can these problems be best handled? There is need to study the remote cause, the immediate cause and the possible ways to nip/address these issues now and future.

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## GENERAL VIEW OF THE CAUSES OF CONFLICTS/ VIOLENCE

There are many symptoms and signals of conflicts, factors and causes of conflicts such as;

- Differences in Religion, emotions, lack of communication, struggle for power, ethnicity, culture/ tribal sentiments.
- Scarcity of resources and exploitation
- Value/ goal differences
- Subjugation/Oppression.
- Suppression of interest.
- Dictatorship type of Government.
- Negative Solidarity
- Ignorance / illiteracy
- Indoctrination
- Mis -interpretation of information
- Mis- understading of information
- Mis- application of information
- Lack of exposure.

## A CATALOGUE OF CONFLICTS AND TERRORISTS ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA FROM (1980-2010).

A brief highlights of Terrorists Attacks/religious violence in Northern Nigeria from 1980-2010 are:

### ***(a) First wave terror attacks and violence (1980-1989)***

- \* May 1980,Zaria Kaduna State, religious violence in Zaria: Christian properties burnt / destroyed
- \* December 18-29, 1980,Yan-Awaki Ward in Kano, Kano State, religious violence by Maitatsine sect, Cameroonians from the Kotok tribe who had his infamous Kingdom in the heart of Kano, 4,177 people were killed, Christian properties worth millions were destroyed..
- \* October 29-30, 1982,Bullumkutu,Maiduguri,religious violence by Kala-Kato and Maitatsine sect, 118 people killed, Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.

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- ✳ October 29-30,1982,in Kano, Kano State , religious violence by Muslim demonstrators, Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.
  - ✳ February 27-March 5,1984,Dobeliward,Jimeta-Yola Gongola state, Maitatsine sects,763 people killed,5,913 displaced, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - ✳ April 26-28, 1985,Pantami ward Gombe , police lost 11rifles to the fanatics 7,231 rounds of ammunitions,68 smoke catridges,5 glass grenades and 6 rifle magazines, Bauchi state, Maitatsine sect, 105 people were killed, Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.
  - ✳ May 3,1985,muslims students society at the University of Sokoto wanton rampage protesting of the programmme drawn in commemorating the achievements of Nana Asmau, Othman Dan Fodio's daughter.
  - ✳ March 1986, Ilorin, Kwara state, Muslims and Christians clashed at Easter Procession.
  - ✳ May 5,1985, Ibadan, University of Ibadan,Oyo state, Muslims Society Students of the same Institution with dangerous weapons attacked innocent people and burnt the figure of the Risen Christ, Chapel of Resurrection, while Sokoto University was still boiling and University of Ibadan.
  - ✳ March 10,1987,(1) Kafanchan,Kaduna state, at College of education Kafanchan in the crusade known as "mission 67", a new Muslim convert to Christianity known as Bellow Abubakar ,made reference to his past life experience as a Muslim, this made the Islamic Students to believe that Abubakar was extolling his new faith to the retirement of his old time, Islam. Muslims and Christians clashed at the College of Education Kafanchan Lost of lives and burning of mosques by Christians and some native tribes, this riot engulfed the whole Kaduna State. (2)Katsina,Funtuwa,Zaria,Gusau,Kaduna, Kaduna state, people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions
  - ✳ February 1988, Kaduna ,Kaduna polytechnic, Kaduna state, religious violence amongst students , Muslims destroyed the foundation walls of the Christian Chapel.

***(b) Second wave terror attacks and violence(1990-1999)***

- ✳ April 1991, Katsina,Katsina state, religious violence spearheaded by Mallam Yahaya Yakubu , Leader of the Muslim fundamentalists, Shiite sect in Katsina ,It was a protest over a blasphemous publication in Fun-Times. Several lives were lost, Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.
- ✳ April 1991, in Bauchi, Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi state, started between a Fulani man and a Sayawa meat seller in Tafawa Balewa . Escalated in a full blown

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violence and later took the coloring of a religious war in Bauchi, people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.

