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COMMUNIQUE OF THE MUSLIM LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA'S 12TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD ON 22ND – 25TH DHUL QADAH, 1440 AH (25TH – 28TH JULY, 2019) AT GMT HOTEL AND EVENTS CENTRE, OSOGBO, OSUN STATE.

The 12th Annual National Conference of the Muslim Lawyers' Association of Nigeria was held from 25th to 28th of July 2019 at the GMT Hotel and Events Centre, Osogbo in Osun State. The opening ceremony was chaired by Hon. Justice Olukayode Ariwoola, JSC, while Professor Wahab Egbewole SAN of University of Ilorin delivered the Keynote address on the theme of the Conference: "Security, Law and Good Governance". The occasion was well attended by dignitaries from within and outside the bar and the bench. At the Conference various salient issues of national concern were discussed and following decisions reached:

1. The Association views with concern, the alarming state of insecurity that pervades the length and breadth of the Nation and which is not helped by the poor service delivery or poor governance by each arm of Government, and therefore calls on those at the helm of affairs to take prompt action to address the obvious deficits. It enjoins them to employ equity and fairness in governance, increase the drive to provide social - economic amenities for the citizenry and an enabling environment for all where Rule of Law prevails.
2. The Association notes the efforts of the present regime at nipping in the bud, the various acts of insecurity and criminality that keep on disrupting the daily lives of Nigerians and threatening their continued co - existence as a nation. It observed with awe, that more grounds need to be covered by the Federal Government in order to effectively protect the lives and property of the citizens of this great Nation and therefore call for a significant change in the approach of the fight against all forms of criminal activities that stare the Nation in the face so that we can progress from a technical defeat to actual defeat and possible extermination of all heinous crimes from our polity.
3. The Association observes that the economic well being of an average Nigerian under the present regime is at its lowest ebb in the recent economic history of this Nation and this is notwithstanding the theoretical economic growth rates being reeled out by the handlers of our economy and their Western Supervisors. It is the position of the Association that

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any economic growth that does not impact positively on the lives of the mass of the population is nothing but mere imagination of the so called economic pundits. The prevalence of poverty is an enabler to the high level of criminality and insecurity that has enveloped the country. On this, the Association calls on the three tiers of Government to rejig their economic management approaches with a view to achieving a people oriented economic policy that will impact positively on the lives of every citizen of this Country. They are enjoined to put in place real and sustainable Welfare Schemes to alleviate the suffering of the people rather than the political expedient measures we have at present.

4. The Association bemoans the unbecoming attitude of some sections of the populace at linking and/or tying certain crimes to particular ethnic groups. This is unreasonable because verifiable evidence show that such crimes as kidnapping, terrorism, arson, militancy, treason, murder, ritual killing and other forms of violent crimes are not peculiar to any ethnic group or region. To believe otherwise is not only false but defies all rational thoughts and theorems on Criminology and Criminality.
5. Further, the Association deprecates the smear and well-orchestrated campaign of calumny being carried out by some persons, groups and institutions within and outside Nigeria to advance a false narrative that Muslims are violent people. The mischief of these persons, groups and institutions is exemplified by their attributing any violence or crime to Muslims even when unassailable facts show otherwise. Nigerians, irrespective of religious persuasion, should never allow the inordinate drive to be relevant especially for self serving ends of these mischief-makers which has made them delusional, to be used to create schisms between Muslims and non-Muslims in our county. The MULAN hereby re-emphasizes the known fact that Islam means PEACE and Nigerian Muslims are peaceful people who frown at all forms of crimes and injustice. The tolerance of the Nigerian Muslim is legendary even in the face of many derogations from, and deprivations of, their religious rights in the public and private space in the country.
6. The Association seriously condemns the incessant harassment and intimidation of hijab wearing female Muslim in various institutions of learning, the work place and other environments in Nigeria. The intolerant attitude of the authorities in charge of these institutions such as the International School Ibadan under the management of the University of Ibadan, is not only unconstitutional and parochial but undermines the multi-religious state of our Country. It is an affront on the rule of law and civility flying as it were, in the face of extant decisions of the Court of Appeal affirming the right of the female Muslim to the use of Hijab at all times. The MULAN urges all those engaged in this discriminatory act against the female Muslim to desist forthwith.
7. The Association calls on the Federal Government to always be ready and prepared to decisively deal with any criminal act with the same measured approach no matter which part of the Country same occurred or which ethnic or religious group the perpetrators belonged to however, high or low in the economic, social or political ladder the culprits are. The Association appeals for a pragmatic review and upgrade of existing security infrastructure, provision of adequate training and monitoring of all our Security

operatives as well as the improvement of the social welfare programs for these endangered personnel.

8. In order to depart from the present snail speed delivery of Criminal Justice, the Association advocates for the cooperation of the Judiciary, the Police, the Prisons Service, the various Ministries of Justice, as well as counsel engaged in the defence of criminal cases so as to ensure the prompt arrest and investigation of suspects, and the prosecution of persons charged before any Court of competent jurisdiction as well as execution of punishment where imposed. The Executive and Legislative are advised to treat the Judiciary with respect and to obey all decisions of the courts whether it suits their fancy or not. A situation whereby the Executive especially at the Federal level disregards orders of competent courts leaves a sour taste in the mouth and should be seriously frowned at by all decent persons.
9. Flowing from the foregoing and due to the acknowledged fact that a Nation is never built or developed by its Leaders alone, the Conference called on all Nigerians especially Professionals of the Islamic faith to, at all times, be guided by the ethical standards of Islam in carrying out their professional duties in their various callings. Specifically, Muslim Lawyers were enjoined to always remember the Quranic and Sunnatic admonitions on Islamic Justice Delivery while handling cases before Courts/Tribunals and effecting instructions of their clients. They are reminded to always keep in mind that without substantial justice there can be no social and economic development.
10. Lastly, MULAN will continue to relate, interact and cooperate with other persons, groups and institutions to advance the course of justice, rule of law, peaceful co-existence and the socio-economic and political wellbeing of all Nigerians free from discrimination on grounds of religion, ethnicity, sex or social status. It therefore extends its hands of fellowship to such persons and groups having similar aims and objects for a mutually rewarding relationship
11. The Association fervently wishes all Nigerians well and prays that Allah (SWT) will give the President and the political leadership at various levels the requisite wisdom, ability and capability to acquaint themselves well and bring real growth and development to the country.

For: MUSLIM LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (MULAN)



Prof. F. A. R. Adeleke
National President



Ismaila Alasa
Secretary General