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»In words and deeds. Preaching on its own is not enough. The act of loving and benevolence towards others – both in our own religious community and beyond – should be part of our daily life.«

Archbishop Kaigama and Emir Muazu

Rethinking the challenges of tomorrow

Archbishop Kaigama's and Emir Muazu's insights

- **Dialogue:** We in Nigeria want to give interreligious dialogue »shoes to walk«. For an effective dialogue you need common values and trust. We therefore start with encounters. We visit each other's places of worship – churches and mosques – and participate in each other's religious celebrations. The next step involves reading our holy scriptures together. It is practically impossible to establish a dialogue with the terrorist organisation Boko Haram, so we focus on interreligious dialogue as a preventive measure.
- **Welfare:** Life has given us many precious gifts. We should embrace them gratefully and enjoy them. If we as human beings took greater care of each other, the world would be a better place. In some parts of the world there is more than enough food, yet elsewhere people are starving. We must remedy this deplorable state of affairs.
- **Solidarity:** We don't see people as Christians or Muslims. We see them as human beings. When thousands were driven out by Boko Haram and sought refuge in the city of Jos, we provided food, clothes and medicine. The people of Jos helped the refugees irrespective of their religion. We firmly believe that is how a society should work. If we fail to stand by our fellow human beings, then we fail ourselves.
- **Religion:** Religion is at the heart of everything we do in Nigeria. Wherever we go – to the market, to school or work – our religion goes with us. People can serve God in different ways, yet in doing so their deeds always speak more loudly than their words. On its own, simply talking about our religion is not enough. It must be a sincere and integral part of our daily lives.
- **Boko Haram:** Christians, Muslims and others suffer from the horrible crimes committed by the terrorist group Boko Haram, which abuses religion and therefore casts it in a negative light. Yet at the heart of these so-called »religious conflicts«, in Nigeria and elsewhere, are power struggles. If there were no economic or political crisis, the violence in our country would not have arisen.
- **Young people:** Nigeria is a very young and dynamic country. We have to teach our youth to be thoughtful and wise. They have to learn that fire is fire before they get burned. Regrettably, the Nigerian school curriculum does not include religion or history. It is crucial to know where we come from in order to know where our future lies.
- **Politics:** Nigeria is a rich country. We have oil, gold, land and a young population. What we don't have is real leadership, and that is dangerous. We don't want Nigeria to become a permanent battlefield. That is why we and many of our fellow campaigners are doing everything we can to prevent such a scenario. For this, we need the government. Its role must be to create an environment that is conducive to fruitful and respectful dialogue.
- **Sustainability:** As religious leaders, we are guided by the vision of a positive future. We devote our strength and our lives to the generations that follow us. We work to achieve peaceful coexistence. We are merely visitors upon the Earth and should therefore treat each other and our planet with respect.

Archbishop Kaigama's and Emir Muazu's vision

»Our new president, Muhammadu Buhari, offers hope. But he alone cannot reform the political system because the culture of corruption has become so pervasive. As Nigerians, we hope that the international community will support his endeavours to change the system and lead Nigeria into a more peaceful and prosperous future.«

Their lives

Ignatius Ayau Kaigama studied in Rome, where he was awarded a doctorate in theology in 1991. Today he is Archbishop of Jos in Nigeria and also president of the Nigerian Bishops' Conference and vice-president of the Episcopal Conference of West African Catholic Bishops. Archbishop Kaigama is chairman of the »Interreligious Committee for Peace« set up by the Plateau State government and founder of the »Dialogue, Reconciliation and Peace Centre«. The centre offers a platform for dialogue and learning aimed at religious, traditional and community leaders and at young people and women. In 2012 Archbishop Kaigama received the »Golden Dove Peace Award«. His Excellency Emir Muhammadu Mohammed Muazu is a traditional Muslim ruler in Plateau State. Together with the Archbishop he actively

supports interreligious dialogue and encourages harmonious coexistence between the different religious groups in Nigeria.

Interreligious dialogue in Nigeria

Christians and Muslims make up the majority of Nigeria's population. Their security and peaceful coexistence are endangered by the terrorist group Boko Haram, which commits dreadful crimes in the name of Islam. Thousands of people have already lost their lives, and the widespread destruction of vital infrastructure has plunged many into extreme poverty. Millions have fled their homes and need assistance. Against this background, Archbishop Kaigama, Emir Muazu and their fellow campaigners are striving to promote interreligious dialogue and create a more peaceful society.

Links

- <http://drepcentre.blogspot.de>
- www.dw.com/en/nigeria-religious-dialogue-in-times-of-terror/a-18762315

Literature

- Kefa, Allan Kalafa/ Moses, M. Ombuge (2012): *Manual for Interreligious Dialogue*, Chemchemi Ya Ukweli & Civil Peace Service, Kenya.
- Omotosho, Mashood (2014): *Managing Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: The Inter-Religious Mediation Peace Strategy*, Africa Development, Vol. XXXIX, No. 2, 2014, pp. 133–151.

Dialogue series Religion matters – Rethinking the challenges of tomorrow

Development policy that perceives people as individuals must in turn be willing to engage seriously with those people's perspective on the world. Religion and culture shape how people see the world, their lifestyles and engagement. They are a powerful force for social and political change. In a new dialogue series, entitled **Religion matters – Rethinking the challenges of tomorrow**, organised by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), distinguished individuals are regularly invited to exchange views on values, religion and sustainable development. The dialogue events are conducted with selected representatives from the spheres of politics, civil society and

academia. They are moderated by Ms Nazan Gökdemir, who is well known from her television work as presenter of the news programme *Arte Journal* and the ZDF series *Forum am Freitag*.

Links

- www.bmz.de/en/what_we_do/issues/religion-and-development/index.html
- www.giz.de/Values-and-Religion
- www.twitter.com/ReligionGIZ
- www.facebook.com/ReligionMattersGIZ

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