

**SECOND TRIANNUAL MEETING OF THE NIGERIA INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL
(NIREC) HELD AT BARCELONA HOTEL, WUSE II, ABUJA, FROM 22ND –
24TH SEPTEMBER, 2026**

COMMUNIQUÉ

PREAMBLE

The Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), under the leadership of the Co-chairmen, His Eminence, the Sultan of Sokoto and President-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar, CFR, mni, and the President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), His Eminence, Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Okoh, held its 2026 Second Triannual Meeting at Barcelona Hotel, Abuja, from the 22nd to 24th of September, 2026. The theme of the meeting was “Shared Sacred Flourishing in Nigeria”.

The Opening Ceremony, which was held at the venue of the meeting, was attended by traditional rulers, religious leaders, senior government functionaries and distinguished members of NIREC. Dignitaries at the ceremony included the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Senator Dr George Akume, and the Permanent Secretary, General Services, OSGF, Dr. Ibrahim Kana, and the Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Mr Ola Olukoyede. Also at the Ceremony were the representatives of the Inspector General of Police and the European Commission.

The meeting was declared open by the SGF who warned religious leaders against using their sacred platforms for political campaigns and divisive rhetoric as the 2027 elections are drawing near while urging them to rather mobilise their followers for peaceful elections. The Co-chairmen and the Executive Secretary of NIREC, Rev. Fr. Prof. Cornelius Afebu Omonokhua, in their opening remarks urged Nigerians to pray for their leaders and not seek leaders' downfall because God determines everything. They also stressed that the sanctity of human life is sacrosanct and that shared sacred flourishing would only be possible if Nigerians uphold unity in diversity. The manuals of the Interfaith Anti-Corruption Advisory Committee (IAAC) /Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for Muslim and Christians in Nigeria were presented by Prof. Emeritus Is-haq Oloyede, supported by Archbishop John Praise. The Chairman of EFCC, Mr. Ola Olukoyede, delivered a well-received paper on the theme of the meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

After extensive deliberations and deep reflections on the theme of the meeting and the state of the nation at the plenary and closed-door sessions, the Council:

1. **resolved** that no nation can flourish in the face of corruption at all levels and as ignorance of the scriptures is the ignorance of God, Nigerians should seek personal encounters with God and let people around them live in peace and human dignity;

2. **condemned** accidental Pastors and Imams who mislead their followers and raise national temperature with hate speech and fiery statements that negate peace and human dignity;
3. **decided** not to be partisan by supporting one political party against the other and stop religious preachers and teachers, through the manuals produced by EFCC, from engaging in the destructiveness of priest-craft or religious corruption, which is as evil as witchcraft;
4. **urged** Nigerians not to support the crime of anyone just because of shared faith or ethnicity or hate and kill anyone because of differences in regions and religions;
5. **called on** government especially and all Nigerians at large to use their positions to address impunity, lack of accountability and insecurity in the country;
6. **noted** that our wellbeing is connected to the wellbeing of our neighbours and communities and that Nigerians should work together to build a Nigeria where Muslims and Christians not just tolerate one another but live together in mutual love and understanding;
7. **stressed** that insecurity, poverty, unemployment, inequality and communal tensions are challenges requiring a shared sense of responsibility and that Muslims and Christians should join hands with one another in peacebuilding, education, youth development, humanitarian assistance, poverty reduction and ethical leadership;
8. **charged** religious leaders to stop shielding corrupt individuals, regardless of their political, religious or social status, while insisting that law must take its full course against anyone accused of corruption and crime;
9. **advocated** against stealing public funds and diverting such to religious purposes, including donations to places of worship and sponsorship to pilgrimages, because stealing is contrary to the teachings of both Islam and Christianity;
10. **adopted** the Anti-Corruption Preaching/Teaching Manuals for Muslims and Christians in Nigeria published by IACC of EFCC and resolved to distribute copies of the manuals to religious leaders across the country to guide them in orientating their followers and faith communities;
11. **acknowledged** the EFCC for shifting anti-corruption campaigns from merely arresting and prosecuting offenders to preventing corruption through character formation in homes, schools and places of worship as evident in the manual publication project;
12. **tasked** religious leaders and traditional rulers to condemn banditry and terrorism without ethnic and religious considerations stressing that security is a collective responsibility that deserves collective action;
13. **noted** that as politics belongs to the ballot, not to the altar or pulpit, Nigerian leaders should support ‘peace caravans’, mobilise youths and women as peace advocates, counter social media misinformation and let religion be a crucial tool of maintaining national stability, not otherwise;
14. **appealed** to Nigerians to desist from inflammatory statements and vitriolic utterances that threaten social order and public peace especially through the social media;
15. **stressed** that peace is the cornerstone of development and no effort should be spared in steering Nigeria to the path of sustainable peace and security by every Nigerian;
16. **warned** Nigerians, especially the youth, against being used to perpetrate electoral violence in the 2027 general elections and urged religious leaders to join voter education campaigns and general mobilisation for good governance;
17. **decried** the weaponisation of religion, ethnicity and politics as tools of manipulating Nigerians and by religious, community and political leaders who should genuinely know

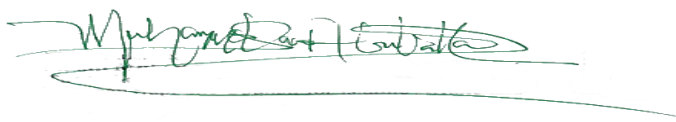
better that working to enthrone good governance across board is in the interest of everyone;

18. **urged** governments at all levels to create a moral environment to achieve the socio-economic wellbeing of the people while religious leaders should be at the forefront of this moral renaissance as agencies like the National Orientation Agency (NOA) are tasked do more to revive national values;
19. **enjoined** government to create a conducive working environment for Nigerian professionals so that those who render essential services like medical doctors are discouraged from migrating abroad just for the purpose of seeking greener pastures;
20. **encouraged** government to put price control mechanisms in place so that ordinary Nigerians would not be exploited by unpatriotic traders and businessmen whoprofit from inflicting pains on Nigerians through unregulated pricing;
21. **commended** the Federal Government and the security agencies for the continuous efforts aimed at improving the security situation in the country while urging them to double their efforts in that regard because insecurity still remains a major concern in Nigeria;
22. **re-affirmed** the commitment of NIREC to partnering government to achieve curriculum review, functional education, free and fair elections and national development;
23. **appreciated** the Co-chairmen of NIREC for their astute leadership that has assisted the Council in achieving its set objectives and specially thanked the outgoing Executive Secretary, Rev. Fr. Prof. Cornelius Afebu Omonokhua, Professor of Dialogue and Conflict Management,for his excellent service to NIREC for the past eight years while wishing him success in his future endeavours; and
24. **welcomed** the appointment of a specialist in interfaith dialogue, former Commissioner in Osun State and Professor of Islamic Studies, Prof, Muibi Omolayo Opeloye, as the incoming Executive Secretary of NIREC with effect from October 2, 2026.

APPRECIATION

The Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) immensely appreciated the support of the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, towards the success of the meeting. The Council also acknowledged the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Dr. George Akume, for his support and for attending the opening session of the meeting. The Council equally thanked the Guest Speaker, the Chairman of the EFCC, for personally attending the meeting and sharing his insights with members; the Inspector General of Police and the EuropeanCommission for their participation and their heartwarming goodwill messages. The Council also expressed itsgratitude to its members, including the Youth Wing of NIREC and the Women of Faith Network, for their cooperation towards making the 2026Second Triannual Meeting a resounding success.

SIGNED



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His Eminence Alhaji Muhammed Sa'adAbubakar CFR, mni



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His Eminence Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Okoh

The Sultan of Sokoto and President-General,
Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA)
CO-CHAIRMAN

President, Christian Association of
Nigeria (CAN)
CO-CHAIRMAN

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Afebu Omonokhua', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev. Fr. Prof. Cornelius Afebu Omonokhua