



**PROGRAMME FOR CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS
IN AFRICA (PROCMURA)**



**EAST AFRICA AND INDIAN OCEAN CONSULTATION ON
'WHAT PROCMURA IS AND WHAT IT STANDS FOR'**

**JUMUIA CONFERENCE AND COUNTRY HOME, LIMURU, KENYA
8TH - 14TH JULY 2012**

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Introduction

The 16th General Council of PROCMURA, held at Archbishop Desmond Tutu Conference Centre, Nairobi, came up with very innovative decisions aimed at strengthening PROCMURA's work in the continent. The Council analysed the work load of the PROCMURA Central Office staff and came to the conclusion that, if PROCMURA has to live up to its commitments and the demands for its expertise in Africa, it has to bring in more hands to support its work at grassroots as well as high profile levels.

As a result of this decision, the General Adviser was mandated to intensify orientation and retraining of all Christian scholars in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations (ICMR) in Africa, to adopt the PROCMURA model and approach to Christian-Muslim relations, so that they would appropriately represent PROCMURA at all levels of its work in the continent and engagement with others outside the continent. The process, the Council explained, will create a pool of experts for PROCMURA in the present time and into the future and also make recruitment to PROCMURA Area Committee and the Central Office easier.

The decision gave the General Adviser and his team at the Central Office the much needed impetus to start the process by bringing together 30 Masters and Ph.D graduates in Christian-Muslim relations to Jumuia Conference Centre and Country Home, in Limuru for a consultation on the theme *PROCMURA: What it is and what it stands for*. The three days consultation which attracted graduates from 6 countries in East Africa and the Indian Ocean country of Madagascar was very intensive and principally led by the General Adviser. He took participants through the two main principles of PROCMURA which are *Faithful Christian witness in an interfaith environment of Christians and Muslims that respects the spirit of good neighbourliness, and Christian Constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and peaceful co-existence towards the holistic development of the human family*. He also carefully explained PROCMURA's vision statement of *a continent where religious people live with their religious differences in peace*.

Apart from the above principal focuses of PROCMURA, the General Adviser took participants through the evolutionary process PROCMURA had to go through to stand the test of time, and how it came to evolve a fivefold approach to Christian-Muslim relations often known as: *Christian-Muslim relations in the Political, Economic, Cultural, Social, and Religious Spheres and Christian and Muslim cooperation and collaboration on environmental issues*. The consultation lived up to its name when the graduates made presentations in the area of academics and case studies of Christian-Muslim relations in the different countries and regions. The academic papers will be published in the PROCMURA's journal *From the Cross to the Crescent*. A welcome highlight of the conference was a statement to the participants to commit themselves to the service of PROCMURA wherever they may be.

The Vice Chancellor of St. Paul's University Prof. Joseph Galgalo, and the Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. Esther Mombo addressed the participants at different times and provided useful inputs on the *process PROCMURA is taking to create the resource pool for its work*. It

is important to emphasise that all except three of the participants, were former graduates of the St. Paul's University ICMR programme which the University and PROCMURA co-founded.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Dan mission and Church of Sweden who specifically set aside special funds for this particular consultation. We are hopeful that as we plan for a similar consultation of this nature to take place in the Anglophone and Francophone West Africa regions of PROCMURA next year, we would be able to raise the needed funds to do so.

DAY ONE

1. Morning Devotion



Rev. Ted Mwambila leading the morning devotion

The day started with a morning devotion led by Rev. Ted Mwambila, PROCMURA Executive Committee member from Malawi who came to participate in the consultation and to acquaint himself with its proceedings. His reflection was based on Luke 10:25-37. Commenting on the text, the Rev. Mwambila outlined the bad neighbourliness of the Samaritans and Jews of Jesus' day. He said that in spite of that the Samaritan cared for the Jew who was in trouble and in need having been beaten by robbers on the high way.

The Rev. Mwambila called on participants to be aware that the way Christians and Muslims relate today in some countries around Africa, is similar to what we read in the story of *The Good Samaritan*. He entreated participants to reflect on the text and concluded by making it clear that unless Christians work towards mending relations with Muslims where relations are broken, and maintaining good relations where such relations exist, we cannot claim to be good neighbours with Muslims, and may therefore not even assist such neighbours in need as the good Samaritan did to the Jew.

2. Welcome and Introduction



Ms Joy Wandabwa welcoming participants to the consultation

After the devotion, Ms. Joy Wandabwa, the PROCMURA Team Leader - Finance and Administration welcomed participants to the consultation. She asked them to introduce themselves by name, country of origin, their area of work and where applicable, their year of graduation at St. Paul's University.

From the introductions, it became clear that most of the male scholars were engaged in work related to Christian-Muslim

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relations while most of the women were engaged in formal employment. A number of them are parish priests.

3. Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony was presided over by the General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah. He began by a word of welcome to the participants, and invited Prof. Joseph Galgalo, the Vice Chancellor of St. Paul University who was the Guest of Honour to address the gathering.

3.1 Address by the Vice Chancellor of St. Paul's University: Prof. Joseph Galgalo

The Vice Chancellor began his address by first and foremost acknowledging the relationship between the University and PROCMURA and the support the organization gives to the University. He praised PROCMURA for its work on Christian-Muslim relations in Africa and specifically for organising the consultation. Turning his attention to the participants, he reminded them that Islam and Christianity are two great missionary religions in the African continent and therefore seek to add more members to their faith communities. Such an endeavour is imperative for the two religions and obviously can be a source of friction between the two since they are operating in the same space.



Prof. Galgalo of St. Paul University

Turning his attention on religious tolerance, the Professor lamented that the religious landscape of the continent in that direction was changing considerably as conflict based on religious differences or misunderstanding seems to be on the rise in some countries. To this end the ICMR programme at St. Paul's has opened a centre in Eastleigh¹, Nairobi, to enable students engage the Muslim community and by so doing practice what they learn in the lecture halls on how to relate with Muslims.

He reiterated how pleased he was that PROCMURA has brought together the St. Paul's ICMR alumni to help them adopt the PROCMURA model which he argued, is a model for

¹ Eastleigh is an area within Nairobi that is mainly populated by Somalis, hence it is approximately 90% Muslim populated. Life there is like living in a Muslim country where everything reflect Islam. The area is usually referred to as small Mogadishio and it is full of all kinds of business. According to some people, it is a very rich area.

Africa that would, if applied properly ease religious tension in the continent. He urged the alumni to use the opportunity to network and keep the communication going.

He concluded by thanking the General Adviser for his insight in the work of PROCMURA and pledged the university's support in whatever way possible, to ensure that this important ministry has trained quality persons to support its work.

3.2 Address by PROCMURA: Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah



The General Adviser addressing the participants

The General Adviser began his address by thanking Prof. Galgalo for the kind and insightful address and expressed his appreciation of the VC's re-affirmation of the partnership between St. Paul's University and PROCMURA and expressed optimism that such cooperation will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Providing the rationale, focus and objective of the consultation, the General Adviser elaborated 5 main points as follows:

- ✓ That PROCMURA in collaboration with St. Paul's University initiated the ICMR programme in order to have more people trained in the subject to provide the churches and PROCMURA with a pool of resource persons.
- ✓ That the ICMR field is a very sensitive and an ever changing domain that need to be revisited regularly, so as to adjust to the current reading of the situation
- ✓ That the General Council of PROCMURA was concerned about the fewer staff at the Central Office who are often overworked and looked for ways of engaging more hands in the implementation of PROCMURA's programmes.
- ✓ That many of those who have completed the ICMR programme at St. Paul's are posted to areas that they are not able to put their hard-earned knowledge into practice and it was time for PROCMURA to engage them in the implementation of its programmes.
- ✓ That as emerging scholars, it is important to keep track with academic work even as they embark on practical work in the field.

Commenting on the five points mentioned above, the General Adviser explained to participants that issues related to Christian-Muslim relations is becoming more and more

important for all communities and is now part of the agenda for many institutions, organisations even states. It is therefore paramount that those who have studied ICMR are kept active on regular basis so that they may be abreast with current developments in the field.

4. Presentation One: General Adviser Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah

The General Adviser began the first of his presentation by taking participants through a detailed history and background to the founding of PROCMURA in the late 1950's and how the organization developed and stood the test of time to become a vibrant organization and the sole programme of the churches in Africa on Christian-Muslim relations. He elaborated on the political and religious climate on the continent at that time. From the



Rev. Dr. Mbillah Giving the a presentation on PROCMURA

presentation, it came out clearly that the church in Africa became conscious of the situation in the continent where new changes were being experienced, and therefore started considering how to become self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. It was in the area of



Participants paying keen attention to the General Adviser's address






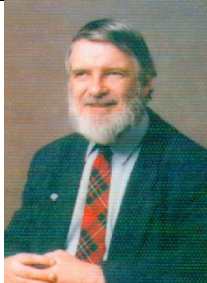

self-propagation that the seed of PROCMURA was sown with the understanding that the need for Christian constructive engagement with Muslims as co-citizens, would be imperative when African countries became independent. Dr. Mbillah went on to elaborate on the various preliminary discussions that were held

prior to the formation of the organization. The General Adviser also spoke of the change of name from Islam in Africa Project (IAP) followed by Project then to Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA).

After the historical brief, Dr. Mbillah pointed out the organisation’s area of work and explained that PROCMURA currently works in 20 countries around Sub-Saharan Africa and have 22 Area (country) Committees; that the organisation works with all the churches in Africa in spite of doctrinal differences and relates with all the Muslim groups and organisations in Africa in spite of doctrinal or sectional differences. The General Adviser then expounded on principles that guide PROCMURA’s work and finally threw some light on the governing and administrative structure of the organisation.

4.1 PROCMURA’s Journey So Far

Recounting what the journey of the organisation has been so far, Dr. Mbillah presented all those that have assumed the role and position of General Adviser since 1964 to date. He went on to explain that despite various changes that have occurred around the organisations leadership, it kept its vision, focus, and braved the various challenges in Christian-Muslim relations to remain what is arguably the most credible organisation when it comes to the area of Christian-Muslim relations in the African continent.

			
Prof. Wim Bijlefeld 1964 -1966	Rev. Dr. John Crossley 1966 -1972	Dr. Peter Ipema 1972 - 1977	Rev. Dr. James P. Dretke 1977 -1984
			
Rev. Dr. Johannes Haafkens 1984 -1996	Dr. Stuart E. Brown 1996 – 1999	Rev. Dr. Johnson Apenad Mbillah 2000 - Present	

A progressive list of General Advisors since 1964 to date

On change of names, the General Adviser expounded that the organisation changed its names to reflect its essence and changing realities while maintaining its mission based on its two principles of operation which are: *Faithful Christian witness in an interfaith environment of Christians and Muslims that respect the spirit of good neighbourliness and Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and peaceful co-existence towards the holistic development of the human family.* He further explained that in its mission, the organisation has been able to achieve important landmarks, by ensuring that Christians do not become polemical against Muslims in their witness to Christ and by building bridges of understanding between Christian and Muslim communities, as well as constructively engaging them to address issues of peace and development and other issues of concern to adherents of the two religions and the wider society.

In conclusion the General Adviser stressed on the fact that among the various situational changes that are happening around the organisation, there are also financial ones that have been brought about by the financial meltdown that the world at large is experiencing. In spite of that situation, PROCMURA's partners have kept faith with the organisation and together we are gradually working towards a programme of financial sustainability of the organisation.

In conclusion the General Adviser stated that Christian-Muslim relations in Africa is like a boat in the sea experiencing storm and that needs to be stabilised and we need all hands on deck to stabilise the boat. "You are here to learn more about PROCMURA, its ideals and goals so that you may join us to work towards ensuring that Christian-Muslim relations in the continent is stable and promising for future generations. Ours is to get Africa to order based on our commitment as Christians to 'Love our neighbours as ourselves' and to take the much needed measures to do so in our witness and constructively relating with our Muslim neighbours for peace in society and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims. This religious philosophy of PROCMURA is that which informs its vision "A continent where religious people live with their religious differences in peace' and not in segmented pieces."

5. Group discussions



After the two presentations that were followed by series of questions and answers, participants were put into groups to discuss and address some of the issues that were raised during the presentations as well as during the short discussion. This enhanced more interactions, sharing of experiences and collective participation in addressing the issues that the presentations focused on.

5.1 Question

Participants were given one question with multiple segments to deliberate on. Below is the question:

“Discuss PROCMURA’s two principles of faithful Christian witness and Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and peaceful co-existence and spell out how such can be carried out”

5.2 Group reports

Four groups were formed and they came up with their responses in the following order

GROUP 1

i. Faithful Christian Witness

- 1) Representing Christ as He would like to be represented by living Christ-like lives. This entails respecting, loving and understanding others without compromising our faith.
- 2) Through non-verbal communication of our faith, diapraxis.
- 3) Collaboration in dealing with common challenges through advocacy.
- 4) Engaging in interreligious conflict prevention and resolution.
- 5) Diligently witnessing Christ as a driving force to bring the Gospel to others in love and respect for good neighbourliness.

1. Constructive Engagement with Muslims

- 1) By consolidating existing good Christian-Muslim relations joint activities for peace.
- 2) Sensitizing Christian organizations and churches about PROCMURA and its activities
- 3) Consolidating Area Committee Programmes wherever we are.
- 4) Enriching ICMR course to incorporate project proposal writing, planning etc.
- 5) Getting the churches to utilise the services of the ICMR graduates to provide education on PROCMURA's ideals and goal to equip them to constructively relate with Muslims.

GROUP 2

i. Faithful Christian Witness

Definition: Living and acting according to the teachings of Christ.

- 1) Relational: Ensuring that our relations with others reflect our faith and belief.
- 2) Teaching the faith: Verbal communicating the Gospel in a way that convinces and convicts.
- 3) Being role models in our daily lives: Putting our faith in practice by being mindful that faith without works is dead.

ii. Constructive Engagement with Muslims

Approaches based on common ground in Christian-Muslim relations

- 1) Socialization
- 2) Economic engagement: women self-help groups.
- 3) Solidarity as God's people in times of difficulties and crisis; death, natural calamities.

The group also observed that among PROCMURA's constituencies, the East and Southern Africa region is the weakest in terms of activities. They therefore suggested that

- PROCMURA needs to strengthen links with national councils of churches to ensure that they take PROCMURA seriously.
- PROCMURA needs to provide funding for activities in the East Africa region which appears to be the weakest of the three regions.



Participants in small group discussion at the conference

GROUP 3

i. General Comments

Witness is an obligation laid down by Jesus Christ, we need to take it seriously.

(a) As Christians we need to hold firm our faith and our identity

(b) Meeting the basic needs of both Christians and Muslims without discrimination is a form of witness.

Leadership of PROCMURA needs to be more vibrant and ensure that:

- (a) All the three regions of PROCMURA are represented when it comes to personnel recruitment in the Central Office.
- (b) Need for constant communication with participants for good information sharing.
- (c) Engage ICMR graduates in all PROCMURA's activities.
- (d) Create PROCMURA Area Committees in some regions i.e. Kenya and Sudan.
- (e) Need for mentorship programme (like the Biblical example).
- (f) Ensure that Area Advisers are well catered for to boost their morale at work.
- (g) Involve more church leadership by direct contact with different Church denominations.
- (h) Work towards the sustainability of the programme.
- (i) Create a youth desk that would take charge of youth activities within PROCMURA.



Participants warming up in between the conference's sessions

GROUP 4

i. General Comments

- It's hard to strike a balance between different faiths without the proper constructive knowledge of the other faiths and doctrines.
- PROCMURA should advice Christians to avoid confrontations but instead engage in responsible Christian witness.

- PROCMURA should carefully work towards balancing practical engagement at high profile level with grassroots basic forms of engagement as both are important and life wire of the organisation.
- In Christian-Muslim engagement much has been focused on dialogue and less on apologetics. We suggest that PROCMURA should fill the gap by emphasising on relations and apologetics.
- PROCMURA must do more to ensure that its principles are felt on grassroots levels.
- The structures laid down by PROCMURA appear to favour national councils some of who do not carry the same to grassroots levels.
- Other churches apart from mainstream churches should be fully involved.
- PROCMURA's leadership should not only advise the leadership of the churches but be deeply involved in everyday activities of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa.
- PROCMURA should be flexible to have various and different approaches that would include ethnic factors in conflict resolution.

A.O.B

- PROCMURA should stick to its principles and improve on them and not be swayed by internal church, and other Christian organisation's politics.
- PROCMURA should empower ICMR graduates and involve them more in its activities.
- Improve on its communication network to ensure many know of the organisation and its activities.

Presentation Two; Critical Issues in Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa

Dr Mbillah started the presentation with some preliminary remarks about Islam and Christianity in Africa. He stated that a credible early history of Christianity and Islam cannot be written without the mention of Africa and reminded that graduates that Jesus was brought to Egypt as an infant to escape the wrath of Herod while early converts to Islam had to leave Mecca to Abyssinia (modern day Ethiopia) to escape persecution by Meccans. Dr. Mbillah argued that the presence of Jesus in Egypt and several years later the early converts to Islam, set the spiritual tone for the presence of the two religions in the continent.



