



CATHOLIC LAWYERS CALL FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS INTERFACE DISCUSSION ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

The Association of Catholic Lawyers have advocated an all stakeholders interface meeting to holistically address the challenges militating against the enthronement of good governance in the country. The call was part of the resolutions adopted at the end the National Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting and Colloquium, held recently at the Catholic Resource Centre, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN); Durumi, Abuja.

The resolutions were part of the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting and signed by Barristers Chukwuma Ezeala and Angela Odunukwe, President and Secretary of the association respectively. Calling for affirmative actions in the direction, the association listed the groups that should take part in the interface discussion to include: Christian Lawyers; Muslim Lawyers, other relevant stakeholders, institutions and organizations.

Other resolutions adopted by the body included: to create awareness and work towards building bridges of peace, harmony and social cohesion; and to work on how “to embrace core values in governance and well-being of the Nigerian State so as to jettison the primordial ethnic cleavages that have always held us down as Nigerians”.

The lawyers called on the Federal Government to revitalize the entire security structure of the country and make it technology driven to save lives in the overall interest of the Nigerian State and her citizenry; adding that the fight

against corruption needs to be tackled and dispatched holistically. In this perspective, the lawyers enjoined the government to put up appropriate structure and pragmatic system that the government and Nigerians will collectively cooperate and collaborate to effectively address corruption for the betterment of the Nigerian society.

During the Colloquium, the lawyers deliberated extensively on: the rule of law and transparency in which they observed that these cardinal virtues and norms are substantially lacking in facets of life and governance in the country. Another major topic of discussion was social justice which they noted was at its lowest ebb. Other topics discussed included: security challenges, human rights abuses and visible socio-economic challenges

Also present at the meeting/colloquium were: the President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, Most Rev. Dr. Augustine Akubeze and Archbishop of the Metropolitan See of Benin City; John Cardinal Onaiyekan of Abuja Archdiocese; Archbishop Matthew Ndagoso, Chairman Department of Church and Society, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), and Archbishop of Kaduna Archdiocese; Bishop Mathew Hassan Kukah, of Sokoto Diocese and Bishop Anselm Umorem, Auxiliary Bishop of Abuja Archdiocese.

The programme was attended by Catholic lawyers from eight of the nine Provinces of the Church in the country - Abuja, Benin, Calabar, Jos, Kaduna, Lagos, Onitsha and Owerri. Senior Lawyers in attendance; included: Dr. Theo C. Osanakpo, SAN, KSGG, KCSGG, Mr. Augustine Alege, SAN - former President of NBA, Senator Mike Ajegbo, CON, Mr Ben Anachebe, SAN - Chairman of the NAACL Board of Trustees, Prof Maxwell Gidado, SAN, Professor Paul Idornigie, SAN and Professor Eric Okojie.