

COMMUNIQUE OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN NIGERIA:

KNOWN IN HAUSA AS “TARAYYAR EKKLESIYOYIN KRISTI A NIJERIYA” (TEKAN) 63RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD AT THE EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH OF CHRIST (ERCC) HEADQUARTERS, ALUSHI, AKWANGA, NASSARAWA STATE¹

FROM 9TH -14TH JANUARY, 2018.

1. PREAMBLE:

The Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria TEKAN is a fellowship that has been in existence for over 63 years and has about 30 million members cutting across 15 denominational churches with traceable evangelical ancestry, theological affinity and Christian belief. The churches include:

- 1) Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN)
- 2) Nongo u Kristu u i Ser u sha Tar (NKST-URCC)
- 3) Christian Reformed Church- Nigeria (CRC-N)
- 4) Ekklesiyar Yanuwa a Najeriya (EYN)
- 5) Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN)
- 6) Reformed Church of Christ for Nations (RCCN)
- 7) United Methodist Church of Nigeria (UMCN)
- 8) Evangelical Reformed Church of Christ (ERCC)
- 9) Mambila Baptist Convention- Nigeria (MBC-N)
- 10) Evangelical Church of Christ in Nigeria (ECCN)
- 11) United Church of Christ in Nations (UCCN-HEKAN)
- 12) Nigeria Reformed Church (NRC)

¹Notes from website proprietor:

1. TEKAN—This organization is popularly referred to as “TEKAN,” which is the acronym of the original Hausa-language name “Tarayyar Ekklesiyoyin Kristi a Nijeriya.”
2. It must be remembered that this document is a communiqué, i.e., meant for public consumption. These are not minutes and thus do not reflect the entire proceedings. One must avoid concluding that the church group has gone totally political. The political emphasis of this communiqué does not necessarily indicate complete politicization of TEKAN. One needs to read the minutes to see the complete picture.
3. To understand this communiqué, one must be acutely aware of the context, namely the decades-long political, religious and economic battle with Islam that has been waging in the country. Every issue is looked upon from that perspective; there is not much room for deeper Christian reflection.

- 13) All Nations Christian Assembly (ANCA)
- 14) United Missionary Church of Africa (UMCA)
- 15) Christian Evangelical Fellowship of Nigeria (CEFN)

2. ATTENDANCE: The Assembly had in attendance the President of TEKAN Rev Dr Caleb Solomon Ahima, all the TEKAN Executive Council Members, Board of Trustees, Advisers, Presidents and General Secretaries of member denominations, delegates and other invited dignitaries.

3. THEME OF THE ASSEMBLY: The Assembly was held under the Theme: “The Church: In Time Like This.” The theme reflected on the challenges confronting the Nigeria Church and the Role of TEKAN Churches especially as the church passes through her most trying moments.

The Assembly, in addition to glorious worship services, admonitions on the need for sacrificial love and relationship, resolved to pursue and stand for the truth, equity, fair play and the course of the gospel in all circumstances.

4. CONDOLENCES: The Assembly condoles deeply with member-churches and other victims affected by the ongoing Fulani herdsmen and other terrorists’ attacks in parts of Nigeria particularly Benue, Adamawa, Taraba, Kaduna, Plateau, Nassarawa, Rivers, and Kwara States among others.

5. ENVIRONMENT: The Assembly noted with concern desertification and its impact on the society and economy of the nation and calls on Member-Churches to reclothe the earth of its current nakedness by ensuring that members plant trees annually.

6. INSECURITY:

i) The Assembly condemns in strongest terms the wanton killings and destruction of lives and properties of her numerous members and innocent Nigerians around the country in recent times by Fulani Herdsmen and persons masquerading as Boko Haram and “unknown gunmen” and wondered why President Buhari consistently turn the other side.

ii) The Assembly expresses concern with dismay that the President Muhammadu Buhari’s led Federal Government has not been able to abate the killings and destruction of properties and calls on the President to uphold the sanctity of human

lives and keep to the terms of his oath of office and the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to defend and protect the lives of every citizen.

iii) The Assembly views the security architecture of Nigeria, and is saddened by the fact that almost all the heads of the security apparatus come from the same religion and geographical zone of Nigeria, the Assembly believes that the ethnic skewed appointments are responsible for the increasing level of Fulani herdsmen terrorism in the Country and calls for a deliberate balancing on those appointments.

iv) The Assembly condemns the usage of the Nigerian Air force fighter jets for attacks and killings of innocent and defenseless citizens in Adamawa and Borno States under the guise of missed target. The Assembly demands that the outcome of the investigative Committee's report of the incident be made public.

