



Muslim and Christian leaders Dar-es-Salaam Communiqué

We, Muslim and Christian religious leaders from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda, meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania from September 1 – 5, 2008 under the auspices of the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCURA), on the theme: *Religion, Conflict Prevention/Management, Peace Building and Reconciliation in Eastern Africa*:

- having deliberated on the causes of misunderstandings that lead to violent conflicts in the region;
- aware of the fact that religion and religious differences have been misused and manipulated to poison relations and lead to the loss of human lives and properties;
- concerned about the sufferings that have resulted from violent confrontations perpetrated by some of our followers;
- recognising that there are some positive steps that have been and are still being undertaken to bring about peace and reconciliation where violent conflicts have occurred;
- having recognised our common mission to build, uphold and sustain peace in the society at all times;

Do hereby rededicate ourselves to remain in solidarity with each other in pursuit of peace, justice and reconciliation in the region in particular, and Africa in general, and reaffirm that:-

- Religious leaders have the utmost responsibility to ensure that justice and peace prevail in the region;
- Religious communities in the region should be mobilised to promote understanding and trust for peace and peaceful coexistence;
- Religious leaders and communities must ensure that there is mutual respect, understanding and appreciation of each other's religious values, beliefs and practices;
- Interfaith engagement is a strong tool that can be used to identify and harness potentials for the realisation of peace and peaceful coexistence.

On account of the above, we call upon:-

Religious leaders to recognise anew the value of remaining politically impartial and desist from partisan politics in order to play effective roles as peace-builders and reconcilers;

- Governments and political leaders to observe and practice principles of good and responsible governance;
- Governments and policy-makers to develop and implement policies that respect and uphold religious and cultural pluralism;
- Religious leaders to constructively engage with policy-makers to re-examine education curriculum and policy with the view of inculcating the spirit of mutual understanding and trust among communities;
- Governments and those in positions of authority to desist from the tendency to manipulate state resources to favour specific communities or one's own community as this is not only immoral but also a recipe for conflict;
- All stakeholders in interfaith work to collaborate and complement each other's efforts rather than be in competition in addressing human needs in society;
- Governments, political leaders, and economic planners to regularly and deliberately involve religious leaders in matters of policy development, and conflict management.

We adopt the above as our resolve to remain in unity and work with each other as partners in addressing our regional religious, social, economic and political challenges.



Signed by all participants at the conference on September 4, 2008 in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania