



CSN DELEGATES AT CAN URGED TO ADHERE TO THE FOCUS OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

Officers and delegates representing the Catholic Church in the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) have been urged to remain focused and align with the position of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), on the purpose and ultimate goal of the association for the common good of the society.

The advice was given by the Secretary General of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN); Rev. Fr. Zacharia Samjumi, while receiving the officers and delegates of the Catholic Church who participated in the election of the President and Vice President of the association, held recently at the National Christian Centre, Abuja. The delegates were led on the courtesy visit to the Secretary General by the leader of the CSN Bloc to the CAN election, Rev. Fr. Joseph Nomhwange SMA; CSN Director of Mission and Dialogue.

During the visit, Fr. Samjumi, briefed the delegates on what led to the five-year suspension of the participation of the Catholic Church in the activities of the association at the national level, noting that this was in the interest of the Christian faith and the common good of the society. The Secretary General noted the attempt by some past officers to make CAN an appendage of government, among other things that negate the objectives of the founding fathers of the association, prompted the action of the Catholic Bishops' Conference (CBCN).

According to him, the primary goal and objective of the founding fathers of the association was the unity and collaboration of all Christian denominations in the country, with the ultimate intention of ensuring justice, equity and love, among all the people, irrespective of their differences. He added that making the association an appendage of government portends danger not only for the body but also for the followers of Christ in the country; and makes the body a political association as against the intended spiritual and pastoral life in conformity with the directives of Christ.

Fr. Samjumi, noted that there is the need for an overhaul of the Constitution of the association to insulate it from being turned into an organ of the government in power with the temptation of supporting the oppression of the people as might deem fit by the government in power. He therefore urged the officers and election delegates to abide by the guidelines and position of the Bishops' Conference, aimed at sanitizing the association and make it pursue the purpose for which it was established. He wished the delegates success at the elections and assured the officers representing the Church under the CSN umbrella in the association of the continuous support of the Bishops' Conference.

Responding on behalf of the officers and delegates, Rev. Fr. Joseph Nomhwange, SMA, briefed the Secretary General on the plans of the team for the election and thanked him for the confidence reposed in the members by the Bishops' Conference. He assured that they will work in conformity with the intent of the Bishops to bring sanity to the association and make it a real Christian organization for the oneness of the Body of Christ.

The officers and delegates who accompanied Fr. Nomhwange SMA, on the courtesy included: Rev. Fr. Gregory Obanado, CSN Secretary of Dialogue in the department of Mission and Dialogue; Rev. Fr. Moses Iyara, CSN Secretary for Inculturation and Translation; Sir Peter Igbinijesu; Bridget Itodo; Barister Comfort Otera Chigbue;; Mrs. Vera Nwosu; Mrs. Clara Peter; Mr. Sunday Imuh and Otunba Jide Fadugba-Pinheiro of the Directorate of Social Communications, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN).

