



PROGRAMME FOR CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN AFRICA
PROGRAMME DES RELATIONS ISLAMO-CHRETIENNES EN AFRIQUE



50th
Anniversary
Celebrations

November 2009

*"...so far as it depends upon you,
live peaceably with all"*

Romans 12:18

Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA)

PROCMURA What it is and What it Stands For?

PROFILE

The Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) is a Pan African Christian organisation dedicated to Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace in the society and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims

Founded in 1959 when independent nation-states in Africa were on the rise and the place of religion in international affairs was subdued by negotiations on critical issues such as the Cold War between the East and the West and its impact on nations, PROCMURA had already envisaged a situation where religion (Christianity and Islam) would become dominant forces in public life. It recognised that future independent nations which African nationalists' movements were agitating for, would be made up of Christians, Muslims, practitioners of African Traditional Religion(s) among others, and that Christianity and Islam were likely to be the best or worst of rivals since both religions are missionary in character. The forefathers and foremothers of PROCMURA therefore evolved an approach to Islam and Muslims devoid of polemical traits, and aimed at Christians constructively relating with Muslims to ensure that conflicts that may arise between adherents of the two religions are addressed in a none violent manner and that they are able to cooperate and collaborate for peace and peaceful co-existence.

PROCMURA's Niche

PROCMURA is the sole Christian organisation in Africa that is dedicated to building bridges of understanding and promoting mutual respect between Christians and Muslims in the entire continent.

As the sole programme of the Churches in Africa that stretches a hand of friendship to the Muslim community for peace and development, and recognising that adherents of these two great missionary religions have the potential of becoming bad neighbours, PROCMURA, in spite of its Protestant roots 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 their doctrinal or sectional differences as well. In fact PROCMURA works with all Christian and Muslim organisations but is subsumed by none.

PROCMURA'S Mission

Faithful and Responsible 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.

PROCMURA's Vision

A continent where faith communities in spite of their differences work together for the holistic development of the human family.

4. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Area of Operation

PROCMURA is well established in twenty countries in sub-Saharan Africa and has made contacts and organised occasional workshops in ten more other countries with the hope of eventually bringing such countries into the PROCMURA fold.

Achievements/Experiences

PROCMURA has in its 50 years of work successfully assisted many of the churches in Sub-Saharan Africa to embark on positive tolerance and acceptance of religious plurality as an African heritage, and to initiate with the Muslim communities, forums for solving conflicts between adherents of the two faiths and collaboration to attend to national issues. It has done so and continues to do so through national councils of churches and PROCMURA Area (country) Committees around the continent.

It has pioneered Christian and Muslim joint peace missions to the Sudan in the early 1990's and through its members within the Liberia Council of Churches and the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone encouraged joint Christian and Muslim initiatives that met with the rebels in the bush and eventually persuaded them to negotiate peace. It has through the various national councils of churches encouraged non-institutionalised cooperation and collaboration between Christians and Muslims to attend to national issues such as mediating conflicts between political opponents, mitigating inter-ethnic conflicts, creating fora for solving conflicts caused by itinerant and polemical Christian and Muslim preachers etc etc. Some of these loose and non-institutionalised cooperation and collaboration have metamorphosed to live their own lives in the growing interreligious councils, while others continue to live in the form that they were initiated.

PROCMURA continues to accompany the Christian and Muslim communities in Nigeria, for example, in their quest for solutions to the perennial conflicts in the northern part of the country, and offer advice to conflict-prone situations around Africa where Christians and Muslims have been involved on the educational front. PROCMURA in the recent past brought together Christian and Muslim leaders in Eastern Africa (1 – 5 September 2008) and Christian and Muslim leaders from West Africa (21 – 24 July, 2009) in Dar es Salaam and Accra respectively, to deliberate on Religion and Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Reconciliation in the two sub-regions. On the part of intra-Christian relations for peace, PROCMURA recently (18 – 21 May) organised a Peace Building workshop for church leaders in Malakal, Southern Sudan to assist them to work towards mitigating intra-Southern Sudanese violent conflicts.

Apart from its focus on Christians and Muslims coming together to talk peace and live peace and intra-faith and inter-ethnic peace, PROCMURA has been proactive in bringing Christian and Muslim women and Christian and Muslim youth together to discuss issues of common concern as for example, the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Such programmes have been carried out in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Rwanda, Ghana, Senegal, Togo, Benin, The Gambia, Nigeria, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone among others.

PROCMURA's success story is founded on its principle of making sure that its field workers (Area Advisers) go through formal education at least to the Masters level in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations so that they may avoid the usage of inconsiderate or offensive language in their bid to constructively relate with Muslims. In line with this policy, PROCMURA in collaboration with St. Paul's University in Limuru initiated a Masters programme in Islam and Christian-Muslim relations principally for Christians and also for Muslims to study together in respect of each other in the academic environment and translate that into respective living alongside each other. It is hoped that the programme will be replicated in Ghana for Anglophone West Africa and Cameroon for Francophone Africa.

Johnson A. Mbillah
General Adviser

5. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Messages of Goodwill from PROCMURA's Partners and Friends

We Are Grateful To God For Having
Journeyed With Procmura For 50 Years
Protestant Churches In The Netherlands
Kerk In Actie Mission Department

In the sixties of the last century the attention of the Mission Societies in The Netherlands was drawn to the rapid spreading of Islam and Christianity in Africa South of the Sahara. Dr Wim Bijlevelt explained to later generations how academics and missionaries at that time were explaining this religious change as a run on converts - sometimes leading to serious clashes. Dr Hans Haafkens, another of the missionaries of the Reformed Mission Council (Raad voor de Zending Oegstgeest), explained to us how the pioneers of the IAP Islam in Africa Project struggled to find good words to communicate their vision and mission to both Christians and Muslims. They forged in that time a trend in Christian-Muslim relations that is up to this day the leading principle within the PROCMURA movement: to witness the faith that inspires us and urge all church families to make the effort to know Islam better and connect to Muslims in their neighbourhood. The objective was to keep peaceful relations and continue to witness Christ openly in a non-aggressive manner. The golden principle behind this movement has been its broad ecumenical approach and the systematic effort to train local Area Advisers on an academic level.