- ✧ October 1991, in Kano , Kano state , A peaceful procession initiated by the Izala sect to halt Reinherd Bonke, from having a crusade in Kano , later degenerated into very bloody religious violence people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- ✧ May15, 1992, Zongon Kataf,Zaria,Kaduna,Ikara,Kaduna state , Kataf and Hausa clash, over market placement, later took the dimension of inter-religious war between Muslims and Christian experienced other major cities of Kaduna, this culminated into arrest and detention of Major General Zamani Lekwot (rtd), people were killed, displaced and rendered homeless, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- ✧ January 1992, Funtuwa, Katsina state, The Kala –Kato sect, assaulted the village head and burnt down the police vehicle. people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- ✧ May 5, 1993, a clash between two Muslim sects over the use of a mosque built in Tudun Wada area of Brigade Quarters in Kano metropolis. Two people including a police officer were killed.
- ✧ September 4,1994, Potiskum, Yobe state, Muslims violent demonstration that led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions. people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- ✧ In 1994,in Bauchi, Bauchi state, Appointment of a Muslim Sayawa over the Christian Sayawa commissioner by Governor Rasaki Raji and forcefully funded the Muslim reception . The Governor replaced a Christian commissioner with a Muslim .
- ✧ In 1995, in Kano, Gideon Akaluka, an Igbo man was murdered in Kano prison by some Islamic religious bigots, where he was kept in custody for allegedly using a sheet of the Koran to clean up after defecating.
- ✧ May 30,1995,in Kano, at Abubakar Rimi Market , Sabon Gari ,Kano Market, Nwankwo Audu and Okoniyo were engaged in a fight which later spread throughout the market and the city of Kano leading to civil disturbances.
- ✧ May 30, 1995, in Bauchi, Bauchi state, misconception over two Hausa women who parked their car in front of an Igbo Shop. Two Hausa men burgled the car and soled a bag ,the Igbo trader notify the culprits to the ladies, they were reported to the police later released the two Hausa men later picked fight with the Igbo's. Other Hausa people in the area saw the fight and support their brothers, disregarding the reason for the fight. Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.

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- \* July 1, 1995, in Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi state, a pre-planned attack by the Hausa Fulani Muslims of Tafawa Balewa led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* September 18, 1996, in Zaria Kaduna State, about 35 Shiites protested the arrest and detention of their leader, Mallam Ibrahim El-Zaky-Zaky and attacked policemen on duty after the death of some of their members in Zaria.
  - \* February 8, 1997, in Kano, 4 members of the Fundamentalist Shiites Sect were shot dead in a brawl with police at the Kofar Mata Eidil-Fitr praying ground in Kano, the members of this sects were making statements accusing religious and traditional leaders in the country of misguiding Muslims and disturbing the concept of Islamic religion.
  - \* July 25, 1997, in Kaduna State, Shiites protested the refusal of authorities to allow them to stage a demonstration in solidarity with their leader Ibrahim El-Zaky-Zaky who was charged to Court. The police fired tear gas canisters to disperse the group who were shouting Islamic slogans, 4 people were killed in the process.
  - \* September 19, 1998, in Kano, a clash between the Shiites Sect and the Securitymen at the end of Jumaat prayer at Fagge Jumaat mosque in Kano, the sect organized an illegal procession demanding the release from detention of their national leader, Ibrahim El-Zaky-Zaky
  - \* December 11, 1998, in Maiduguri, Borno state, A protest against the Government's decision to allow the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge C R K in public schools, led to Muslims violent demonstration, led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* December 1999, in Ilorin, Kwara State, Muslims fundamentalists struck, led to 14 churches were destroyed by them.

***c.) Third wave; terror attacks violence (2000-2010)***

- \* February 21/May 22, 2000, in Kaduna State, Sharia crisis: Demonstrated eye Christians led to violent demonstration by Muslims, led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- \* May 2001, in Kaduna metro, Kaduna state, Miss World crisis: staging of miss world beauty contest in Nigeria, Muslim staged a violent demonstration that led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- \* July 7, 2001, in Jos metropolis, and environs, civil disturbances, led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.

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- \* September 7, 2001, in Jos, a woman was said to pass through a crowd of Muslim worshippers, as their usual custom, it spilled for riot. Muslim staged violent demonstration that led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* In May 2002, in Jos, Plateau State, killing took place between the two religions as a result of a continues violence by Muslims which led to confrontation between Muslim which led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* July 2002, in Langtang, Wase, Plateau state, riot between Christians and Muslims as a result of harbored tension by both groups over previous over previous crisis this led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* In 2004, Terminus Market was burnt down properties worth billions of naira was destroyed.
  - \* February 18, 2006, Denmark Cartoon / religious crisis as a result of caricature cartoon of the prophet, violent demonstration by Muslims was staged, lives were lost, churches were burnt and properties were destroyed.
  - \* February 22, 2006, Denmark Cartoon / religious crisis as a result of caricature cartoon of the prophet, violent demonstration by Muslims was staged, lives were lost, churches were burnt and properties were destroyed.
  - \* November 28, 2009, in Jos metropolis, Jos North Local Government election PDP, snowballed into a religious conflagration over 400 people lost their lives. this led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* July 29, 2009 Potiskum, Yobe State, Boko-Haram Sect, burnt a Police station in Potiskum.
  - \* July 29, 2009 Maiduguri state Boko-Haram Sect, properties were burnt.
  - \* January 17, 2010, Hausa/Fulani strike Jos, Bukuru, Pankshin and environs of Plateau State, above 400 were killed, houses burnt, Churches burnt and properties worth millions of naira.
  - \* March 7, 2010 Fulani from Boto/Magama Gumau, Strike Dogo NaHauwa of Plateau State, 315 Christians were killed and mass burial took place on 8/03/010
  - \* On October 1, 2010 during the Nigerian 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Celebration, the Terrorists strike the Eagle Square with a BOMB blast killing 12 people mostly are Security men, some few civilians and many wounded and cars destroyed in the FCT.

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**d) Terrorists attacks in Bauchi State (1985-2010)**

- \* April 26-28, 1985, Pantami ward Gombe ,Bauchi state, Maitatsine sect, 105 people were killed, Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.
- \* April 24, 1991, in Bauchi the Shiites Moslems clashed with law enforcement agents. This snowballed into tribal conflict when the Igbo community in Kano and Bauchi States tried to revenge. The same April at Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi state, another Riot started between a Fulani man and a Sayawa meat seller in Tafawa Balewa . Escalated in a full blown violence and later took the coloring of a religious war in Bauchi, people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- \* In 1994,in Bauchi Bauchi state, Appointment of a Muslim Sayawa over the Christian Sayawa commissioner by Governor Rasaki Raji and forcefully funded the Muslim reception . The Governor replaced a Christian commissioner with a Muslim .
- \* May 30, 1995, in Bauchi , Bauchi state , misconception over two Hausa women who parked their car in front of an Igbo Shop. Two Hausa men burgled the car and soled a bag ,the Igbo trader notify the culprits to the ladies, they were reported to the police later released the two Hausa men later picked fight with the Igbos.Other Hausa people in the area saw the fight and support their brothers , disregarding the reason for the fight. Christian properties worth millions were destroyed.
- \* July 1, 1995, in Tafawa Balewa , Bauchi state, a pre-planned attack by the Hausa Fulani Muslims of Tafawa Balewa led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
- \* Febuary 2006,In Bauch State, Denmark Cartoon / religious crisis as a result of caricature cartoon of the prophet, violent demonstration by Muslims was staged , lives were lost , churches were burnt and properties were destroyed.
- \* December 11& 12, 2007,in Tanko Government Secondary School Kagadama Yelwa Bauchi,Bauchi State, a foundation / Muslims Students praying ground, which some Muslims students demolished that one block played foundation in the night ,Muslim students refused to write their exams on Dec 11,2007, while the Christian requested that let teachers gave them their own exams because they wants to for Christmas Holiday, Muslims students insisted until their mosque is being built, There was no legal permission from ministry of education to erect such a structure, if they do why must it be only a mosque without a Chapel for Fellowship of Christian Students, FCS, this has led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.