Rev. Lusungu of Zanzibar making a point after the presentation

After the opening remarks, Dr. Mbillah carefully took participants through maps produced by the Central Office that illustrate the religious landscape of the continent and the politicisation of some of the religious figures. He explained that Christians and Muslims now form the majority in Africa, arguing that it made no sense any longer for anyone to refer to Christianity and Islam as Western and Arab religions respectively except in terms of history. Christianity and Islam, he contended, had become African religions by virtue of their large following, and by virtue of the fact that the two religions currently wield more followers than adherents of the African Traditional Religion(s).

As a result of the large numbers of Christians and Muslims in Africa, who live alongside each other coupled with the fact that the two religions are missionary in nature that seek to make converts and dread their own being converted, a lot needs to be done to promote peaceful living. To be able to do that, the General Adviser (GA) elaborated that it requires a comprehensive approach to Christian-Muslim relations. The GA explained the fivefold approach as Christian-Muslim relations in the political, economic, cultural social and religious spheres. Intertwined with this fivefold approach include issues related to governance, theological encounters, religious freedom, citizenship and how to work for peace and peaceful co-existence.

Day Two

1. Morning devotion



Rev. Joseph Mutei presenting the message

The devotion was led by Rev. Joseph Mutei alumni of St Paul's University who is now a lecturer in the same university. He based his reflection on Mathew 16:13-20. The Rev. Mutei began his reflection by recalling the strategy used by the Prophet Amos in the Bible. He stated that Amos' message had something for everyone and any audience that cared to listen to him. Amos began his message by referring to nations far away and gradually drew closer home to his audience.

He said that when Jesus sought to know whether people were clear about his identity, He started by asking his disciples. "Who do people say I am?". It was very easy for them to respond as it is always very easy to ride on what other people are saying. But then Jesus turns around to ask them "Who do you say that I am?" Peter's response, "you are the Christ the son of the Living God" was different from what people said about Jesus. He was simply saying You are the Messiah like others believe but beyond that, you are also the son of God - the living Most High God. According to Rev. Mutei, Peter was grounded in firm faith of Jesus and therefore commissioned to represent Jesus appropriately as a rock firmly rooted in faith.

The Rev. Mutei encouraged participants to be firmly grounded in faith in Christ, stressing that we cannot have any meaningful relationship with the others if we are not firmly grounded in faith. We need not compromise our faith when relating with our Muslim neighbours. He concluded by saying that our faith should engage with people of other faiths.

Critical Issues on Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (Continued)



Session of presentation of the critical issues

The General Adviser began with a recapitulation of the previous day's by reminding the participants that Islam is not just a religion but a way of life that is an embodiment of politics, economics, cultural, social as well as spiritual issues. The church in Africa therefore, needs to have a comprehensive approach that considers the above in order to be effective in its resolve to constructively relate with Muslims. He explained that Christians have always separated politics from religion which is not the case for Muslims. He made it clear to participants that since politics and politicians make decisions that govern all people, it was in correct for Christian leaders to advise the lay persons in the churches involved in partisan politics

4. Engaging with (CORAT Africa)



Dr. Ndhlovu of CORAT Africa engaging the participants

On introducing the Christian Organisations Research and Advisory Trust for Africa (CORAT AFRICA) to participants and the role they came to play in the conference, the General Adviser recounted that for the past five years, PROCMURA's operation had been guided by a five year Strategic Plan that is due for evaluation this year so as to pave way for a new Strategic Plan that will take the organisation through the next five years. The evaluative exercise was be

conducted by CORAT Africa, and it was Rev. Dr. Japhet Ndhlovu and Mr. David Oburu that came from CORAT to conduct the session.

Dr. Ndhlovu started by introducing CORAT Africa to the participants and said that ‘the Christian Organisation Research and Advocacy Trust for Africa’ (CORAT Africa) is a Pan-African non-profit making Christian organisation that is aims at promoting stewardship, integrity, leadership development and accountability in churches and church related organisations in the continent. CORAT, he said, has also other courses for institutions and individuals. It also does Research & Consultancy as well as evaluation even in churches.

He then explained to participants the process of the evaluation exercise. This was made up of questions for individuals to fill in and also group work. On the questionnaires, participants were to comment on the external context of PROCMURA, the extent to which the organisation’s mission statement has been achieved; the review of its 6 strategies and on the future of the organisation.

In the group work, four groups were formed and each group was to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the organisation and comment on them. Participants spent the late afternoon session working on the questions and discussing the future focus of PROCMURA’s work. The result of their findings and proposals thereof were given directly to the CORAT Africa team.

