



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



GENERAL ADVISER'S REPORT 2014

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



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Prophet Jeremiah is commonly referred to as the “Weeping Prophet” essentially because of human beings inhumanity to their own kind, which saw many people literally slaughtered during his time. Jeremiah continued to weep for the slain, whom he described as his own people (Jeremiah 9:1). What stimulated such unending weeping of the prophet is the hardheartedness of the people to heed to warning, to heed to the voice of reason - indeed to listen to the voice of God. In PROCMURA’s Central Office, we commissioned staff to come with a Catalogue of events that serialises the Boko Haram menace, the mayhem caused by Al-Shabaab, the sporadic and intermittent attacks of the Ansar al-din supported by the Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in the Sahel region of Mali and all other attacks where religion has been implicated. The findings have been telling as they have been depressing to all of us. On Boko Haram, for example, it was noticed that since they stepped up their insurgency in 2009, there has been over seventy attacks and killings as at December 2014.

Out of this number, over 30 attacks took place in 2014 alone with thousands of lives lost and many cases of abductions – the worst of them all being the over 200 secondary school girls abducted from Chibok, North Eastern Nigeria. As all are aware, the whereabouts of the girls remain unknown. On Al-Shabaab, our findings revealed that in Kenya alone, nearly fifteen terrorists’ attacks in 2014 have been attributed to them. The above facts and many others make PROCMURA with its vision of an African “Continent where Christian and Muslim communities in spite of their differences, work together for justice, peace and reconciliation...” see itself as a weeping organization.

It is disheartening in many respects as the extremists and the radicalised who claim to be religious fail to heed to the voice of reason – indeed the voice of God who has entrusted to PROCMURA a ministry of peace and reconciliation. In all these seeming setbacks, we take solace and encouragement from the words of Martin Luther King Jr. When he said: “The ultimate measure of a man or woman is not where he or she stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he or she stands at times of challenge and controversy.” It is these realities that make us in PROCMURA to be resolute in our commitment to the vocation that God has called us. We therefore can without any hesitation reiterate the Apostle Paul’s statement that we may be “afflicted in every way but

not crushed, perplexed, but not driven to despair” (2 Corinthians 4:8). The doom and gloom picture we have vividly described above are direct antithesis of other parts of PROCMURA’ life and work. We have made great strides in getting large sections of the Christian community to embrace the PROCMURA’s mission of: Faithful Christian witness to the Gospel 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.

In fact, the year 2014 had a much needed balance towards that aspect of PROCMURA’s work which falls within its Core Business. In a similar way, PROCMURA’s focus on building bridges of understanding between Christians and Muslims for the promotion of “justice, peace and reconciliation towards the holistic development of the human family and the environment”, continues to provide hope for Christians and Muslims and the wider society. Ecumenical partners within Africa and our partners of Europe and North America, governments, the international community, and regional bodies within and outside Africa appreciate PROCMURA’s efforts.

Therefore, they see the organisation as a valuable partner in their quest for the peace and development of nations, continents and the entire human family. The PROCMURA Central Office image building which is guided by its sense of humility after God has endeared it to the wider public who visit the new offices and in awe recognise what God can do to lift an organisation of such humble beginnings. The 2014 report captures this mixed salad of PROCMURA’s work, which our readers have unfortunately no choice but to consume as they reflect on an organization who now and then sings:

*Jesus, where can we find you
In our world today?
Jesus where can we find you,
Incarnate word, today?
Look at your brother beside you;
Look at your sister beside you;
Look! Listen! Care!*

Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah
General Adviser
January 21, 2015

2.0 CENTRAL OFFICE MATTERS

2.1 New Central Office/Financial Sustainability Project is Completed



The Construction of the new PROCMURA Central Office with a financial sustainability focus which began with the ground breaking ceremony and laying of the foundation stone by the chairperson of PROCMURA, Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon on 26th July 2012, was completed and handed over to PROCMURA on 14th August 2014. The Central Office staff relocated to the new offices on 1st September 2014. The partitioning which was slow due to financial constraints is virtually completed

and we have since 1st January settled down well to continue work in earnest. We are overwhelmed with joy, that our collective dream did not turn out to be a nightmare, and that our hope did not turn out to be an unreasonable hope.

We are grateful to God who has brought us thus far, to our Executive Committee for their resilience and encouragement, to our partners who shared our dream and contributed generously towards the project, our trustees who committed themselves and signed the aspects of the loan agreements that were tricky in many ways, the building committee, the architect, the contractor and all service providers who contributed to the success of the project. As it may be seen from the Team Leader, Finance and Administration report we have already got tenants for the rentable two floors of which we are grateful. Our greatest challenge is how to service the Oiko Credit Loan as fast as we are able since the interest rate is very high and is bound to affect our cash flow. Any person or group of persons that have ideas as to how this may be done is most welcome to provide us assistance/information.



Conference Facility



Office Space

2.2 Staff Issues

Newly appointed Programme Officer begins work



The newly appointed Programme Officer for PROCMURA, The Rev. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel began work on 1st March 2014. This addition to PROCMURA's workforce is very welcome indeed. The Rev. Ezekiel who is a Lutheran minister from the northern part of Nigeria joins PROCMURA with a wealth of experience in ecumenism. His interest and research on issues related to just peace will be an asset to PROCMURA's programmes on justice, peace and reconciliation.

We welcome Rev. Ezekiel to the wider PROCMURA family and look forward to his contribution which will no doubt immensely increase PROCMURA's capacity to attend to the various challenges that its work faces.

Programme Assistant returns after training

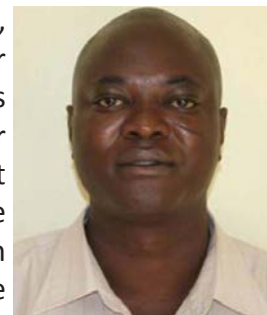
Ms. Florence Iminza, the PROCMURA Programme Assistant who, apart from being the staff person in charge of Literature and Communication is also in charge of Women Issues in Christian-Muslim relations participated in a six weeks intensive training on women's role in peace-making and reconciliation. The training took place at the Swedish Theological Institute (STI) in Jerusalem, between February and March 2014. Her training was made possible through the sponsorship of Church of Sweden.



Ms. Florence Iminza during one of the training sessions in Jerusalem

New Regional Coordinator for Anglophone West Africa appointed

The Venerable Joshua Mallam, PROCMURA Area Adviser for Nigeria North who was appointed Regional Coordinator for the Anglophone West Africa Region by the Executive Committee, assumed office in January 2014. The Venerable Mallam holds a Master's degree in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations from St Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya. He succeeded Rev. Moses Khanu, the Area Adviser of PROCMURA for Sierra Leone who had been Regional Coordinator for six years. We look forward to working with him to strengthen the work of the Anglophone West Africa Region.



2.3 PROCMURA Area Adviser Appointed Bishop.



Bishop Nathan I. Samwini displays the Citation assisted by his wife

The PROCMURA Area Adviser for Ghana, Rev. Dr. Nathan Iddrisu Samwini was appointed and consecrated Bishop of the Northern Ghana Diocese of the Methodist Church, Ghana on Sunday 9th November, 2014 in Tamale, the Northern Regional capital.

PROCMURA was represented at the consecration by Joy Wandabwa, PROCMURA's Team Leader, Finance and Administration. One of the General Adviser's daughters, Priscilla Mbillah, accompanied Ms. Wandabwa to the ceremony. Ms. Wandabwa delivered a goodwill message of PROCMURA to Dr Samwini and his family, and assured him that PROCMURA will continue to draw from his wealth of experience. She urged him to use his elevated position to propagate PROCMURA's ideals to his parishioners among his fellow bishops in Ghana.



Bishop Samwini accompanied by Priscilla Mbillah (left), his wife (2nd right) and Ms. Joy Wandabwa(right)

Bishop Samwini on his part praised PROCMURA for its work around the continent and indicated that his work with PROCMURA for nearly 20years has made him what he is when it comes to Christian-Muslims. He was very grateful for PROCMURA’s presence in such an important event of his life and ministry in the Church.

2.4 Proposed Appointment of a Liaison for Area Committees.

The proposed appointment of a Liaison for Area Committees has been put on hold. This temporary short term position was intended to help reinvigorate the existing Area Committees of PROCMURA. As we at the Central Office continue to reflect on what is the best way forward, the Executive Committee will revisit the issue at its meeting in March.

2.5 PROCMURA named Goodwill Ambassador of the Golden Rule

In recognition of PROCMURA’s contribution to the cause of peace in society and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Africa, the United Religions Initiative (URI) and the Golden Rule International on 5th April 2014 conferred on PROCMURA the award of “Goodwill Ambassador of the Golden Rule” The award ceremony took place at the AACC Desmond Tutu Conference Centre, Nairobi, during the commemoration ceremony of the International Day of the Golden Rule. The award was presented by the Executive Director of URI Global, The Rev Victor H. Kazanjian Jr. assisted by

Ambassador Mussie Hailu, Director URI Africa, and Ms Rattan Channa, Global Council Trustee URI. The award was received by Rev. Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel, Programme Officer of PROCMURA, on behalf of the General Adviser Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah who was on travel. In his address before the presentation of the award, the Director of URI-Africa, Ambassador Mussie Hailu commended PROCMURA for the profound manner in which it has carried out its activities in Africa and even beyond. He recounted his enriching encounter with the General Adviser at different forums and stated unequivocally that PROCMURA is unique in its programme implementation and target, and that it has remained steadfast to its founding objective of peacebuilding in the society and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Africa.



The Executive Director of URI Global, Rev Victor H. Kazanjian Jr. (centre) assisted by Ambassador Mussie Hailu, Director URI Africa (right) present the Award to Rev. Lesmore G. Ezekiel, PROCMURA, Programme Officer

2.6 Publication of the PROCMURA Strategic Plan



The Five-Year PROCMURA Strategic Plan which was concluded in 2013 has finally been published in an abridged form to facilitate easy reading and reference by partners, stakeholders and the reading public who have an interest in PROCMURA and wish to know its programmes focuses for the next five years. The financial aspect of the Plan remains with the Central Office and with PROCMURAs partners and constituencies. Those who have interest in the programmes and would want to provide support may contact the Central Office. The activity and financial reports of PROCMURA have been reworked to be

in consonance with the Plan. We remain grateful to all who assisted us in the visioning and bringing to fruition the document in its current form.

2.7 Security Matters

all of us at PROCMURA that indeed we do not walk alone. It also demonstrated that our welfare and the welfare of the organisation are as much in the hearts of our partners as are the programmes we carry out.

Thank you all for this very practical show of concern and solidarity.



Perimeter-wall enhancement at the General Adviser's residence



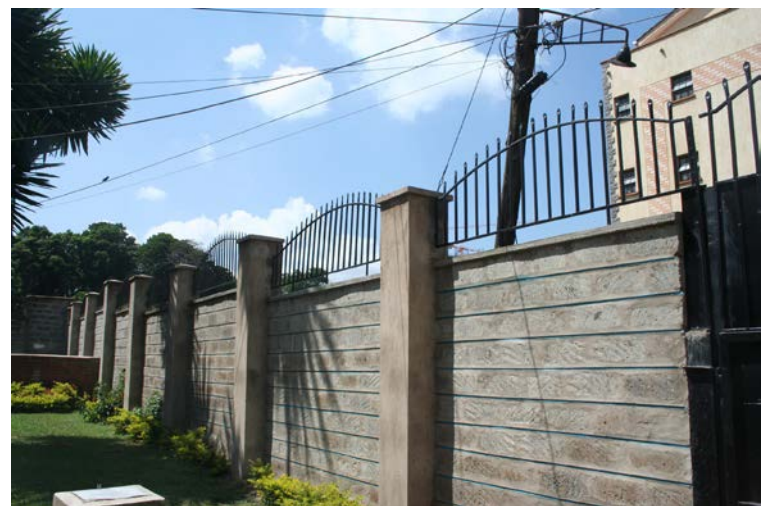
Intruder barbed wire

PROCMURA's constituencies, partners, and friends have already received a comprehensive report on the armed robbers attack on the General Adviser and his family on the night of Friday 14th March 2014 at his residence. We are grateful to God for saving our lives and enabling us to survive the ordeal. We would like to most sincerely thank our partners for the deep sense of empathy, concern, solidarity, and love shown to us when they received the news. It is worth mentioning that in the wake of the traumatising situation, as many as 5 partners from Europe and North America offered to provide a quiet environment for the General Adviser and his family to reflect and have emotional healing. Some offered to hire professional counsellors to assist us.



High-raised metallic gate

We would as a family and as an organisation want to say how we remain overwhelmed by the response to the appeal the Moderator of the European Liaison Committee Prof. Klaus Hock made to members of the European Liaison Committee concerning the beefing up of the security of the General Adviser's residence and the PROCMURA offices. As may be seen from the Team Leader, Finance and Administration report, the proposal she wrote towards security received massive support from our European and North American partners. The finances which we received enabled us to secure the General Adviser's premises, the office space adjacent his home where the armed robbers had access to his residence, and the newly constructed offices which only had minimum security. The response to the security situation reassured



Perimeter-wall enhancement at the property on Mimosa Road

3.0. PROGRAMME FOCUS

3.1 CORE BUSINESS/PROGRAMMES

3.1.1 Awareness Raising and Capacity Building/Enhancement

I. CHURCH LEADERS

Kigali, Rwanda, 8th July 2014



In the midst of growing radicalisation, religious extremism as personified in the activities of Al-Shabaab in neighbouring countries coupled with growing insensitivity in the way and manner that Christians and Muslims need to recommend their faith, the Area Committee of PROCMURA invited the Central Office to conduct series of workshops on awareness raising, and Capacity enhancement for Christian religious leaders. The gathering of the leaders took place in Kigali, the Rwanda capital and attracted 25 participants from various Church denominations in the country. The General Adviser, the PROCMURA staff in charge of Women issues in Christian-Muslim relations, Ms Florence Iminza, and Canon Joyce Kabuba, an alumni of the St Paul's University Master's programme on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations were the main facilitators of the programme.

The presentations made ranged from the basic tenets of the faith and practice of Islam, Guidelines on Christian constructive engagement with Muslims in witness and working towards peace and peaceful co-existence, the reality of extremism and what the leadership of the churches need to do about it. Workshops and group discussions on pertinent issues in Christian-Muslim relations in Rwanda provided PROCMURA with a wealth of information on the situation on the ground. After the conference the leadership of the churches urged PROCMURA to

step up its awareness raising activities for Christian leaders and to plan a conference for Christian and Muslim religious leaders on how to jointly counter extremism and radicalisation since it polarises society along religious lines.

Juba, South Sudan 23rd & 24th September 2014



PROCMURA's planned workshops in Rumbeck and Waw had to be redirected to Juba, the South Sudan capital because of the ethno-political crises that engulfed the newest country in the world in 2013 and 2014 - and still simmering. The Juba conference/workshop was aimed at building the capacity of the Christian leadership to eschew politico-ethnic or sectional differences and pave the way to constructively engage Muslims so that together they work for the peace of the land. It is important in the context of South Sudan to emphasise that PROCMURA recognises the important role of Church Leaders in peace-building and its maintenance in any society.

It is therefore expedient in a continuous basis, to work towards the enhancement of the capacities of South Sudanese towards increased involvement in conflict prevention and peace-making. In all 30 Church leaders from different denominations that constitute the South Sudan Council of Churches participated. The specific subject matter of the conference included among others: the dynamics of Christian-Muslim Relations, Conflict Prevention and transformation, and also on strategic steps in Entrenching a Culture of Peace. The church leaders thereafter expressed their commitment to deliberately work for peace in the society and peaceful coexistence between the Christian majority and the Muslim minority in the country.

Nairobi, Kenya, 30th September 2014



In the spirit of the visionary statement of PROCMURA reflected in both the constitution and strategic plan, which states: “to put before the churches, their responsibility of understanding Islam and their Muslim neighbour with the objective of constructively relating with them for peace and peaceful coexistence” PROCMURA organised an awareness raising workshop for Church leaders. The motivation for organising the conference at that time was the existential realities of religious extremism and radicalism expressed in terror attacks on the religious other in Kenya.

The conference, which took place at the new PROCMURA conference hall at its new offices in Nairobi, was to assist the church leadership to understand that terrorists have an agenda of creating rift and fuelling violent conflicts between Christians and Muslims in Kenya. At the end of the workshop, PROCMURA challenged and stimulated the church leaders to set their own contextual agenda for peace and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims for the greater good of their country. Over thirty five (35) church leaders and Christian theologians were in attendance.

II. WOMEN

Kigali, Rwanda, 8th – 10th July 2014

Guided by PROCMURA’s understanding that in Christian-Muslim relations it is easier for Christian woman to enter a Muslim woman’s world, PROCMURA organised a two-day capacity enhancement sessions for Christian women leaders in Rwanda. Thirty (30) Christian women from different church traditions participated in the workshop which was facilitated Ms. Florence Iminza and Canon Joyce Kabuba who is mentioned earlier in this report. The women looked at various women issues in Christian-Muslim

relations. Of specific importance were issues related to peace and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims, Interfaith marriages and its attended challenges, as well as understanding your Muslim neighbour’s faith and practice.



Issues on Female Genital Mutilation were also discussed. The participants had the chance to share their experiences and proposed ways of engaging with their Muslim counterparts in peace initiatives. Rev. Rose Marie, the Vice Chairperson of PROCMURA’s continental body played an important role in organising the conference and provided a lot of input from her wealth of experience as the person in charge of Women issues within the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda.

Juba, South Sudan, 24th September 2014



Sustainable peace is only possible when all stakeholders play their roles proactively. Women are major stakeholders in any society but in some societies they are not given the opportunity. It is with this understanding that PROCMURA organised a capacity empowerment seminar for Christian women leaders in South Sudan. The seminar focused on how women can, together with their Muslim counterparts, constructively contribute in concrete ways to the peace processes in South Sudan which is plagued with intractable violent clashes. Over twenty five (25) women were in attendance.

Nairobi, Kenya, 29th September 2014



In many countries, Kenya not being an exception, the role of women in initiating and strengthening Christian-Muslim relations in large measure cannot be waved away. This is especially true in communities where prejudices are held against the religious other due to the activities of few bad elements that hold biased religious feelings of the other. It was in recognition of the pivotal role that women can play in entrenching a culture of peace in multi-religious society of Kenya that PROCMURA organized a one day capacity enhancement workshop for Christian women representatives of church denominations in Kenya. Over twenty five (25) women participated in the one day intensive workshop. The workshop was held at the PROCMURA new conference room. The women shared the new perspectives gained at the end of the workshop and also committed themselves to work closely with their fellow Muslim women in overcoming prejudices and building life affirming relations for the good of their country.

III. YOUTH

Kaduna, Nigeria North, 16th - 17th June 2014



As a consequence of the volatile situation in the northern part of Nigeria precipitated by Boko Haram, PROCMURA organised an open forum for Christian youth in Kaduna, Nigeria North, to sound them on the growing trend of religious radicalisation

and extremism and to help build and/or raise their capacity to attend to the worrisome situation. The forum also gave the youth the opportunity to share experiences and to map out appropriate ways of constructively relating formally and informally with their Muslim counterparts to promote peace and peaceful coexistence.

Not fewer than twenty five (25) youths from different church traditions participated. The General Adviser, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah; Programme Officer, Rev. Lesmore Ezekiel Gibson, and the PROCMURA Regional Coordinator for Anglophone West Africa who is also the Area Adviser of PROCMURA Nigeria North, Canon Joshua Mallam facilitated the forum.

Juba, South Sudan, 24th September 2014



A capacity building workshop for youth of the churches in South Sudan was informed by the realities of intolerance, precipitated by ethnic and in some cases religious profiling of the other. These realities triggered the need for such a workshop, with the understanding that the youth are more susceptible to being lured into violence as they can sometimes be easily swayed to join the band of fighters.

The workshop aimed at assisting Christian youth to have a better understanding of basic Islamic principles, understand that terrorists who make Islam an ally in their violent acts ride on a religious ideology which most Muslims do not subscribe to. PROCMURA used the workshop to stimulate the participants to generate their concrete and realistic agenda for peace and social cohesion in their young country.

Nairobi, Kenya, 19th - 20th September 2014

As result of religious radicalisation experienced in Kenya in recent years and our quest to take the youth through the memory lane as Kenya marked the



first anniversary of the well-known Westgate Mall Attack, PROCMURA organised a two-day Christian youth workshop. The rationale of the workshop was to provide a platform for the Christian youth from different Christian traditions to engage the question of religious tolerance as a tool for achieving sustainable peace in Kenya. The PROCMURA Central Office conference hall served as the venue for the two (2) day activity. Thirty five (35) Christian youth leaders took part in the capacity enhancement workshop.

3.1.2 Literature and Communication

PROCMURA continues to hold a firm believe that the production of both promotional and academic literature for dissemination to the reading public will go a long way to propagate the ideals and goals of the organisation and contribute to knowledge of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa.

In the reporting year, the Literature and Communication office having produced the January to March quarterly newsletter decided to experiment on a weekly bulletin in its stead. The weekly bulleting stalled in July as we spent a lot of time working on settling in at the new offices. We intend to evaluate the value of both the quarterly bulletin and the weekly bulleting to ascertain which of the two is the most informative and will help us achieve our objective of intermittent dissemination of information.

Our determination to resume the publication of the bulleting “From the Cross to the Crescent” received a boost when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg approved our project proposal for the resumption of the said publication for 2015. We are working on it and shall sooner than later come up with such a publication.

3.1.3 Research and Documentation

Our strategic focus to embark on research and documentation in Christian-Muslim relations in Africa is yet to take off in earnest. We have seriously discussed the areas that need research and resolved to embark on religious extremism, radicalisation and the element of terrorism as it shows itself in the activities of Boko Haram, Al-Shabab, Ansar al-din among others.

3.1.4 Personnel Development

In the year under review, PROCMURA has three new students undergoing training at St Paul’s University for the Master of Arts (MA) in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. They are:

	<p>1. Rev. Robert Yodam Pangani - the Moravian Church in Tanzania. Sponsored by Mission 21</p>
	<p>2. Rev. Isa Bowman Dalatu – the Church of the Bretheren in Nigeria (EYN). Sponsored by Mission 21</p>
	<p>3. Rev. Ukoha Ngwobia Ukoha – Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Sponsored by ICCO & Kerk in Actie</p>

Other students in their second year of the MA course from PROCMURA are:

1. Rev. Margarate Salli Ndombo – Presbyterian Church of Cameroon. Sponsored by Mission 21
2. Rev. John Shettima – Methodist Church in Nigeria. Sponsored by the Methodist Church in Britain

3. Rev. Hayford Yao Azornu – the Evangelical Presbyterian, Ghana, Sponsored by EMW through St Paul’s University.

Others are:

1. The Rev. James Bol Obwonyo - Presbyterian Church of South Sudan who is also the Area Adviser of PROCMURA for South Sudan is pursuing a PhD at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. He is being sponsored by EMW and Mission 21.
2. Rev. Canon Joshua Mallam – Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion and Regional Coordinator of PROCMURA for Anglophone West Africa. PROCMURA sent him to Israel in November 2014 to participate in a 4 weeks programme on peace at the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem. The sponsor of the programme was Church of Sweden.
3. The Rev. Bernadette Yema Kadie Massaquoi – The Countess of Huntingdon’s connexion (Sierra Leone). Sponsored by Danmission successfully completed her Masters programme at St Paul’s University and has since returned to work as Associate Area Adviser of Sierra Leone. She will be a resource to our programme on Women issues in Christian-Muslim relations.

We are very pleased indeed that year after year partners continue to assist us in our personnel development programme. We will need to lament though, that the number of students for the Masters in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations at St Paul’s University could be better, otherwise the programme risk being suspended and eventually scrapped as result of inadequate enrolment of students.

3.1.5 Reinvigoration of Area Committees

The reinvigoration of the PROCMURA Area Committees has not yet begun in earnest. As mentioned earlier, the Executive Committee will revisit the issue at its next meeting. However, in the year under review, PROCMURA organised and met the Rwanda Area Committee to discuss ways and means of making the Committee more visible and proactive. The Committee, which already does relatively well, pledged to continue to do their best to keep PROCMURA more visible in the country. In

a related development, Sudan Area Committee that existed when there was only one Sudan has now split. The General Adviser, in the company of the PROCMURA Programme Officer and the person in charge of Women issues in Christian-Muslim relations inaugurated a new Area Committee for South Sudan during its Christian leader’s workshop in the country. It is hoped that in the near future, the reinvigoration of various Area Committees will begin in earnest.

3.1.6 Networking and Collaboration

PROCMURA has continued to work closely with the AACC and all other ecumenical organisations within the continent and beyond that share similar aspects of PROCMURA Mission and vision as it relates to Christian-Muslim relations.

In the world scene PROCMURA continues collaborate with the WCC and other worldwide confessional communions, such as the Lutheran World Federation and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

Below are highlights of the collaborative efforts that PROCMURA was involved in during the year under review:

Collaboration with Tangaza Catholic University, Kenya.



Rev. Lesmore G. Ezekiel making a presentation at Tangaza Catholic University

The Tangaza Catholic University in its efforts to revamp the Interreligious Dialogue and Islamic Studies in the institution organized a week-long exhibition aimed at displaying and showing documents and documentaries on very important initiatives and efforts made by World Religions on peace and peaceful coexistence in the world. The event spanned from 5th to 11th May 2014 at the university main auditorium. The week-long event climaxed with a symposium which had the theme,

“Christian-Muslim Relations in East Africa: Challenges and Future Prospects”. The Programme Officer, Rev L.G Ezekiel gave a presentation on the theme of the symposium from PROCMURA’s perspective. The text of his presentation is published in the Tangaza Journal of Theology. The Programme Assistant, Ms Florence Iminza took charge of the exhibition stand of PROCMURA. The University appreciated the contribution of PROCMURA towards the successful implementation of the event.

3.1.7 Collaboration with Ecumenical Partners

PROCMURA Joins African Women as they Celebrate 30 Years of Active Participation in Church Ministry



PROCMURA in its effort to maintain its commitment to women participation in its life and vocation joined the celebration of the participation and contribution of African women in the life and ministry of the Church in the face of HIV epidemic. PROCMURA was represented by the Programme Assistant, responsible for Women Issues, Ms. Florence Iminza. The conference took place at Jumuia Resort and Country Home in Limuru, Kenya, between 19th and 24th June 2014 followed by an open women celebration forum in the capital Nairobi. The conference under the theme: ‘Celebrating Women’s Ministry in Churches in the Era of HIV& AIDS’ brought together sixty one (61) African women theologians from Eritrea, Cameroon, Ghana, Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and a delegation from the Netherlands. During the conference, Ms. Iminza presented a paper titled “A historical overview of the Women’s Programme in PROCMURA”.

The General Adviser Participates in a Lutheran World Federation Conference

The General Adviser of PROCMURA, Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah served as a resource person at a conference organised by the Lutheran World Federation between 5 and 8 May 2014 in Dar es



Salaam, Tanzania. The theme of the conference was, “Interfaith Dialogue on Peacebuilding, Democracy and Development: A Call for Active Citizenship in Sub-Saharan Africa”. The conference was attended by eminent religious leaders, academics and civil society practitioners from Sub-Sahara Africa. Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah was one of the panellists that engaged and deliberated on “Current Developments in Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa”.

A joint declaration was issued at the end of the conference. Full details of the meeting can be accessed via this link, <http://www.lutheranworld.org/news/joint-interreligious-development-declaration-peacebuilding-democracy-and-development>

PROCMURA at the AACC Leadership Development Workshop



The General Adviser Rev Dr Johnson Mbillah was among the team of resource persons at the Leadership Development workshop for Church Leaders in Africa organised by AACC held from 28th April to 2nd May 2014 at the Desmond Tutu Conference Centre. It had in attendance Leaders from eleven (11) African countries cut across Christian traditions. The GA made a presentation on “The Complexity of Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa”. The GA was assisted by the Programme Officer, The Rev Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel during the presentation.

4.0 DESIGNATED PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

4.1 Focus on Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Reconciliation for Development

Kaduna, Nigeria North (18th - 20th June 2014)



PROCMURA organised a consultation of Christian and Muslim religious leaders to have open and frank discussions on what to do with the growing menace of Boko Haram activities which is poisoning relations between Christians and Muslims. The well attended consultation took place in Kaduna, Nigeria North. The Christian and Muslim religious leaders as stakeholders in PROCMURA's vocation of working for peace in society and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Africa lived up to the focus of the consultation. They deliberated on the complexity of the situation and mapped out further consultations and action plan that will eventually help them to curb the influence of Boko Haram so as to avoid further radicalisation and recruitment of youth.

Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, 6th – 9th October 2014



The need to promote peace within Tanzania and peaceful coexistence between adherents of the two dominant religions in the country, Islam and Christianity cannot be over-emphasized. The recent

past and current happenings in the country called for proactive steps to be taken towards promoting religious and societal tolerance and acceptance of religious and political differences and to live with such differences in peace.

The foregoing scenario and deep commitment to the cause of peace underpins the necessity to convene the national conference on peace in Tanzania. During the opening ceremony with the President of Tanzania in attendance, the General Adviser of PROCMURA, Johnson Mbillah cautioned that politicising religion and religionising politics has the propensity to ignite uprising and insurrection among the people. He called on religious leaders to reject any attempt to drag religion into partisan politics and cautioned politicians to refrain from using religion as an instrument to achieving political goals.



Dignitaries and Diplomats present the Religious leaders' conference

The President of Tanzania, H.E. Dr Jakaya M. Kikwete in address raised some fundamental issues that often militate against the realisation of sustainable peace in Africa at large and Tanzania in particular. Some of the issues he raised were; land dispute/land grabbing, greed on the part of leaders, quest for political power/control, using religion as an asset for political negotiation, negative ethnicity, religious intolerance and militarization of politics as a strategy to intimidate the civil society. He called on religious leaders to remain true and firm to their calling and God-given mandate of speaking the truth and standing by it. They must not accept to be used by some political bigots for their selfish interests. He concluded by applauding the remarks by Dr Mbillah on religionisation of politics and politicization of religion. He assured Dr Mbillah and the audience that he will share the new notion gained with his

colleagues; Presidents and Heads of Governments within East African Community and the African Union as whole. The conference climaxed with a press briefing with at least ten (10) electronic and print media correspondents in attendance. The joint statement of commitment and affirmation by Christian and Muslims religious leaders that participated at the conference was presented.

N’Djamena, Chad, 29th September – 2nd October 2014



From left, Rev. Lesmore G. Ezekiel, The Grand Imam, Dr. Boris Yakoubou and Sheikh Ousman

In our effort to increase the commitment of Christian and Muslim communities towards the sustenance and maintenance of sustainable peace as cardinal to sustainable development, PROCMURA went to Chad to consult with religious leaders on a proposed national peace conference in the country. The Programme Officer, Rev Lesmore G. Ezekiel along with Dr Boris M. Yakoubou of Faith, Culture and Education organization operating in Central African Republic and member of the Peace Resource Group of Central Africa Sub-region went to Chad to facilitate the consultative meetings.

The PROCMURA team consulted with the leadership of the Evangelical Association, Catholic organization, and the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs of Chad. The idea to convene a national peace summit was well received. The time to do this was not conclusively arrived at as there remained a number of issues which the Evangelical Association needed to consult wider on. Having carefully reviewed the situation the team advised that the Central Office should consider reprogramming the activity to a country that may be in urgent need with the hope that when Chad is fully ready for the summit, they will contact PROCMURA.

4.2 Advocacy and Religious Diplomacy

In the year under review, PROCMURA has been involved in the following high level multilateral consultations with the United Nations, African Union and European Union:

4.2.1 United Nations, Bujumbura, Burundi, 24th – 25th March 2014



An International Conference on Interreligious Dialogue for Peace and Prevention of Conflicts and Wars in Africa was organised in Bujumbura, Burundi under the auspices of the Ombudsman of that country. The General Adviser was one of the main speakers on the peace and development of the continent and how Christians and Muslims have to be active participants in that noble course.

4.2.2 The European Union, Brussels, Belgium 21st - 22nd January 2014.

As a result of the collaborative effort of Dr. Hans Spitzeck, Bread for the World Department Africa–Unit of Continental Projects, and Mr. Michael Hansmann, the Bread for World person in the European Union Office, the General Adviser was invited to the European Union Offices in Brussels. He, together with Dr. Spitzeck and with express support of Michael Hansmann made presentations on PROCMURA and its work, with a focus on the importance on religion (Christian and Muslim relations) in the peace and development agenda of nations. The visit accorded the General Adviser the opportunity to present the broader picture of the situation of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa. Commissions and individuals that the General Adviser interacted with and made presentations included:

- i. EU Parliament, MEP Mr. Neuser, German, Socialdemocrat, Member of Development Committee and Member Delegation Parliamentary Assembly ACP-EU*
- ii. Pan African Affairs: EU External Action*

Service Head of Division Mr. Jose Costa Pereira

- iii. *EU External Action Service, Mr. Wiedey-Nippold, Mrs. Krissler, Mrs. García Guillen*
- iv. *Programme Manager of EU Policies, Governance, Democracy, Gender, Human Rights Directorate General for Development Cooperation. Europe Aid, Sofia Lemmen*
- v. *Head of Division, Horn of Africa. Apart from meetings with dignitaries at the EU, arrangements were also made for the General Adviser to meet Frank-Dieter Fischbach, Executive Secretary, Church & Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches (CEC).*

4.2.3 Presentations at the European Union Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya. 22nd February, 2014

Following a recommendation from our visit to the European Union Head Quarters in Brussels, Dr. Hans Spitzreck arranged for a delegation from the PROCMURA Central Office, Bread for the World and the European Liaison Committee of PROCMURA to visit the European Union regional offices in Nairobi.

The delegation was made up of:

- *Johnson MBILLAH (General Adviser of PROCMURA)*
- *Joy WANDABWA (Team Leader – Finance and Administration of PROCMURA)*
- *Rev. Dr Owe BOERSMA (Secretary of the European Liaison Committee)*
- *Karin Döhne (Head of Department Africa, Bread for the World)*
- *Hans Spitzreck (Programme Officer – Unit of Continental Projects Africa)*
- *The delegation was received by Julien Bouzon, Counsellor-Head of Section, Microeconomics, Governance and Private Sector, and Uwe Wissenbach First Counsellor – Political.*

After brief introductions of the different roles of all, the General Adviser was given the opportunity to make a presentation on what PROCMURA is, and elaborate on its work on conflict prevention, peace and peaceful co-existence for development.

4.3 African Union

Nairobi, Kenya, 4th – 7th November 2014



The African Union organised a consultation on Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want in collaboration with AACC with the active involvement of PROCMURA in mobilising all the Muslim participants across Africa to the consultation. The main thrust of the consultation was to elicit the views and inputs of the faith based institutions/groups in Africa towards the process of the implementation of the Agenda 2063 developmental framework designed by the AU. It's a fifty years development plan, which encapsulates the various views and counsels. PROCMURA participated fully in the three days consultation. More than fifteen African countries were represented at the consultation. It was enlightening. The Programme Officer, Rev L G Ezekiel presented the paper prepared by the General Adviser, Rev Dr J. Mbillah at the consultation.

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo 1st - 3rd December 2014



The African Union organised a workshop for Central African countries governments and religious leaders on the theme "Radicalisation, Violent Extremism Deradicalisation and Counter Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in ECCAS Region. The well patronised workshop was very revealing in terms of statistics and outlines of violent extremists' agenda aimed at creating havoc in Africa and the world at large. The General Adviser was one of the main presenters at the workshop.

CONCLUSION

We have as usual only been able to provide you with a gist of our activities for the year, with the understanding that we have said enough to let you know what PROCMURA occupies itself with year after year. We will need to emphasise that in all cases our input is always important and appreciated because of our wealth of experience in the field of Christian-Muslim relations. There have been several occasions when we have said no when we have been asked to make an input. We admire genuineness but detest the activities and invitations of those who seek to know in order to ridicule religion.

As much as we offer, so also do we receive. Our involvement in our constituencies' activities and the activities of the international community broadens PROCMURA's understanding of complex issues that are sometimes misunderstood. It is our prayer that the Lord who has brought us thus far will continue to lead us, show us the direction we should go in this complex vocation God has entrusted to us.

MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BE OUR HELP.

Johnson Mbillah
General Adviser.

