



CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

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Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

THE COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM 23RD –27TH SEPTEMBER, 2019, AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PETER, ASABA, DELTA STATE.

INTRODUCTION The Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) met at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, Diocese of Asaba, Delta State, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and presided over by The Most Rev'd Nicholas D. Okoh, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria. In attendance were his wife, Mrs. Nkasiobi A. Okoh, President of the Women and Girls' Organizations; the Dean of the Church of Nigeria, The Most Rev'd Dr. Ali Buba Lamido, 157 Bishops, 138 Clergymen, 90 members of the House of Laity and delegates of the Mothers' Union. We were honoured at the Opening Ceremony with the presence of some distinguished guests including the Executive Governor of Delta State, His Excellency, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa.

THEME The theme of the meeting was 'FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH' [1 TIMOTHY 6:12]. At the end, the following Communiqué was issued:

At a time like this, when we seem to be distressed over insecurity, deterioration of our social amenities, poor medical system, weak educational system, the Standing Committee reminds all:

- That God's unconditional faithfulness is the perfect assurance that we have a future which no one or system can destroy.
- That the prevailing situation in our nation is increasingly dire and full of hate. All Nigerians are, therefore, called upon to renounce the devil and all his works, by crucifying the flesh.
- That everyone, especially Christians, must rise up and fight this fight between light and darkness, good and evil, the kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan wisely particularly by setting good examples for those who have strayed from the straight path of godliness.
- that believers must not shy away from fighting the good fight of faith as inherited and passed on by the fore-bears of our faith.

FELICITATION The Standing Committee heartily congratulates the Most Rev'd Henry Ndukuba- Bishop of Gombe Diocese and Archbishop of Jos Province for his successful emergence as the Primate-Elect of our Church. The Church prays that as he prepares to take over the huge task of leadership, the Almighty God will empower

and strengthen him. In similar vein, the Committee appreciates the out-going Primate, the Most Rev'd D. Okoh, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria for the developmental strides and achievements so far, and pray God to grant him the ability to finish strong in the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Amen.

CASHLESS POLICY While appreciating the efforts of the Federal Government towards introducing a sustainable cashless policy, the Standing Committee calls for caution in its implementation in order to guard against hoarding of funds in unconventional places. It further urges our elected officials at all levels to embrace more the spirit of sacrifice and patriotism, in view of paucity of funds to finance the new minimum wage and other pressing needs of the citizens. With greater number of the citizens living below poverty level, the Government should look for better ways of sourcing or saving funds instead of worsening their lot with increase in Value Added Tax (VAT).

TRANSPORTATION The Standing Committee commends the Federal Government on the improvement on the rail system. Similar attention should be paid to other means of transportation, to improve the deplorable condition of our roads, as in fact the Government has started, and the services of the local airlines. The Federal Government is implored to assist local airlines to replace old aircraft to save the nation from avoidable air disasters. The opening of our water ways for the movement of goods and services is a need that is both urgent and compelling.

THE POWER SECTOR The Standing Committee is worried that despite all efforts and funds invested since the inception of this democratic experience in 1999, the power sector has defied solutions by successive administrations while consumers pay dearly for darkness. It prays and calls on all concerned to redouble efforts in this direction so that sooner than later, constant power supply will be available and affordable.

XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA The Church condemns the wave of Xenophobic attacks in South Africa against foreign nationals, especially Nigerians, and calls on the Government to pursue diplomatic solutions to its logical conclusion. It also urges the Government not to abandon the returnees without resettlement, and calls on Nigerians, both at home and in the Diaspora, not to take laws into our hands, by destroying establishments. It further commends the patriotic spirit of Airpeace Airline towards the rescue mission of Nigerians in Diaspora, especially on this issue. Wealthy Nigerians are accordingly urged to use their God given resources to better the lives of other Nigerians.

The absence of viable youth empowerment programmes has partly led to the migration of progressive Nigerian youths to other less endowed nations, where they

are mistreated. The Government should create enabling environment for our youth to explore their potentials with zest.