IAP / PROCMURA has proven to be a stimulator through the European Liaison Committee to urge European churches to engage in the encounter with local Muslims. It is good here to mention our colleague and islamologist Dr Jan Slomp (GKN Reformed Church) who was amongst the initiators of the European and American support groups.

Many of us who have been working with PROCMURA can witness the effect of this training programme to have launched a number of our colleagues in advocating Christian

Word Of Greeting From The Evangelical Lutheran Church In Bavaria For Procmura's 50th Anniversary

At the occasion of PROCMURA's 50th anniversary the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria extends heartfelt greetings. May the Almighty God stretch out His hand towards all the people working in and with PROCMURA, showering down His blessings onto them. In John 14.27 Jesus says: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you." While Jesus very clearly speaks to his disciples, he makes it clear at the same time that Christ's disciples of all times are living in our world and need to contribute to peace becoming a daily reality, also beyond boundaries of religions and confessions. Over all the years, PROCMURA has played a vital role in paving the way towards peaceful co-existence of Muslims and Christians. Thus it is a living signal that peace among the religions is not only a dream, but can become reality with the help of God's Holy Spirit. May PROCMURA also in the future work keep and strengthen the vision of Muslims and Christians living peaceful together in order to contribute to the development of mutual understanding and respect among the religions built on a living witness of faith, hope and love.

*Rev. Reinhard Hansen
Africa Secretary*

Muslim relations within the churches and in the academy, in Africa and in international circles.

A 50-year jubilee is the moment to look backwards and forward. To thank the Lord and his workers on the ground for their continued efforts to prevent religious clashes and to live our faith in a multi-religious setting. It will be the task of new generation to forge the way forward in a changing world.

We congratulate Dr Johnson Mbillah and his co-workers at the PROCMURA office with this historical moment. May God continue to inspire them and the whole PROCMURA family to continued good work in His service.

Rev. Cokkie van 't Leven, October 2009

6. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Goodwill Message From The Association Of Protestant Churches And Missions In Germany (EMW)

Dear Rev. Dr. Johnson Mbillah, dear staff members of PROCMURA!

In spirit we wish to join with you in the celebration of 50 years of the Project (now Programme) for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa!

We are aware of the manifold contributions towards the better mutual understanding of the two religious communities, and of the strong contribution of PROCMURA towards peace between the religions, and to a more effective Christian witness in Africa. As a long-term partner, we wish you all God's blessing on your continued work for understanding, peace and Christian Witness, and ensure you that we will remain committed to standing with you in all these endeavours.

On behalf of the Chairperson of the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany, Bishop Maria Jepsen of Hamburg,

Rev. Christoph Anders (General Secretary)

Rev. Dr. Owe Boersma (Secretary Africa & Middle East)

CHURCH OF SWEDEN WISHES YOU A HAPPY 50th ANNIVERSARY

The song of the Gospel that the angels sang was about peace on earth. A beautiful song about God's plan for the world. The people around the crib in Bethlehem came from different faiths but they came to see the prince of peace. PROCMURA mission has been to sing this song and give tools to make it a reality in daily life, in religious atrocities, in political instability and in conflicts. The gospel is not fulfilled yet and PROCMURA's work is not fulfilled, but developed and spread. Church of Sweden has been a partner of PROCMURA for many years and has also had the possibility of benefiting from PROCMURA in Sweden when the staff spent a week teaching and leading seminars in Swedish dioceses. Church of Sweden's other partners have also seen the fruits of PROCMURA's work in their churches and institutions. Church of Sweden wishes PROCMURA God's blessings in the work for peace on earth and likes to sing together with PROCMURA – Peace on earth and goodwill for all humankind.

Congratulatory Message From The Church Of Scotland World Mission Council

The inter-relation of Christianity and Islam in Africa was already a major item on the agenda of the churches one hundred years ago when preparations were being made for the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference. It is perhaps a little surprising that it took a further fifty years until PROCMURA was formed in 1959. However, what is very clear is that the passing of the years have only served to underline the need to have an instrument dedicated to the purpose of working on Christian-Muslim relations throughout the continent. PROCMURA has developed a remarkable approach which combines deep mutual respect and commitment to the building of understanding and peace with a readiness to honour the integrity of both Christianity and Islam as faith traditions. This has enabled the Programme to carry the confidence of the churches while at the same time reaching out in honesty and love to Muslim leaders and communities. The Church of Scotland has been proud to play a small part in this endeavour and has been blessed by the rich fellowship of all, both those from within Africa and those from elsewhere who have Africa at heart, who have journeyed together to make PROCMURA what it is today. We pay tribute to the staff who have served, to the country coordinators and to all who have given of their wisdom, compassion and material support to strengthen our common effort. May God richly bless PROCMURA as the Jubilee provides the opportunity to chart a path into the future as well as raising a hymn of thanksgiving for all the blessings experienced on the journey travelled.

Kind regards,

Kenneth R. Ross

Council Secretary

7. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Message on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of PROCMURA from The Swiss Protestant Churches, DM Exchange and Mission

On behalf of Swiss Protestant Churches, DM exchange and mission welcomes with gratitude the work done by PROCMURA for 50 years working with churches in Europe and North America.

Thanks to those who in 1959 would include in the gospel from the perspective of respect and cooperation with people of Muslim tradition!

Thanks to people who since 1959 have worked to educate/train, inform and encourage members of the Christian Churches in Africa to better know, understand and respect their Muslim neighbours!

Thanks to the people who since 1959 have been working for peace and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in the entire society.

In 50 years many events have disrupted the lives of civil societies and religious communities on the African continent. PROCMURA was able to be attentive to these developments and has persevered in its mission with programmes specifically for women and the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Today more than ever, the challenges are many and places of tensions are multiple. It is important to continue faithfully any commitment to a non-

violent management of conflicts and a witness to the Gospel that is lived without restraint or aggression.

In the months of October and November 2009 many discussions were held in Switzerland on how to integrate people of Muslim culture into our country.

Following these discussions we realize that many people do not know their Muslim neighbours. Biases and unfair generalizations raise fears and suspicions.

In expressing our gratitude to God for the PROCMURA's pioneer role, DM exchange mission and hopes that people with such an impetus be more numerous in the churches in Switzerland and around the world.

The service for the next 50 years should be that of strengthening relationships and collaborations between PROCMURA and the churches, to become witnesses of peace and love of Christ.

In this communion we salute you and send you our congratulations on the celebration of your 50th anniversary.

On behalf of DM exchange and mission

Jacques Kung
Secretary General
DM Exchange and Mission

Goodwill Message from Danmission to PROCMURA on the Occasion of its 50th Jubille

On the Occasion of PROCMURA's 50th Jubilee, Danmission would like to congratulate PROCMURA Central Office Staff, its management and all its workers in the field for the good work they continue to do to promote Christian-Muslims relations in Africa.

We in Danmission have appreciated the partnership we have had with PROCMURA for several years and look forward to strengthening such relations in partnership.

We celebrate this occasion with PROCMURA and also with other members of the European Liaison Committee who, together with us we have shared a lot with PROCMURA in its excellent work.

God bless PROCMURA and bless us all.

Harald Nielsen

8. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Congratulatory Message From The Evangelical Lutheran Church In Wuerttemberg

The "Project for Christian Muslim Relations in Africa" (PROCMURA) celebrates its 50th anniversary. From the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Wuerttemberg, we send our warmest greetings and congratulations. As a member of the European Liaison Committee, we accompany the work of PROCMURA with sympathy and hopes.

PROCMURA is a Christian organization, working through and with churches in Africa. It seeks a faithful and responsible witness to the Gospel in an interfaith environment of Muslims and Christians. It promotes good neighborhood, constructive engagement and peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Africa. We appreciate that through PROCMURA local churches in nearly 20 African countries are actively cooperating with Muslim partners, promoting peace and dialogue. For decades PROCMURA provided training about the Islam and Christian-Muslim relations for members of African churches.

With respect and sympathy we see that PROCMURA is not only an interreligious project, but deeply ecumenical. It is supported by protestant, catholic and orthodox churches, and also by Pentecostal and African independent churches. It might be seen as the oldest of Africa's ecumenical church organizations.

PROCMURA started in 1959 as the "Islam in Africa Project", on the eve of independence for many African countries. Today we see dramatic changes: Christianity in Africa has grown enormously. Today it is one of the centers of Christianity worldwide. But also Islam in Africa has grown, and African Muslims form an important part of the Muslim community, the "Ummah".

We know that developments in Africa have an impact on Christian-Muslim relations in Europe and also worldwide. We are thankful that the people of PROCMURA and the members of the churches in Africa accept the challenge and follow our Lord Jesus Christ, witnessing the gospel, calling for love, respect and understanding.

God bless you!

Department for Missions and Ecumenical Relations

To PROCMURA on the Occasion of its 50th Anniversary from the United Church of Canada

"But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. 18 So you too should be glad and rejoice with me." (Philippians 2: 17-18)

The United Church of Canada congratulates all the members and staff of PROCMURA on its 50th Anniversary.

The work of PROCMURA has been a pioneering effort, in the continent and globally. In a world filled with despair, hatred, sadness and injury, we celebrate PROCMURA as an instrument of God's peace, seeking to understand Islam as Christianity would wish to be understood. Through creating such understanding, it seeks to sustain long-term relationships of mutual respect, trust and common action for the sake of the world we all inhabit.

PROCMURA, we in The United Church of Canada celebrate with you five decades of service to faithful Christian witness in relations with Muslims and Islam. As tensions grow in global relations between Muslims and Christians, PROCMURA offers leadership and a model for all efforts seeking to foster peaceful engagement and respect between the faiths. For your pioneering role in Christian-Muslim relations, we honour you. For the many occasions over the past 50 years when PROCMURA has been the unsung hero, the peacemaker, in communities across the African continent, we congratulate you.

We pray that, with the grace and love of God, the next 50 years will enable you to continue to build on the solid foundation of the past 50.

Strength and peace to you.

Wendy Gichuru

FRATERNAL CONGRATULATIONS AS YOU CELEBRATE YOUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY CHURCH DEVELOPMENT SERVICE (EED) OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN GERMANY

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

Receive fraternal congratulations of the Church Development Service (EED) of the Protestant Churches in Germany for 50 years of service to Africa. The grace and the mercy of the Lord may be with the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa.

Since the beginnings the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) has become an integral and exceptionally valuable element of the ecumenical movement in Africa. PROCMURA responds to the religious heterogeneity and Christian-Muslim coexistence throughout the continent. It encourages the faithful Christian witness in an interfaith environment that respects the spirit of good neighbourliness and the constructive engagement of Christians with Muslims for peace and civil conflict management.

PROCMURA brings Christian and Muslim leaders together for a mutual understanding of the common challenges and to learn to know each other. This refers to the Christian-

Muslim Relations in the Political, Economic, Cultural, Social, and Religious Sphere. By its activities, conferences and publications PROCMURA helps the churches to be faithful to the gospel by preaching and acting even in the field of development. Since keeping and restoring the interfaith peace is one of the major challenges of the churches in Africa – for the sake of the Lord and the people.

The approach of PROCMURA is based on the bible. It has its firm foundation in the spirit of meekness, as Jesus Christ has taught us in the sermon on the mountain. Humble service as PROCMURA offers it is a contextual response to this call of the Lord in Africa. EED is grateful to have a partner like PROCMURA.

We pray for all sisters and brothers who dedicate themselves to the Programme for Christian-Muslims Relations in Africa. We pray for the churches and the ecumenical movement. We pray for Africa.

The Church Development Service (EED), Germany wishes the Programme for Christian-Muslims Relations in Africa many more years of fruitful work and service. The Lord may bless PROCMURA. He may turn his living face to the religious leaders of Africa. He may shine his light on the people and states of Africa. - Amen

The United Church Of Christ And The Christian Church (disciples Of Christ) Congratulates Procmura

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
Greetings in the name of our Lord!
It is with much joy that we celebrate with you 50 years of ministries in Africa.
We, your partners of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), take great pride in your accomplishments over the years. We are grateful for your many contributions and we assure you that we have received much by being in relationship with you.
As you continue your ministry, we wish you the best in meeting God's people and creation at the point of deepest need: spiritually, physically, and emotionally. May God continue to be with you during this very special time of celebration.

Sandra R. Gourdlet

Sincerely

Sandra R. Gourdlet

Africa Office Executive - Global Ministries

Goodwill Message From Mission 21, Switzerland, on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary Of PROCMURA

Dear Staff and Friends of PROCMURA,

I still remember that I was fairly surprised when, while working with Sudanese sisters and brothers in a huge refugee camp in north-western Kenya a few years ago, I constantly heard them praising Allah. This, for me, was the Muslims' name for God and I wondered why people who had suffered so severely under a so-called Islamic regime should behave that way. Well, it soon dawned on me that the relations between Christians and Muslims are probably a bit more complicated than they sometimes seem at first sight.

Looking back in retrospective, I think one can only conclude that those who founded PROCMURA in 1959 must have been people of vision indeed! Who

10. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

could have foreseen by then how important and how necessary the Christian-Muslim dialogue would be, still or especially in our days, 50 years later? Can we, therefore, say that God must have had his hand in what happened in 1959? I would certainly answer, yes, we can!

In all these 50 years PROCMURA has contributed substantially to overcome the stereotypes that used to and sometimes still do exist among Christians and Muslims about each other. But we all also know that we are far from having achieved a peaceful cooperation or even coexistence of all members of both religions here in Africa and elsewhere in this world. This is all the more painful as we are facing so many problems which make it impossible for many people to live their lives quietly, happily and in dignity. But these problems can only be overcome if we stand together. PROCMURA is needed, so we see, maybe more than ever before!

Therefore, as we look back in gratitude towards God and all those who have devoted and are still devoting themselves to the Christian-Muslim dialogue, we look forward with expectation to the realisation of the vision our mothers and fathers had in 1959! May God bless us all.



Dr. Armin Zimmermann
Programme Officer Sudan

**We Give Thanks To God For Procmura's
Life Of 50 Years
Presbyterian Church Of The United States Of
America (PC USA)**

Dear Friends and Staff of PROCMURA,

We give thanks to God for the work that is done by so many sisters and brothers through the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa!

Bringing together Christians and Muslims for discussion and cooperation in addressing the pressing issues that all communities face is surely part of the work we are called to do for God's kingdom on this earth. And helping our fellow Christians make a respectful and open witness to Christian life and faith among Muslim neighbors is a significant contribution to faithful discipleship. You do both of these things, and do them well.

We are sorry not to be with you in person at the 50th anniversary celebration, but will remain steadfast in our prayers for you. And, as we are able, we will continue our support of PROCMURA in the future.

Your fellow servants in Christ,

Jay T. Rock, Coordinator for Interfaith Relations
Doug Welch, Associate Director for Mission Partners and Programs

**Warmest Greetings From The
United Society For The Propagation
Of The Gospel: Anglicans In World
Mission Based In London On The
Occasion Of Your 50th Anniversary**

The Trustees, Senior Management and Staff of USPG warmly congratulate PROCMURA on its 50th birthday, and join you in thanking God for both the inspiration and the operation of the organisation across the years.

We live in such a fast-changing and complex world at the start of the 21st century that there has never been a time when it has been more important to foster relationships and mutual understanding between the world's great faith communities.

Africa, with its rich cultural heritage of personhood (ubuntu) and inter-connectedness, is in a unique position to explore new ways of bringing communities into closer harmony with one another. Too often the world's media concentrates on the divisiveness of religions, rather than their capacity to enable people to engage with and celebrate "difference" as one of God's gifts in the creation.

Long may PROCMURA thrive, and continue to work for peace and reconciliation across the continent. And long may its witness beyond the continent of Africa be a beacon to others caught up in the pain and loss caused by division and misunderstanding.

USPG counts itself privileged to have been, and to continue as, a close partner with PROCMURA.

Edgar Ruddock

11. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

**Message to the 50th anniversary
celebration of the Programme for
Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa
(PROCMURA) from the World Council of
Churches (WCC)**

On behalf of the World Council of Churches (WCC) it is with great delight that I take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt congratulations to PROCMURA (the Programme on Christian Muslim Relations in Africa), on its 50th anniversary.

PROCMURA's commitment to building and strengthening relationships between different faith communities across the African continent has been inspirational for those working on many interreligious initiatives.

With its wide network of religious leaders, women, youth and grassroots activists, both inside and outside Africa, PROCMURA has provided the much needed platform for different actors around the continent to engage in constructive dialogue on conflict prevention, peace building and reconciliation.

Its work for promoting a better understanding of Islam in Africa, especially in situations of conflict and religious intolerance, and thus creating respectful and cordial relations with Muslim neighbours, is a good example for how to lay the groundwork for peaceful and constructive coexistence between Christians and Muslims.

Thank you for the kind invitation to be with you for the 50th anniversary.

On behalf of the World Council of Churches, I congratulate you and wish you success and many blessings as you continue this common journey of peace as Christians and Muslims.

Yours in His Service

Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia
General Secretary

**Message Of Goodwill From
Judith and Sigvard Von Sicard**

On the auspicious occasion of IAP/PROCMURAs's 50th anniversary Judith and Sigvard von Sicard are immensely thankful to God for the opportunities over nearly 50th years of sharing in the thinking, planning and execution of a programme that has no equal on the African continent. Our hopes and prayers are that God in his infinite loving kindness will continue to bless and prosper the work He has established so that Christians and Muslims under His guidance will together proclaim His glory and work for the growth of His Kingdom.

Judith and Sigvard

**Message Of Solidarity On The
Occasion Of The 50th Anniversary Of
Programme For Christian-Muslim
Relations In Africa (PROCMURA)**

ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

Fraternal greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

I feel honoured to convey to you warm greetings and congratulations from AACC and from our Member churches.

Back in the 1950s, the conscience of our forefathers was clear that post-colonial Africa nation-states would be made of peoples from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. This made them foresee the very important need for collaboration and co-existence on the principle of co-citizenship, thus the establishment of PROCMURA. This is one of the clearest manifests of the power of the Holy Spirit in Africa to date.

You will recall that at the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit manifested that the world, with all its rich variety of life, belongs to God. This empowered the Church to confess this truth and to witness and work for the sustaining of the wholeness of creation.

Accordingly we are challenged to work with people and for people in a manner that works against anything that is against life or aimed at plundering the earth. This is what has characterized the work of PROCMURA over the last 50 years.

The Spirit of God has guided you on ways that are aimed at reconciling those that are not together. The Spirit of God has guided you to overcome ethnic and cultural barriers and to have the entire human community strengthened in the struggles against powers of indignity.

I am proud to say that it is because of such initiatives as the ones that PROMURA has put forth over the last 50 years that have made the whole world, including those who had for years looked down upon us, believe that Africa is the continent of tomorrow.

At the All Africa Conference of Churches, we feel privileged that the close collaboration we have had with PROCMURA makes us active participants in the making of your achievements and so this anniversary.

May I then congratulate you as you celebrate 50 years of an inspired journey of Faith and Action for development, justice and sustained peace in Africa.

Yours in Christ

Rev. Dr. André Karamaga
AACC General Secretary

12. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Congratulatory Message From Crosslinks

Crosslinks mission agency congratulates PROCMURA on its 50th birthday and for its work within the African churches of promoting faithful witness to the gospel and constructive engagement with Muslims for peaceful coexistence. We pray for God's continued blessing on your valuable work in the years to come.

The National Council of Churches of Kenya's Congratulatory Message to PROCMURA

The General Secretary, the management and the entire National Council of Churches of Kenya congratulates the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) on the celebration of your 50th anniversary. The Council would like to appreciate the relationship and support we have had with you in carrying out the mission of Christ through faithful witness and constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and co-existence.

We, the NCKK family, give thanks to God for you and the work to which He called you. We extend appreciation to churches in Africa, and partners in Europe and North America for their faithful and diligent co-working to see the peaceful transition from the results of political and religious climate of Africa's drive towards independence in the 1950's.

In your journey of peace, bridging relations between Christian and Muslim faith, has gone a long way in promoting understanding of common peace for humanity informed through communications of understanding of faith.

Through your interaction for a, dialogue activities, women's engagement, men and women have come to appreciate co-existence and been able to address challenges arising from the interaction of different faiths. We particularly note the partnership we entered, which has seen NCKK empower women in Christian-Muslim relations.

In view of the above and more, we take this opportunity to tribute to your work on the occasion of your 50th anniversary. We are very proud to be associated with you. PROCMURA remains the most strategic Christian organisation, promoting Christian-Muslim dialogue at a time of heightened inter-religious tension. We will be glad to keep the fellowship alive.
With best regards

Rev. Canon Peter Karanja
General Secretary

Congratulations On Your 50th Anniversary

Organization Of African Instituted Churches

As you prepare for the 50th Anniversary Celebration, please receive best wishes from the OAIC international chairman Most Revd Dr. Daniel Okoh, from myself as OAIC General Secretary, and from all the OAIC staff and Member churches.

It is no mean achievement for an African Organization to reach 50 years and thank the Almighty God for steering PROCMURA through all challenges that you have faced on the way. In OAIC we regard PROCMURA as a friend who has walked alongside us as we have sought to explore how to better understand Islam, and to build ties of peace and cooperation between our brothers and sisters in Islam across the continent while at the time continuing to remain faithful to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The path is a narrow one and we thank God for the wisdom of PROCMURA that continues to inspire us and other organizations and churches as we seek to walk it together.

It was during the leadership of the late Archbishop Njeru Wambugu as OAIC General Secretary and his service in the PROCMURA governance structures that our two organizations were brought closer together. We are sure that at time he is rejoicing with us in the celebrations, and is looking forward with us to your next successful half-century of service.
Yours Sincerely

Rev. Nicta Lubaale
General Secretary

Congratulations as you Celebrate your 50th Anniversary

Church Mission Society Africa

All of us at CMS Africa extend our congratulations to you, as you celebrate 50years of service to God's people.

Yours is a unique calling indeed, started in 1959 as IAP, then as PROCMURA; to create and maintain good working relations between two major religious groups in Africa-Christians and Muslims.

We particularly laud your efforts to promote love and good neighbourliness in an interfaith environment, while addressing issues of women, wholistic development, and peaceful co-existence.

We at CMS Africa also believe in conscious efforts to bridge the gap between Christians and Muslims in Africa.

We cherish how you keep the Christian faith while respecting other faiths. We pray that God will favour our continued collaborations in future.

Sincerely yours on this occasion,
Staff & Partners of CMS Africa

13. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Congratulations On Your 50th Anniversary From The World Student Christian Federation – Africa Region

On this happy occasion of the celebration of your 50th anniversary, I'm pleased to express my most cordial congratulations to you and to offer you my best wishes with the assurance of special remembrance in prayers.

Fifty (50) years is a meaningful milestone. I admire your endurance, courage while looking at your challenges and your key achievements in pursuit of a Christian constructive engagement with Muslims for peace and peaceful co-existence for the holistic development of the human family in Africa.

I also take this opportunity to wish you a very successful 50th anniversary celebration.

Sincerely in Christ

Georgine Kengue Djentane
Regional Secretary

Vice Chancellor Of St Paul's University and Faculty sends a Message of Goodwill to PROCMURA in this 50th Anniversary Celebration

The Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) is one of the longest running organizations in existence with consistent engagement record in inter-faith issues and particularly Christian-Muslim relations in Africa.

St. Paul's University sends warmest regards and congratulates PROCMURA as you celebrate your 50th anniversary of fruitful ministry.

We acknowledge PROCMURA's key role in theological education in Africa and especially with regard to the promotion of knowledge in Christian-Muslim relations. In this regard, we register our deepest appreciation for their partnership with us in our pioneer program in this area, the Master of Arts in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim relations, a program which we continued to offer in collaboration since 2004.

Well done PROCMURA and God's every blessing

Fraternal Message to PROCMURA on the Occasion of its 50th Anniversary

IMCS PAX ROMANA AFRICA

For the past Ten years our office has been involved in Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue and PROCMURA has been one of our reference points for examples and resource materials.

We are glad to be informed of the 50th Anniversary and also happy with much appreciation that we have been part of your trainings which has helped us a lot in our youth and human capital development projects.

As you celebrate 50 years of existence, we would like to congratulate you for the heights you have reached in ensuring a peaceful co-existence between religions, the society and most especially Muslims and Christians. We should not forget the fact that the struggle is still on to ensure a more peaceful and tolerant universe and we need to continue to intensify our efforts towards that realisation. Our recommendation to you at this moment of celebration and beyond is to still take the youth programmes as a priority and to intensify the involvement of the youth in your activities. This is because the youth are the pivots of the very society and they are mostly used as a catalyst to violent conflicts. Our involvement and engagements as youth would be a point of departing from being swayed into violence for peoples political or religious gains. Once again thank you for the partnership and Happy Anniversary
Pan African Team

*(Aaron FENU, Maurice NIZEYIMANA
and Fr Fraterr MASAWA, S.J.)*

Congratulation Message To Procmura From Fecclaha

The Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA) extends warm congratulations, prayers and best wishes, to the Programme for Christian – Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) on the 50th anniversary since its inception.

We at FECCLAHA take this opportunity to reiterate our support for PROCMURA's objective of building good relations between Christians and Muslims in Africa and assure PROCMURA of our commitment to carry forward the traditional friendship and Strengthened strategic cooperation between the two organizations towards conflict transformation and peace building in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa.

Fred Nyahera
FECCLAHA Executive Director

14. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

Message from Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

I am very glad to be able to send to PROCMURA - the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa - my very warm and appreciative congratulations on this your 50th anniversary. Your foundation in 1959 was a key moment in the ministry and mission of the Churches in Africa and the work that you have undertaken since then has been of the greatest significance in ensuring that the encounter with Islam is in the spirit of good neighbourliness, mutual respect and tolerance. Your mission statement makes it clear that Christian witness is an integral part of Christian identity and that this witness is to Christ who is the Prince of Peace.

At a time when the world faces some of the greatest challenges that we have ever faced, of poverty and injustice, of violence and warfare and of climate change and environmental degradation, we are called by the God who is Love, in whose image we are all made, to be faithful and hopeful witnesses. Part of that witness is to work with others in meeting the needs of the world.

I pray that in this 50th year of your work, you will be encouraged to re-commit to another 50 years of Christian witness and constructive engagement with Muslim communities across the great continent of Africa. May God bless you.

Personal Reflections



Mrs. Daklu Epse Kalipe
Tchotcho Clémentia -
TOGO

Nearly fifty years for PROCMURA today. We have made progress but much remains to be done. In fifty years, the Women's Programme has done what it can do without the effective involvement of the senior leadership of our churches. They have not succeeded in supervising us as required. It is therefore our hope that the leaders involved will be motivated and better equipped to face the growing challenge of interfaith issues in our communities.

PROCMURA is a very important body in our societies; bringing together African religious leaders, who are deeply rooted in their respective religious traditions, and committed to taking "common action for peace." After 50 years, PROCMURA should now focus on religious

communities cooperating together in advancing shared security through advocacy, education and other forms of action that can be a powerful force. Collaborate with other bodies that bring the RELIGIOUS together for a synergic action, Africa



Ms. MUKAMUDENGE
Zubeda RWANDA



Mrs Léocadie H ukporti
TOGO

needs joint force and collaboration to reach everywhere our spiritual actions are needed.

For me, I congratulate PROCMURA. It is a programme that needs to be encouraged. We should wish it a long life. A programme that unites religions with their divergences, and which advocates for peace can only be encouraged. For the next fifty years to come, PROCMURA should endeavour to touch deep sensible and vulnerable groups and give them education on PEACE between RELIGIONS.

PROCMURA is doing a good job by bringing together from time to time all religions on issues of education, health. As future projection, PROCMURA should enlarge its perceptive. Though the meetings for reflections are important but we think that PROCMURA should also work through concrete actions toward targeted populations.

We welcome the introduction of PROCMURA which, since its inception to date, works tirelessly to ensure that people of different religious cultures cultivate the virtue of love. To



Ms. Agbo Adissetou
TOGO

15. May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !

paraphrase someone, we say that if PROCMURA was not in existence, it should have been created.



Rev. Daniel Konan
CÔTE D'IVOIRE

"PROCMURA is a right framework to enable Christians and Muslims get to know each other, to better understand each other so as to better complement each other in promoting ethical standards, awareness, socialisation, and the pacification of the world for more solidarity, love, mutual respect and thus peace between nations and peoples."

I applaud the organisation for conferences and seminars it organizes each year for education and training that give us the opportunity to refine our knowledge in several areas of life. Furthermore, I do know that the vast majority of the Muslim community in Togo ignore the existence of PROCMURA. For this, I seek the assistance of PROCMURA to organize seminars and workshops to inform and disseminate the existence and activities of PROCMURA.



El Hadj Ahmed Adjoto
Agodomou - TOGO

PROCMURA is an example that should be emulated by all. It

has gone a long way into

promoting understanding between Christians and Muslims.

The deliberations and communiqués that have been arrived at in various conferences need to be integrated in national policies of African countries especially relating to Interfaith Dialogue. PROCMURA is an organisation that can offer useful services in solving Christian-Muslim conflicts. She should be consulted and be integrated with other areas in the



Mrs. Darou-Salim Kognaw
TOGO

national deliberations. I am honoured to be associated with it.

As PROCMURA celebrates its 50th jubilee it gives it a great opportunity to evaluate the past years and come up with analysis of its positives and negatives, and the challenges ahead. It should consider accelerating its work at grassroots level (villages, towns, schools etc) as



Esha Faki Mwinyihaji
KENYA

well as high places (eg. the continent's religious organisations, civil societies, regional government authorities, central government administrations, parliaments, and the African Union). Considering the great job that PROCMURA does and its wealth



Archbishop Abune Berhaneyesus D. Souraphiel
ETHIOPIA

of knowledge and experience in Christian-Muslim relations, it should use its 50th jubilee celebration to seek an observer status in the African Union. It is my prayer that PROCMURA remains faithful to God who has called it to this ministry. May God bless PROCMURA.



Dr. Mrs. T. Omotayo Fadeyi
NIGERIA WEST

PROCMURA has worked hard in the training of Area Advisers, but so far its like a drop of water in the sea. There is the need to train many more young women and men who capture PROCMURA's vision, who have interest and commitment to move the organisation forward. There are challenges especially financial, but it is possible. Scholarships may be

partial and not full; courses may be entrenched in many more universities at Post Graduate level and incentives can be given to interested candidates who take the course as additional qualification at Diploma level.

The focus of the programme for Christian-Muslim relations in Africa after the celebration of its Golden Jubilee should be on the following areas:

- a. Dialogue: This is very important, because every other

meaningful projects will be based on Dialogue with all the stakeholders of both Religions.

- b. The role of Religious leaders in peace building is another serious issue at stake. This is because, they can either be a tool for peace or for destruction. It has been rightly observed, especially in Nigeria that Religious leaders play a key role in some of the conflicts we are experiencing as a result of the type



Mrs. Justina M. Ngwobia
NIGERIA NORTH

of messages they preach. The target group of PROCMURA as you have always done should continue to be Religious leaders.

- c. Globalisation as it affects Peace. It is an urgent issue to address especially the area of importation of conflicts to Africa. For God's sake, we have enough problems in Africa, why importing more problems?
- d. Voice for Africa: PROCMURA, You can be a Voice for Africa, a voice that when heard, situations are brought to calmness. This can be achieved by making all the programmes more viable in all parts of Africa.

PROCMURA represents a formidable link between the two major faiths, Islam and Christianity. No known platform better than this yet! Promotion of experience sharing by PROCMURA provides vital tools towards conflict resolution and peace



Mr. Kefas Solomon Akundo
NIGERIA NORTH

building on the continent. Organization and coordination reflect quality of personnel and good team spirit within the system. Selection of resource persons during the last peace conference of PROCMURA (21 – 24 July 2009) PROCMURA demonstrated a great deal of competence and experience.



Rev. Ezekiel, Lesmore
Gibson
NIGERIA NORTH

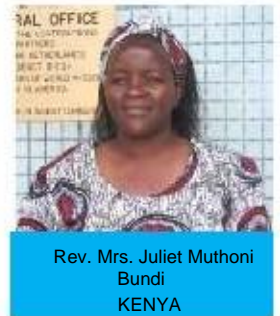
Any fellow that has attained 50years of existence, it is expected that such a fellow has a family and in some cultures, the fellow is being called a grand father/mother. PROCMURA being a father should focus on establishing functional offices at

the Sub-regional and National levels to enhance the impact of

PROCMURA. This effort will reduce the burden on the central secretariat. It is not enough to engage individuals that will be working on part-time basis for PROCMURA at the aforementioned levels of administration, those to be engaged should work on full-term basis, especially with the proliferation of interfaith and peace building organizations, some of whom are commercial in nature, they attract funding but just a fraction is used for the community intervention but the bigger chunk spent on themselves.

Suggestions to PROCMURA after its 50 years:

- a. Train more experts to be able to deal with smaller areas, (the areas are very vast for PROCMURA to be felt at grassroots level).
- b. Utilize People who have been trained by PROCMURA (whether short term or vice



Rev. Mrs. Juliet Muthoni
Bundi
KENYA

versa) by doing the follow-ups, to know how they use the ideas and knowledge they get from the training/courses done by PROCMURA.

- c. Source funding and put up Muslim/Christian Centers.
- d. Lay down strategies on how to actively involve Muslims during the trainings, for both participation and facilitation.
- e. Enhance the witnessing methods. e.g women to women.
- f. Use effectively the media and other existing modern methodologies to communicate about PROCMURA to the whole continent and the entire world.



Mrs. Phyllis Ngoro
KENYA

Being a Christian institution, PROCMURA should be a bit more aggressive in working with the churches in equipping the leadership and also the congregations. This would help the communities to interact with the Muslims with knowledge rather than emotions

or following the 'voices' of the loudest among the Christians. PROCMURA now has a good number of graduates from St Paul's University with the Masters degree and who are holding different positions in churches and other organisations throughout the country – they are an important resource and it can be tapped to not only equip but also to allow Christians know that the organisation is there to work with them.