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- \* February 10,2008,in Yank LGA,Bauchi State, refusal of friendship between a Muslim and Christian girl, led to people were badly wounded and wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions, and burning of the Police Divisional Headquarters Yana.
  - \* May 13, 2008, in Ningi, Bauchi state, The Abduction of two Christian guild by some Muslims in the name of conversion to Islam led to people were badly wounded and wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions, the Palace's frontage of the Empire of Ningi was bunt.
  - \* November 3&4,2008, in Bauchi state, COCIN Church Sabon Kaura was demolished, and Assembly of God Church Kagadama Yelwa was burnt over night, CAN Bauchi state Chapter complained but action was taken by the state or Local Government.
  - \* Febaury1-19, 2009,silent destructions of Christian Churches in Azare, Ganjuwa LGA, and Inside Bauchi Metropolis,
  - \* February 20-24&27,2009,Muslims /COCIN Church, a parking /Dispute with a Mallam Isa Pantami Mosque ,distance from COCIN Church, led to people killed, wanton destructions of Christian properties worth millions.
  - \* July 26,2009, Operation Fire for Fire between the Security agencies and Boko-Harm/Talibans of Nigeria, several of them were wiped away. no destruction of public properties.
  - \* December 28, 2009, Kala Kato, in Zango around Railway of Bauchi State metropolis, dispute amongst them,
  - \* In September 2010, few day to the celebration of El-del Faith Sallah, Boko Haram Sects after the Evening Prayer, bunt The Nigerian Prisons Near the Emirs Palace in Bauchi and released all Members of Boko Haram out of Prison, they were well armed with AK 47 weapons.

## CONCLUSION

Conflict prevention is less costly than conflict management. To prevent future recurrence of conflict there is need to analyze any conflict by supplying answers to these questions;

- What is the nature of the conflicts?
- What parties are involved?
- How will it affect the Church, community, society or our nation if not prevented?
- How can it be prevented/ managed or what strategy is to be adopted to prevent / manage?
- Can conflicts be prevented / managed?



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There is need to encourage Christian / Muslim cooperation to foster mutual peaceful Co-existence, understanding and unity. There is need for more awareness and enlightenment CONFERENCES/ SEMINARS / INTERFAITH DIALOGUE to address the issue of ignorance and bridge gaps and to strengthens relations.

The Christians are peace makers, men whose mission is the reconciliation of quarrels, bridge builders, called people of the way, people of truth, players of peace, people surrounded by conflicts, crisis, violence, terrorists etc. But they need to analyze the attitudes of those who caused conflict matters a lot. Matt. 5:9.

Avoid the three agents that cause conflicts in our society:

- Mis- information
- Mis- interpretation
- Mis- application

**Glory be to the father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

***TR REV MUSA MWIN TULA  
CAN CHAIRMAN/ BISHOP, DIOCESE OF BAUCHI***

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## **Annex V**

### **PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE**

#### **DAY ONE – Wednesday, October 6, 2010**

Arrival of participants

#### **DAY TWO – Thursday, October 7, 2010**

0900-1100	Official Opening Ceremony
1100-1145	Group photo and refreshment
1145-1245	Case Studies of conflicts and Peace building
	➡ Kano State
	➡ Bauchi State
1315-1430	Lunch & Prayer
1430-1530	Plenary Discussions
1530-1600	Tea Break
1600-1645	Case Studies of conflicts and Peace building
	➡ Plateau State
1645-1730	Plenary Discussions
1730	Break for the day

#### **DAY THREE – Friday, October 8, 2010**

0700-0800	Breakfast
0800-0815	Prayers
0815-0945	Case Studies of Conflicts and Peace Building
	➡ Kogi State
	➡ Kaduna State
0945-1030	Plenary Discussions
1030-1100	Tea Break

