



CALL FOR ALL STAKEHOLDER GROUPS DIALOGUE TO STEM TIDE OF UNREST IN NIGERIA

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ABEOKUTA -

The Catholic Bishop of Abeokuta Diocese, Most Rev. Peter Odetoyinbo has called on the Federal Government to engage leaders of all stakeholder groups in the country in a meaningful dialogue, with a view of putting an end to the tide of unrest in the country.

The bishop made the call in a statement issued in Abeokuta, Ogun State, recently; in reaction to the recent #EndSARS protests by youths of the country, against Police brutality; and the subsequent decision of the Federal Government to reform the country's Police Force among other demands by the youths.

Bishop Odetoyinbo expressed the hope that the orchestrated decision of the government to reform the country's Police, is not just a political talk; and urged that the exercise should be an enduring and real rejuvenation of the police force in such a way that the sustainability of these reforms by successive governments would help the Nigeria Police to be more effective and efficient in their herculean tasks of protecting the nation.

His words: "Our concern is the sustainability of these reforms. We hope that such will not only end at mere promises whose implementation becomes impossible to fulfill not only by the present administration but subsequent ones". The Bishop continued: "We are particularly concerned because of our experience of the political class making unrealistic promises impossible to fulfill in their administration and successive government".

Bishop Odetoyinbo advised that the Police reforms should be sincere and enduring as this is what can bring an end to the continuous agitations of the people. He added: "Giving life insurance to police officers should not only be mere rhetoric to boost the morale of the officers but justifiably implemented considering the present situation of the COVID-19 pandemic".

While justifying the peaceful protests of the youths of the country, as the concern of all concerned Nigerians on the brutality of the police, especially the SARS squad; Bishop Odetoyinbo condemned in strong terms the hijack of the peaceful protests by hoodlums and the destruction of valuable public and private properties by these hoodlums urging that those who perpetrated the acts should be caught and dealt with according to the law of the land.

Bishop Odetoyinbo also used the occasion to call on the Federal Government to ensure that its anti-corruption crusade is carried out vigorously with all sincerity, with no sacred cows, stressing that: "Let us not forget that such looters also exist in the political class who loot our commonwealth and consistently evade justice because of their

political affiliation". He added: "One of the promises of the present administration is the fight against corruption but we advocate that everyone be treated equally before the law"