PROCMURA is a good organisation introduced to help organise both Christians and Muslims to live in peace and harmony in order to avoid tribal religious conflicts both in their community and Africa as a whole. The focus of this programme in the near future should be to unite all the Christians and Muslims in the African continent to understand how to



Rev. Jerry Daniel Dogbey
GHANA

conduct a sound and a peaceful election in Africa and for people to understand what democracy means in Africa and to go to the polling stations without any conflict.

I have had the privilege of having being involved with PROCURA in a variety of ways over the past twenty years. My first direct contact was when I worked at St. Philip's Theological College, Kongwa in Tanzania when we hosted Prof. Oyelade who was visiting colleges in East Africa for PROCURA. He gave a talk on Islam, which I remember



Dr. John Chesworth
ENGLAND

having to translate from English

into Swahili, so that the whole community could benefit. In 2001 I was asked to work with Dr. Mbillah to jointly prepare an MA course in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, to be run at St. Paul's where PROCURA workers could receive in-depth training. The MA programme which began in 2004 has to date trained 33 students. I am grateful for the work of PROCURA and wish it every blessing for the next fifty years. I wish every blessing to the work of PROCURA as it goes forward to complete its first century.

Although I never heard about PROCURA and its



Dr. Aboubacar Abdullah
Senghore
GAMBIA

activities until the time I attended the peace conference in Accra – Ghana, in July 2009, I honestly feel that it is a great organisation with great and noble objectives. This is perhaps the leading and the most established continental organisation working for almost half a century to maintain peace,

The tolerance, harmony and mutual understanding among Muslims

and Christians in Africa. After half a century of hard work and a lot of sacrifice to bring and maintain peace tolerance and mutual understanding among Muslims and Christians in Africa, there are still difficult problems in some areas in Africa.

I treasure PROCURA and it is a very important Programme - a bridging Programme that has brought about Peace in Africa. Many Interfaith programmes have recently come but PROCURA has always been here and has borne many good fruits in Africa. Personally I treasure it because it has given me many opportunities in life to participate in the Peace



Sr. Maria Goretti Kisakye
UGANDA

process in my Country and other Countries of Africa. I propose that we continue to keep the same spirit, we need to sustain this programme financially in spite of many challenges, let's work together to keep peace in Africa.

I believe that PROCURA is a tools/instrument in God's hand to bring Peace amongst us as Christians and Muslims. We may not believe the same thing but we can co-exist in peace in spite of our religious differences. We can build clinics together for the health of everybody, we can all build palava huts for peace, unity and progress of our given



Miss. Rebecca Adelyn Tarpeh
LIBERIA

community. God wants to use PROCURA to build bridges for unity and break down walls that divide us. After 50 years, PROCURA should:

- Build institutions of higher learning, across Africa that will educate Christians and Muslims in Conflict Resolution and Peace Mediation.
- Raise volunteers to engage grass roots churches and Mosques to carry out the mandate of PROMURA in villages and Towns.
- writers (Christians and Muslims) to writeInvest in literature on religion and Peace Building and Conflict resolution in Africa.

The work of PROCURA epitomises what it means to be truly African and truly Christian in the context of plurality of religions. Before I knew of PROCURAs work I had a deep desire to learn how I can be an African Christian who is sensitive, loving, tolerant yet faithful and uncompromising in their mandate to be witnesses for Christ in a friendly manner. My studies at St. Paul's University which was generously supported by PROCURA through the National Council of churches of Kenya (NCCK) and subsequent interactions with the PROCURA family have made me learn immensely and understand Islam and Christian-Muslim relations in our Kenyan context. The approach is one that is Godly and Christ-centered. For God is love. In our celebration of the 50th anniversary of this great organisation and work of God, we hope and pray that many more Muslims and Christians alike will be impacted by the ministry and work of PROCURA . G o d b l e s s



Mr. Titus Charo Kazungu
KENYA

PROCURA, God bless Africa.

From Titus Charo Kazungu
Ag. Area Adviser, PROCURA Kenya

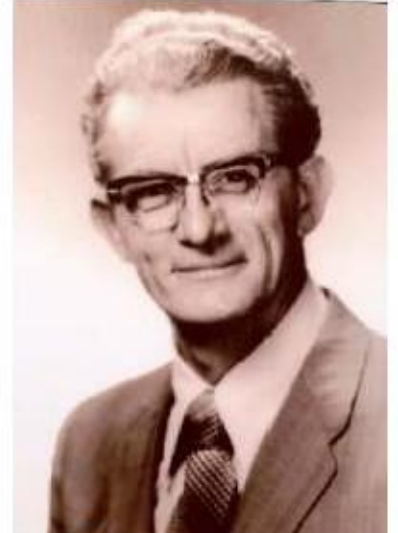
Procmura General Advisers



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 A. Mbillah
2000 - to date

Procmura Project Officers /Financial Directors

1. Mr. Aage Ernstsens;
August 1992 - June 1994

2. Mrs. Esther Fueter-Matharu
April 1994 - December 1997



3. Mrs. Mary Gitau, 1997 - 2006



4. Ms. Joy Wandabwa, 2007 to date

Procmura Women's Programme Coordinators



Mrs. Coby van der Steen, first woman who was in charge of the Women's Programme From 1970



Ms. Dorothy Gilbert, Women's Adviser (1990 - 92)



Rev. Dr. Janice NESSIBOU KIRKSEY
Women's Programme Coordinator
(1993 - 98)



Mrs. Christine SAI interim Women's Coordinator for Francophone region (2000-2003)



Mrs. Hannah MALLAH interim Women's Coordinator for Anglophone region (2000-2003)



Rev. Mrs. Angèle Dogbé, Women & Education Programme Coordinator (2003-to date)

23. *May God Help us to Live Another 50 years !*