Day Three

1. Morning devotion

The morning devotion was led by Rev. Juliet Muthoni who based her reflection on I Kings 3: 16-28 which deals with the two women who brought a living and a dead child to King Solomon with both claiming to be the mother of the living baby. On expounding on how the wisdom Solomon employed to determine who the mother of the living baby was, and who it was that was mother of the dead baby Rev. Muthoni stated that this was only possible because Solomon had earlier asked God for wisdom to govern his people. She said that in Christian-Muslim relations we should always look up to God who is the source of wisdom to guide us. The Rev. Muthoni minced no words when she told participants that the ministry of Christian-Muslim relations is one of the most difficult ministries since both religions are missionary in nature and would seek to convert the other. This creates mutual suspicion which we have to pray for wisdom even as we seek to relate with Muslims for peace. We have been called by God to be able to lead, rule and advise with special wisdom. But, in addition, we are to promote peaceful coexistence as well as find ways to relate with the other despite our differences on religious grounds. For that, wisdom is paramount and we need to consistently seek wisdom from God. Rev. Muthoni went on to explain that applying wisdom means doing the right things - being just and ready to be responsible for our actions and inactions.

2. Paper presentation by participants



Rev. Patrick Randriatsfofo of Madagascar presenting his paper

Prior to the consultation, all participants were made to write a paper each on a topic of their choice in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, in their context or working environment. Participants made brief presentations (abstracts) of the papers that they wrote. As participants came from different countries and different regions if they came from the same country the papers reflected such differences. They ranged from analysis of Christian-Muslim relations to issues on the shariah, Sufism and history. The papers will eventually be edited and published in the

PROCMURA journal *From the Cross to the Crescent*.

2. Guidelines on academic life



Dr. John Chesworth (left) making a point, next to him is Rev. Mutahi Thegu (Deputy General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa,

Dr. John Chesworth, former lecturer of ICMR programme at St. Paul's University, made a presentation on the importance of academic life and stressed to participants that one should not quit academic life after having left the university because education is like an ocean, it does not have an end. He exhorted the participants to keep reading, keep their mind active, join academic

societies, attend conferences, and present papers. He pointed to the fact that the current generation has more advantage than the previous one because of internet through which, one can have access and read sections or even entire books, academic papers, articles and archives. Dr. Chesworth also elaborated on the importance of carrying out research, how it should be done and what they should do with it. To end his presentation, Dr Chesworth gave a list of academic websites, journals and archives.

3. Guidelines on Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa

Having begun the consultation on the principles of Christian witness and Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace, the General Adviser concluded the series of his lectures on providing guidelines for Christian-Muslim relations. Introducing the subject, Dr Mbillah explained that apart from Islam, there are other religions that Christians encounter daily and there is the need for the scholars to provide clear guidelines to Christians on relations with people of other religions. Christians cannot and in fact should not live in Islands of their own without relating with Muslims and people of other religions. The relationship is meant to create understanding, minimise friction based on religious differences as well as constructively cooperate and collaborate to ameliorate tensions and encourage positive tolerance.

It is paramount, said the General Adviser, that each group has an accurate understanding of what it means to relate with one another as people of different faith communities. As such, he spoke on what Christian-Muslim Relations are and are not, and the practicality of Christian-Muslim Relations. The General Adviser also elaborated on what Christian-Muslim Relations reject totally. What it rejects according to the General Advisor are syncretism, proselytism, religious indifferentism and theological relativism. He stressed that there are none trading elements in this relationship that has to be taken seriously. Expounding on this the GA made it clear that Christian-Muslim relations leaves intact the right, and indeed the duty, of every Christian to propagate the Gospel and for every Muslim to carry out Muslim *Da'wah* (call or invitation of for non-Muslims to become Muslims). In other words it upholds religious freedom and all that it entails. Before concluding his presentation.

4. Plenary discussion

Plenary discussions covered all the issues that were deliberated on in the entire three-day conference. There was room to bring on board all other issues related to Christian-Muslim relations in Africa and the world. This open discussions were very fruitful as it enabled participants to come up with various concerns they face in the environment that they work and indeed around the world.

All the discussions were very enriching, fruitful and educative. Participants as well as the presenters exchanged ideas, views and opinions on both practical as well as academic issues. It has to be said that participants came to the understanding that the field of Christian-Muslim relations is a very complex and sometimes sensitive issue that has to be dealt with carefully. As such, one always has to be very alert and context conscious in all that one does in relations to issues that have to do with Christian-Muslim relations. The sensitive nature of the subject makes it more delicate to the extent that global issues can affect local issues and vice versa.

