



## RELIGIOUS LEADERS URGED TO PROMOTE LOVE AND UNITY

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### ABUJA, NIGERIA -

Religious leaders in the country have been called upon to spread the gospel of love, brotherhood, unity and selfless sacrifice among their followers, so that the country can attain greater heights in development and growth. This admonition was given by the Emir of Kano, Malam Muhammad Sanusi II, CON in his keynote address at the opening ceremony of the 10th Anniversary National Conference of Veritas University, held recently at Chelsea Hotel, Abuja. The Emir was represented by Dr. Isa Hashim.

According to the traditional ruler, the people of the country, especially the youths must be guided by truth, honesty and justice. He stressed: "If we go aground as a nation, we should all have ourselves to blame, but those of you who have responsibility for our moral and spiritual direction and upliftment will be more blame worthy".

The traditional ruler noted that the country's traditional rulers have a major role to play for continued peace, unity and progress of the country; adding that they must therefore exert their spiritual influence to get Nigerian citizens to work towards this goal. The Royal Father added that all hands must be on deck to ensure peace and national development in the country. He however noted that this can only be possible "if, from now on we make the well-being of every Nigerian citizen, however humble, from which ever part of the federation he hails and whatever faith he follows, our concern".

Speaking on the theme of the Conference which is premised on peace and development, Emir Sanusi noted that there is need to understand what peace connotes and how it can be achieved. According to him: "... unless we have a clear definition and description of the object of our desire before we set out in search of it, our efforts might be misguided and purposeless.

The Emir noted that peace is not just absence of crises or cessation of hostilities neither is it a negative state which notionally and automatically exists when strife or hostilities ceases. He defined peace as "a state which requires the positive, conscious and dynamic efforts of Nigerian and religious and political leaders to bring it into being and sustain it." He added: "It involves the active, conscientious and pursuant promotion and maintenance of economic prosperity and social justice, in such manner as to convince and assure the average Nigerian citizens of their permanent enjoyment."

While pointing out that the seeds of peace must be sown and nurtured in the minds of the people, Emir Sanusi urged the Catholic Church, through its educational institution to be in the forefront in the struggle for national development, by virtue of the access to the hearts and souls of the people. The programme was attended by dignitaries from all walks of life including members of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria and the academia.