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1100-1245	Group discussions
1245-1430	Prayers & Lunch
1430-1545	Group Reports
1545-1600	Tea Break
1600-1630	First Reading of the Final Communiqué
1630-1715	Mapping out the Way Forward
1715-1745	Evaluation & Final Reading of the Final Communiqué
1745-1800	Closing Ceremony
1800	Supper

#### **DAY FOUR – Saturday, October 9, 2010**

Departures

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## Annex VI

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### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

N°	NAME	STATE	ADDRESS/ Email	PHONE
1	James A. M. Sako	Kaduna		08030804917
2	Joy Modupe Obajulu (Mrs)	Kogi	Lokoja	08035072563
3	Rev. Fika A. Jen	Kano		08028291042
4	Fr. Dogojyaro Yakubu	Kaduna	yakubudogonyam@yahoo.co.uk	08058811233
4	Sabo Sawai by Isaa	Plateau		07035101313
5	George Tapwen	Plateau	Coordinator, Bridge Builders Association, Langtan	08039656512
6	Justina Ngwobia	Plateau	(JPRM) justinaminea@yahoo.com	08037018207
7	Bappah Saleh	Bauchi	Muslim Youth Association bappasaley@yahoo.com	08068062529
8	Isah A. G.	Bauchi	alozarow@yahoo.co.uk	0809544869
9	Alhaji Bala Lifid	Bauchi	Director Bauchi JNI	08023746852
10	Alhi Umar Yakubui	Bauchi	Dan Iyan Katagun, Community Leader	08036009277
11	Kabiru Kura	Kano	Member CMMRC kabirkura@yahoo.co.uk	08033144162
12	Pastor Kayode Ajibade	Kogi	Kayodeajibade2003@yahoo.com	
13	Rev. Fr. Oscar Pam	Plateau	Diocesan Interfaith	08035950650
14	Garra Mohammed	Plateau	babachanka@yahoo.com	07066900268
15.	Beji Jibe	Plateau	Muslim-Christian Youth Dialogue Initiative; jibebeji@yahoo.com	08084519179
16.	Murtala Sani Hashim	Plateau	Muslim-Christian Youth Dialogue	08036085773

			Initiative; murtala_sani@yahoo.com	
17	Alhi Tahoya Ibhim	Kaduna		08034755203
18	Rt. Rev. Y. I. Lunu		Dutee Anglican; duteeanglican@yahoo.com	08035839381
19	Rt. Rev.J. G.			
20	Rev. John Hayab	Kaduna	CAN State Secretary	08037009725
21	Mr. Goius Dachet	Plateau	DPJ-Jos; dpjJos@yahoo.com	08069578473
22	Alhi Sab DcGezawi	Kano	sdaudag@yahoo.com	08033351086
23	. Imam Sani Isah	Kaduna	saniisah@yahoo.com	08033001362
24	Mahdi Shehu	Kaduna	Bridge Builders Association of Nigeria; shehuks@yahoo.com	08035600678
25	Pst Engu S. O. Omale	Kaduna	soomale@yahoo.com	08033497615
26	Moses Alokpa	Bauchi	Catholic Organisation; moseealokpa@yahoo.com	07086286231
27	Edwin Ocheni	Bauchi	murphyreuben@yahoo.com	07039601986
28	Pst J. E. UJAH	Kogi		08065238626
29	Rev. John Hassan	Kaduna	Kagoro (kafanchan); jnbettyhas@yahoo.com	08036066181
30	Joshua Mallam	Kaduna	joshuamallam@yahoo.com	08034531268
31	Zwahu Yanwaidi	Kaduna	eyzwahu@aol.com	08034529986
32	Rt Rev. Musa M. Tula	Bauchi	State CAN Chairman; bishoptulabauchi@yahoo.com	08069582241
33	Fidelis O. Pemida	Kaduna	pemidaof@yahoo.com	08033117002
34	Dr. Ndagi Adamu	Kogi	Lokoja; ndagiadamu@yahoo.com	08034518629
35	S. L. S. Salifu	Abuja	Slsalifu12@yahoo.co.uk	08035860233
36	Kefas Akundo	Plateau	Takum; kefasakudo@gmail.com	08036147295
37	Lantana Abdullahi	Plateau	lantbaks@yahoo.com	08059690558
38	Alhaji Suleiman Usman	Kogi		08035907747