EROSION OF OUR VALUES The Standing Committee wishes to register her displeasure over the sponsored promotion of social vices that are alien to our value system through electronic media through programmes like the **Big Brother** reality. The youths get keyed into these alien sexual cultures capable of causing unmanageable social crises and devalue human dignity. We strongly urge multi-national corporations and other sponsors of such immoral programmes to divert their resources to more productive and educative programmes towards raising good, visionary and patriotic future leaders.

SECURITY The Standing Committee notes the pain, suffering and hardship inflicted on citizens as a result of insecurity in the land. More painful is that some privileged Nigerians have turned this regrettable situation into business, defrauding international organizations in the name of NGOs, and diverting funds and materials meant for IDPs. While commending the Federal Government for the efforts made so far in the fight against insecurity, we urge that the fight should also be directed against the sponsors of this heinous crime against humanity no matter who they are.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY The Church strongly believes that the beauty of Nigeria lies in its ethnic and cultural diversities. These should naturally be tools for progress and development. The present trend of exploiting and misusing them for selfish gains should not only be discouraged but also condemned in its entirety. Appropriate Government structure that guarantees justice, equity, honesty and fair play will give us a head start for the desired peace, progress and development. The thriving democracy and development in climes like United States should encourage us employ our diversity rightly.

ACQUISITION OF SEVEN KILOMETRES OF WATER WAYS The plan by the Federal Government to acquire seven kilometers of land bordering water ways across the country is fuelling a lot of suspicion and apprehension in the society. While thanking the 8th National Assembly for rejecting the Executive Bill on this issue, the Standing Committee calls on the 9th National Assembly to be on the watch out for any move to reintroduce it for passage into law. At this stage, of our national development, we should avoid anything capable of upsetting the polity and emphasis what makes for peace and build up our common life. We commend the wisdom and grace that led to the suspension of the infamous RUGA project and calls for its total abrogation in whatever form or guise.

FREEDOM OF WORSHIP Concerned with the plight of Christians, who are suffering at the hands of Islamic extremists in Nigeria and around the world, the Standing Committee urges all Christians to pray faithfully for God's grace and protection for those who are persecuted. It further calls on all tiers of government to

ensure freedom of worship and where necessary, the protection of Christians who are under pressure around the world, particularly in Nigeria. The Standing Committee hereby requests that Government application of policies/laws on the right to own land should be without bias. It should not be designed or seen to favour any religion or group in the country.

JUDICIARY The Standing Committee wishes to express deep concern that the Judiciary is still financially dependent on the Executive. The Federal Government of Nigeria need to realize that the judiciary is an independent Arm and should be allowed to carry out their postings and promotions without interference. An empirical financial autonomy that will enable it function progressively is, therefore, seriously solicited.

CONVOCAATION OF ANGLICANS IN NORTH AMERICA (CANA) In April of this year 2019, CANA came solely under the control and jurisdiction of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Despite the fact that this decision led to the exit of the Diocese of CANA East to join the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), it is our sincere desire to forge ahead and maintain a good relationship with ACNA as they are our brothers and sisters in defense of the faith. We are committed to *fulfilling* our mission of reaching the host in North America. The Standing Committee congratulates Bishop Felix Orji on his appointment by the Primate of All Nigeria as Missionary Bishop of CANA, trusting God to guide him as he leads CANA in the USA and CANADA.

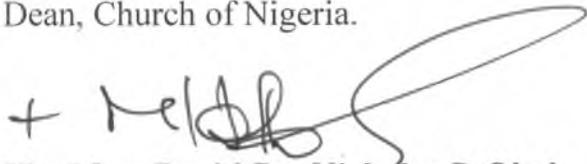
CONCLUSION Finally, brothers and sisters, we urge you to fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art so called and has professed a good profession before many witnesses. (1 Tim 6.12)



Ven. Dr. G. Paul Dajur ,
General Secretary, Church of Nigeria.



The Most Rev'd Dr. A. B. Lamido,
Dean, Church of Nigeria.



The Most Rev'd Dr. Nicholas D Okoh,
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria