



ANOTHER CIVIL WAR NOT IN THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY

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MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA -

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto Diocese, has advised those fanning the embers of another civil war in the country to rethink, pointing out that “this is not in the interest of the country”. The Bishop made the admonition while speaking at a conference organized recently by the Kukah Centre, at the University of Maiduguri, Borno State.

Urging these agents of disintegration to learn from history and ask Germans how they survived after the war, Bishop Kukah declared: “I believe in the power of the supremacy of God and it is important for Nigerians to know that we are still understanding the blessings of God because some people have seen conflicts for up to fifty years and are wishing they never embarked on it.”

Bishop Kukah described the pogrom in the North east of the country as a tragedy caused by lack of collective awareness within “our common humanity”. He reiterated his stand that education is the only antidote to the menace of the Boko Haram insurgency. He commended the authority of the University of Maiduguri for leaving its doors open

for more young people to be educated and fighting back to complete all its planned academic programmes in spite of the challenges of the activities of the Boko Haram group.

Also, speaking at the ceremony, the Vice Chancellor of the University, represented by the deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Professor Haruna Godowoli said that even though there have been arguments for the University to be closed down, they have not bowed to the pressure; adding that, closing the institution could mean more trouble for the students and the entire community of the institution.

According to him: "At a time in our existence, the University was designated the twenty third IDP camp and we have many relations living here for shelter. Even those staying in town had to run to this place for shelter because we had to protect them as a matter of fact. We were also receiving relief items as a result of the large number of IDPs here then."

The Vice Chancellor who disclosed that the University has been attacked eight times since January, this year, described the Kukah Centre as a good friend of the institution, saying: "A real friend is someone who identifies with you when you are in trouble."

In his own remarks, the Executive Director of the Kukah Centre, Dr Martins Aginam observed that no conflict is

completely sorted out by fighting except through dialogue. He stated that the principles and ground norms that were established by the three-day workshop held in the Elkanemi hall (Unimaid) would be used as a bench mark for a larger conference of a wide range of stake holders would be held later this year in Abuja on the same theme: *Reintegration, Deradicalisation and Rehabilitation*.