



# NIREC

Office of The National Co-ordinator/  
Executive Secretary

## Nigeria Inter-Religious Council

Federal Secretariat Complex Phase 1, Shehu Shagary Way, Abuja, (Ground Floor, Besides Dana Air Office).

GSM: 08036075427; 07098200623

### THE COMMUNIQUE

#### **4TH QUARTER MEETING OF THE NIGERIA INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL (NIREC) HELD AT THE TRANSCORP HILTON, ABUJA FROM 8<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2009.**

The Nigeria Inter Religious Council (NIREC) under the Co-Chairmanship of the Sultan of Sokoto and President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), His Eminence, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar CFR, mni; and the President of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, His Grace Archbishop, Dr. John Onaiyekan, (CON); held its 4th Quarter General meeting at the Transcorp Hilton Abuja, from 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2009. The meeting was attended by the principal officers and members of NIREC from across the states of the Federation.

The formal Opening Ceremony of the meeting was attended by The Senate President, Senator David Mark; Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Oladimeji Bankole; Honourable Minister of Federal Capital Territory, Senator Adamu Aliero; Honourable Minister of Aviation, Mr. Babatunde Omotoba; Representative of the Honourable Minister of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation, Mr. Ben Ahiante; Representative of the Honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Ibrahim Abubakar Nikau; *The Secretary to the Government of the Federation* Alhaji Mahmud Yayale Ahmed who made a presentation on "Sectarian Crisis and the Need for Religious Understanding in Nigeria."

Other dignitaries included Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriation, Senator Ahmed Maccido; Reverend William Tolbert the West African Coordinator of African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL); Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Hon. Muhammad Ali Ndume and Chairman House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Hon. Umar Bature



## **Preamble**

Whereas NIREC over the years has preached religious moderation, encouraged understanding and co-existence among adherents of different faiths and made dialogue the bed rock of religious harmony in the country; the Council (NIREC):

- Expressed its immense gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency, President, Commander In Chief of Armed Forces Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, The Secretary to the Government of the Federation Alhaji Mahmud Yayale Ahmed, the Honourable Minister of the Federal Capital Territory Senator, Adamu Aliero, Administration and people of FCT for their support for NIREC in the execution of its programmes.
- Noted the confidence expressed by the leaders of the National Assembly on the leadership, membership and activities of NIREC.
- Noted the presentations made by the National Assembly Leaders and their pledge of legislative support for the achievements of the objectives of the Council.
- Noted the views expressed by the African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL) on the leadership role of NIREC in Africa.
- Expressed delight at the progress made by Nigerian Interfaith Action Association (NIFAA) an NGO founded by NIREC on the control and elimination of Malaria and other diseases.

## **The Council observed that:**

- Peace is a process of ensuring and sustaining justice, fairness and equity to all in the society.
- The two major religions in the Country, Islam and Christianity, preach peace and respect for other religions.
- Adherents of both religions must uphold peace in all their undertakings.
- Efforts are being intensified to fight corruption in the country.
- The issues between the Government and the Unions in the Universities are not fully resolved.



## RESOLUTIONS

### The Council resolved to:

- Use religion as a tool for societal harmony, development and formula for a stronger and united Nigeria.
- Be totally committed to the cause of promoting peace, justice and fair play without fear or favour.
- Urge Governments at all levels to carry out specific activities aimed at promoting peace in their areas of jurisdiction.
- Urge adherents of the two religions to adopt dialogue as an effective means encouraging peaceful co-existence.
- Affirm the dedication of the Council to the pursuance of practical actions aimed at resolving conflicts which may arise from interactions of peoples in a multi ethnic and multi religious society.
- Advise Faith-based Organisations to build a useful and competent platform for peace and religious harmony in Nigeria through the promotion of justice, transparency and good governance.
- Urge all Nigerians to continue to pray for the quick recovery of the President of the Federal Republic Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua.
- Call on both the electronic and print media to promote social responsibility and report events factually and accurately.
- Appeal to Government and Unions in the Universities to imbibe the spirit of dialogue, consider all aspects and expeditiously resolve the dispute once and for all in the paramount interest of students and education in Nigeria.
- Urge all academic staff in the universities to take measures to ensure that students catch up with what was lost during the last strike. Nothing should be allowed to further disrupt academic activities.
- Call on Labour Unions to make dialogue the major tool in the pursuit of members' welfare and eschew quick recourse to strike.

- While Government is considering deregulation, it should take the following measures among others:
  - Ensure that refineries are repaired and functional.
  - More refineries should be built to satisfy the domestic consumption of petroleum products and put an end to importation.
  - Educate the citizens adequately on what deregulation entails.
  - Ensure substantial improvement in the generation and distribution of electricity.
  - Put in place effective and sustainable measures to cushion the adverse effects deregulation might have on the people.
  
- Urge those States that are yet to establish State chapters of NIREC, to do so without further delay to enhance the promotion of peaceful co-existence amongst people.
  
- Urge the Federal Government to ensure that Islamic Studies/Christian Religious Studies are made not only core but also compulsory in secondary schools.
  
- Commend the Co- Chairmen of the Council for their dynamic and purposeful leadership.