5. Evaluation

At the end of the three day consultation, an evaluation form was given to participants who were to rate the event in terms of general comments, relevance of topics, venue and expectations. Below is the summary of what was said by the participants.

General comments:

In general, all participants highly appreciated the consultation. According to them it was informative, inspiring, and well organised. Further comments say the consultation was academic and practical, and has built up the alumni in order to be able to have a better and pertinent understanding of the present issues in Christian-Muslim relations. To some, the consultation has introduced them to deep knowledge and awareness of the principles of PROCMURA its vision as Christian church organisation, and its necessity it was largely appreciated. Participants said they highly appreciated the well elucidated principles of Christian witness and relations for peace. They also commented on the sharing of experiences which for them was very enriching.

Relevance of topics: Participants rated this aspect of the consultation as being excellent and very high powered and asked that next time, balance should tilt towards the practical aspect and everyday engagements at grassroots levels. The fact that participants were asked to present an abstract of their dissertation work was very good. It was, however, noted that some participants were not conversant with writing abstracts and therefore, some of the abstracts lacked focus. On the presentation on academic guidelines, there should have been an aspect showing how to prepare conference papers and respond to a paper at a conference.

Venue: The venue was rated as good in terms of accommodation. For the food, participants said that there should have been a variety. Generally speaking, all participants complained about the fact that the weather at Limuru was too cold and suggested change of venue next time or it should be organised at a different time of the year when the weather is mild.

Expectations: Participants echoed that their expectations were met. They however explained that since the consultation was about them getting to know PROCMURA better, there was need to have presentation on PROCMURA's work done in other regions and even countries so as to learn from others as well as have some practical experiences

6. Way forward

As follow up, it was agreed that participants should individually work out a plan of action that should be monitored by the Central Office. Periodical updates of what the individual does should be sent to the Central Office for documentation and posting on the website. PROCMURA was encouraged to give tasks to individuals who are willing to work on them so as to ensure that all kept abreast with emerging issues in Christian-Muslim relations. It was unanimously submitted that follow up conferences should take place so as to enable participants report on what they have accomplished after the proceedings of the conference.

7. Statement of Intent

Participants issued a statement of intent committing themselves to the ideals of PROCMURA and their determination to ensure that they work to promote PROCMURA wherever they may be. For details of the statement see annexes below.

8. Conclusion

In concluding this report, it is important to stress that this was a unique consultation in many aspects not just because of the numbers that attended and the open and frank discussions that took place, but more importantly the information that the General Adviser provided which he normally does not do so in open consultations. Some of the information which are not recorded in this work because they were meant to be off record were meant to assist them as they seek to work closely with PROCMURA and represent the organisation when called to do so.

Participants were encouraged and delighted about the entire proceedings of the conference and the quality of it that they asked for more. It is hoped that with time, it should be possible to have a follow conference to test what participants did with the information they gathered and what PROCMURA did with the suggestions they put forward.

Annexes

1. Statement of intent

STATEMENT OF INTENT BY ISLAM AND CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS GRADUATES FROM EAST AFRICA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN 13TH JULY, 2012

We the East Africa and Indian Ocean Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations Graduates, at the invitation of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relation in Africa (PROCMURA) participated in a conference with the theme “PROCMURA: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT STANDS FOR” The conference which took place at the Jumua Conference Center, Limuru Kenya from 8th to 14th July, 2012, brought together over 30 participants drawn from Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Madagascar.

Having thoroughly engaged ourselves on the principles on which PROCMURA operates and participated in academic papers presented by participants as well as information sharing, we unanimously agreed to commit ourselves to:

- i. The service of God and humanity.
- ii. Adhere to PROCMURA's principles of faithful and responsible Christian witness to the Gospel in an interfaith environment of Christians and Muslims that respects the spirit of good neighborliness, and Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and peaceful coexistence for the holistic development of the human family.
- iii. Strengthen network among the PROCMURA's three Regions (East and Southern Africa, Francophone West Africa and Anglophone West Africa) by sharing experiences and disseminate them to Area Committees for action.

To this extent we do hereby:

- i. Urge PROCMURA to intensify its collaboration with the National Councils of Churches and individual churches to promote its activities.
- ii. Call on all stakeholders within the PROCMURA constituencies to closely work with the ICMR graduates of St. Paul's University and all others committed to Christian-Muslim relations in Africa to use their knowledge and experience to promote PROCMURA's programmes in the continent and beyond.
- iii. Call on the leadership of the Churches in Africa to take Christian-Muslim relations seriously and to make it part and parcel of the churches life and ministry in an age where religious extremism seems to be on the ascendency.