7. PROSECUTION OF PERPETRATORS: The Assembly demands the immediate arrest and prosecution of some known prominent Islamic and Miyetti Allah Kautal Hore leadership alongside culprits as mentioned by Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Adamawa and Benue States who made inciting statements encouraging the continuous killings of helpless citizens and or directly involved in the attacks in Adamawa, Benue, Taraba States among other parts of Nigeria.

8. CATTLE COLONIES:

i) The Assembly strongly objects the fresh attempt to reintroduce the Grazing routes policy Nigerians had rejected through the back door by calling for the creation of a so called "Cattle Colonies". Besides the offensive name which suggest surreptitious plans to colonize parts of Nigeria they could not conquer during Othman Dan Fodio Jihad, the thought of collecting by whatever name and means our ancestral land for cattle rearing business is the worst form of humiliation to the Christians and other communities.

Therefore, the Assembly rejects any attempt by the Federal Government under President Muhammadu Buhari to annex any land in the Middle Belt and other parts of Nigeria for his kinsmen for their private businesses in the name of Cattle Colony.

ii) The Assembly overwhelmingly commends the bold steps taken by the Governments of Benue and Taraba States in passing the Anti-Open Grazing bill into law and calls on the Governments of Kaduna, Adamawa, Nassarawa and Plateau States to take similar decisive measures.

9. INCITEMENT/ HATE SPEECH: The Assembly is disappointed by the unguarded and inflammatory statements on the killings in Benue State and on the suggestion for the creation of cattle colonies by some top Government officials among who are: Chief Audu Ogbeh the Minister of Agriculture, General Danbazau Abdulrahman the Minister of Interior and Mr Ibrahim Idris the Inspector General of Police and calls on President Buhari to immediately remove them if any level of peace is to be attained.

10. UNEMPLOYMENT: The Assembly views with concern the soaring rate of unemployment among the youths, widespread poverty and hunger in the land compounded by the activities of marauding Jihadists who parade themselves as Fulani herdsmen and calls on Government to intensify measures aimed at creating job opportunities for teeming unemployed Nigerians and eradicating poverty.

11. STATE OF ISRAEL: The Assembly expresses deepest concern over the position the Nigerian Government under President Muhammadu Buhari took during the anti-Israel UN voting and completely dissociate itself as Christians from such ill motivated voting from Nigerian representative which is an attempt to deliberately invite curse upon our land. Therefore, Assembly support American's recognition of Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel.

12. POLITICS:

- i) The Assembly calls on all the Churches to ensure that eligible voters among members register in the ongoing voters' registration exercise and calls on INEC to create a conducive ground for easy accessibility of voters cards so that no Nigerian is disenfranchised.
- ii) The Assembly urges her members to participate actively in political processes to help raising leaders that will bring sanity and sanctity to the nation.
- iii) The Assembly calls on the members of the National Assembly to step up efforts to stand for the course of Nigerians by regularly consulting and ensuring that they live up to the expectations of their constituencies.
- iv) The Assembly urges the Federal Government to permanently address the perennial fuel scarcity which was more severe during the Christmas and New Year celebrations resulting in untold hardship on the citizens.
- iv) The Assembly calls on the people of Benue State to eschew bitterness and advises Christian politicians to close rank by avoiding comments that may divide and tear us apart.

13. PRAYERS: The Assembly calls on Christians in Nigeria to be more committed in prayers for peaceful coexistence of all Nigerians irrespective of tribe, region and religion.

14. CONCLUSION: The Assembly appreciates the almighty God for the successful deliberation and safety and commends her member- churches and other affected persons for standing firm despite the persistent attacks.

Rev. Dr Caleb Solomon Ahima Rev. Moses Jatau Ebuga
TEKAN President TEKAN General Secretary