39	Jibrin Imam A	Kogi		08039434388
40	Lamy S. Lawal	Kogi		
42	Halimau Sanusi	Kogi		080125544561
43	Rt Rev. Dr. Josiah I. Fearon	Kaduna	archbishopfearonk@yahoo.com	
44	Peter Maji	Kaduna	majipeterx@yahoo.com	
45	Mrs. Cheto A. Yakubu	Kaduna		08043115371
46	Hadiza J. Agog	Kaduna		08055615769
47	Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah	PROCMURA /Nairobi	procmura@wananchi.com generaladviser@procmura.org	+254 20 4445181
48	Rev. Angèle Dogbé	PROCMURA /Nairobi	procmura@wananchi.com womenscoord@procmura.org	+254 20 4445181

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## Annex VII

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### CONFERENCE IN PICTURES



*Participants in session before the opening ceremony*



*PROCMURA's Chairperson, Bishop Fearon welcoming the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency Albaji Muktari Ramalan Yero, looking on is the General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillab.*



*Dignitaries at the high table standing for the singing of the National Anthem*



*Engineer Salifu, CAN Secretary General (right) discussing some issues with ..... (left) the Methodist.....*





*Bishop Josiah I. Fearon, PROCURA's Chairperson welcoming all participants.*



*The Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency Albaji Muktari Ramalan Yero, addressing the participants*



*Participants following the address on the focus of the conference*



*Religious leaders posing for a picture together*



*Rev. Dr. Mbillah welcoming the General Secretary of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) - Sheikh Aminu Abubakar*



*The CAN Secretary General, Engineer Samuel Salifu (centre) have a word with Rev. Fr. Oscar Pam (right), Catholic priest from Plateau State*



*A group photo of some of the leaders present at the conference*



*A section of the participants in session*



*Mrs Lantana of Plateau State receiving her Certificate from Dr. Mbillah*

*"It is great to see you all and great that you are here together to reflect on how to build and maintain sustainable peace in the region. This is already an important step."*

**The Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency Alhaji Muktari Ramalan Yero**

*"In spite of the multiple causes of the conflicts which are well known to Christians and Muslims alike, the media simply report such violent conflicts as religious conflicts simply because those who are involved in the conflicts are more often than not people who adhere to the Christian or Muslim faith."*

**The Chairman of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) Rt. Rev. Josiah Idowu Fearon**

*"We as religious leaders need to work together for peace and ensure that our actions depict peace. This will set an example to those of our co-religionists who look up to us for direction. We have to work together and have a common focus on how to live in peace and embrace brotherhood and sisterhood so that we can move forward as a people created by God and put together to live alongside one another in this country called Nigeria."*

**The General Secretary of the Christian Associations of Nigeria (CAN) - Engineer Samuel Salifu**

*"It doesn't matter whether you are Christian or Muslim, we all share a common humanity and none of us can be regarded as anything else but human beings"*

**The General Secretary of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) Sheikh Aminu Abubakar**

*"We need to take self-criticism seriously as a corrective measure, where we can look at our co-religionists in the face and tell them that they are wrong instead of supporting them and being partners with them in wrong-doing."*

**The General Adviser of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah**



**PROCMURA**

P.O. Box 66099-0800

Nairobi, Kenya Office

Tel: +254-20-4445181/ +254-20-4451342,

Email: [procmura@wananchi.com](mailto:procmura@wananchi.com)

Web: [www.procmura-prica.org](http://www.procmura-prica.org)