In conclusion, we would like to acknowledge the richness of this conference in terms of networking, information and experience sharing, and recommend to PROCMURA to work out a plan of action that would enable consultations of this nature to be an annual event.

SO GOD HELP US

2. Gallery



Female Participants at the Conference



A reunion of the 1993 participants of PROCMURA 6 weeks conference that took place in Nairobi of which the General Adviser a resource person. PROCMURA has indeed travelled thus far. From Right: Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, General Adviser of PROCMURA, Prof. Joseph Galgalo, Vice Chancellor of St Paul's Univeristy, Professor Esther Mombo, Deputy Vice Chancellor of St Paul's University and presently a trustee of PROCMURA, Rev. Ted Mwambilla PROCMURA Executive Committee member, Dr. John Chesworth Co-ordiantor Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History 1500-1900 (CMR 1900)



Male Participants at the Conference



East Africa and Indian Ocean Consultation on 'What PROCMURA is and What it stands for'
Jumuia Conference and Country Home, Limuru, Kenya
8th - 14th July 2012

3.List of Participants

N°.	NAME	COUNTRY	EMAIL ADDRESS	Tel. No.
1.	Dr.John Chesworth	UK	John.chesworth@theology.ox.ac.uk	+441865613345
2.	Rev. Ted Mwambila	Malawi	tedidamwambila@yahoo.co.uk	0888394250
3.	Ms. Veronica Mtaita	Tanzania	vmtaita@hotmail.com	+255789396505
4.	William Kopwe		wkopwe@gmail.com	+255786370001
5.	Philip Elijah Mvungi		pheprince@yahoo.com	+255755706266
6.	Rev. Hilda Kedmond Kabia		hkmbahasi@yahoo.com	+2557636405
7.	Mbilinyi Lusungu		lusungubenja@yahoo.com	+255713946133
8.	Richard Joseph Kamenya		rickamjoe@hotmail.com	
9.	Claudin Raoelinarivo	Madagascar	pasteurclaudin@yahoo.com	
10.	Bernard Maximilien		pastmaximilien@yahoo.com	
11.	Rev. Rafalimanana F. Deyris		revdeyris@live.fr	
12.	Randriatsfofo Patrick		tsiffofo@yahoo.fr	
13.	James Obwony P. Bol	Sudan	obwonyobol@yahoo.com	0915987350/ 0956241540
14.	Rev. Daniel Dushimimana	Rwanda	dushimimanadaniel@yahoo.fr	+250878760302
15.	Zipporah	Kenya	<u>zippymwaura@yahoo.com</u>	0700550253

Nº.	NAME	COUNTRY	EMAIL ADDRESS	Tel. No.
	Mwaura			
16.	Grace Muthoni Karii		Gracemuthoni2007@yahoo.com	0727537770 0736664338
17.	Musau Catherine Ngina		Catejose2006@yahoo.com	0721720568
18.	Catherine Khamunga Mushira		<u>catherinemushira@yahoo.com</u> catherinemushira@gmail.com	0715604423
19.	Kabuba Joyce		Jkabuba05@yahoo.com	0722433911
20.	Muthoni Juliet Bundi		muthojully@yahoo.com	0721739065, 0732739065
21.	Anya Damary	Kenya	<u>damary73@gmail.com</u> anyadamary@yahoo.com	0720258949
22.	Florence Iminza		iminzaflorence@yahoo.com	0723637410
23.	Kabuu Milka Waroguru		Kabuumilka@yahoo.com	+254711930835
24.	Rev. Joseph Wandera		wandera@spu.ac.ke	
25.	David Kanyoni			
26.	Joseph Mutei		mutei@spu.ac.ke	0722796294
27.	John Peter Bwire		johnbwire@yahoo.com	
28.	Mutahi Thegu		thegumu@yahoo.co.uk	

N°.	NAME	COUNTRY	EMAIL ADDRESS	Tel. No.
29.	Mwaikuni Merseline		merselinemwaikuni@yahoo.com	
30.	Rev.Jürgen Klein	Ethiopia	info@vision-jk.de	00251- 911090665
31.	Belay Abakiya		belayabakiya@ymail.com	00251- 911090665

PROCMURA STAFF	
Rev.Dr. Johnson Mbillah	
Joy Wandabwa	
Angèle Dogbe	
Dinah Mombo	
Paul Mwalavu	

