



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



# **FREETOWN COMMUNIQUE**

**RECONCILIATION AND PEACE-BUILDING IN SIERRA LEONE**

**FREETOWN, 8<sup>TH</sup> - 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2011**

## **PREAMBLE**

A two day Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders consultation was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, at the National Stadium, under the auspices of PROCMURA.

The consultation brought together over 40 Muslim and Christian Leaders to reflect on the theme *Reconciliation and Peace Building in Sierra Leone* and was officially opened by the Hon. Dr. Denis Sandy, Minister of Social Welfare and Children, and Gender Affairs, on behalf of His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The Keynote Address was given by Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, General Adviser of PROCMURA.

He dilated on important issues on Christian-Muslim relations in Africa, and the challenges facing Religious Leaders and concluded by stressing the need to advocate for peace by example.

Various in depth presentations by Muslim and Christian Leaders reflected the past and contemporary situation of Christian-Muslim relations in Sierra Leone.

Challenges and prospects for Christian-Muslim Collaboration for Peace and Reconciliation in the country were deliberated on. The participants critically examined the issues and came up with the following:

### **1. Observations**

- I. That working towards Peace and Reconciliation was a complex issue that required dedication, commitment and prayer.
- II. That Christian–Muslim relations in Sierra Leone is not at its best and certainly cannot be said to be at its worst.
- III. That clear examples of positive experiences of good and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims in most parts of the country provided hope for participants while negative experiences of bad relations and conflicts ignited a cause for concern.
- IV. That the emerging unethical methods employed by some Christian and Muslim groups and individuals, to propagate Christianity and Islam, call for proactive measures by the leaders of the two communities to curb the situation.
- V. That the media is culpable in promoting religious intolerance by what it disseminates to the public.

### **2. Resolutions**

In pursuit of sustainable Peace and Reconciliation in the country, we resolve:

- I. To advocate for the recognition of the divergent beliefs of the two communities and respect each Community's places of worship.
- II. To uphold religious and moral values without compromising our respective faiths.

- III. To embark on regular dialogue and consultation to promote peace and reconciliation.
- IV. To act responsibly and promote civility among our members especially the youth.
- V. To translate the good precepts of Christianity and Islam as it relates to Peace and Reconciliation, into good practice in everyday living.
- VI. To provide orientation on a regular basis for youth in inter-faith relations for peace and peaceful coexistence.
- VII. To ensure that our Sermons/*Khutba* are non-provocative and free of offensive language.
- VIII. To work together to formulate a Code of Conduct to govern the activities of all religious groups operating in Sierra Leone with the express objective of self-censorship of polemics and provocative statements from both sides that may disturb the peace of the land.
- IX. To partner with government to institute policies to promote Religious Tolerance, peace and reconciliation in the country
- X. To urge the electronic and print media to be circumspect in what they disseminate so as to ensure they do not undermine the moral values of the people of Sierra Leone.

Finally, We as Muslim and Christian Leaders here gathered, commit ourselves to promote good relations between Christians and Muslims for Peace and Reconciliation and urge PROCMURA to continue to accompany us in this process.



Signed,  
**Christian and Muslim Leaders of Sierra Leone**