



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



MAROUA COMMUNIQUÉ

**FRANCOPHONE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA
REGIONAL INITIATIVE FOR CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM
RELIGIOUS LEADERS ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

**MAROUA, CAMEROON
6 – 10 JANUARY 2013**



We, Christian and Muslim religious leaders from twelve (12) Francophone West and Central African countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Chad and Togo at the invitation of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCURA) in collaboration with the Church of the Lutheran Brethren of Cameroon (EFLC);

Having deliberated on the theme: **Francophone West and Central Africa Regional Initiative for Christians and Muslim Religious Leaders on Peace and Development** at Hotel le Sahel in Maroua, Cameroon from 6 to 10 January 2013;

Having critically examined and discussed major papers presentations on two sub-themes of the conference: Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa: ***Challenges and Opportunities for collaboration for peace and Development and the Role of Religion in Peace and Development;***

AWARE that religion and religious differences have often been negatively exploited for political, economic, social and personal gains, thereby causing conflicts that result in several loss of lives and wanton destruction of property;

VERY CONCERNED about the rise of violent conflicts in some of the countries here gathered;

ENCOURAGED that there are concerted efforts being made towards collaboration between Christians and Muslims for justice, peace and development in the countries represented at the conference and some other countries around Africa;

UNDERSTAND that, as religious leaders, we must at all times be agents of justice, peace and reconciliation for development and thereby serve as examples for others to emulate;

CONSCIOUS that Christianity and Islam of which we are religious leaders are the two major religions in west and central African countries;

Do hereby resolve:

- ✓ To lead our respective communities by example and take the responsibility of promoting peace and development in our respective regions;
- ✓ To conduct outreach and awareness campaigns within our religious communities and

help promote religious tolerance, positive peace and peaceful coexistence;

- ✓ To put in place national structures for Muslim-Christian relations in our respective countries based on the principles of PROCMURA;
- ✓ To respect and appreciate religious values, beliefs and practices of each other;
- ✓ To collectively, engage national governments, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the African Union (AU), to promote accountable and democratic governance and consciously search for peaceful solutions to crises that undermine some of our States;

In order to achieve these, we accordingly:

- Call on religious leaders to exercise political neutrality and avoid negative tendencies that have the potential of causing conflicts;
- Call on governments and political leaders to practice good governance and ensure peaceful transitions from one government to another;
- Appeal to governments and armed groups in northern Mali, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo to cease-fire and seek dialogue to resolve their disputes so as to put an end to the suffering of their people;
- Appeal to Christian and Muslim religious leaders of Nigeria to tirelessly continue in their quest for interreligious peace in their communities;

Finally we would want to:

Reaffirm our commitment and determination to be in solidarity with each other so as to maintain peace and work towards sustainable development in Africa in general and West and Central Africa in particular.

Express our gratitude to the Head of State and Government of Cameroun for allowing us to enter, stay and ensure our wellbieng during the entire meeting.

Commit ourselves to ensure that our actions are guided by the tenets of our two religions which have peace at the core of their teachings.

Recognise the importance of our partners from Denmark who have accompanied us in this journey of peace in the region.

Done in Maroua, January 10 , 2013.

Participants.

Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Chad, Cameroon, Rwanda.

