



COMMUNIQUE OF THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHURCH AND SOCIETY

PREAMBLE

The modern world faces multifaceted crises—climate change, inequality, political instability, social fragmentation, and health pandemics—that demand a holistic response rooted in compassion, justice, and faith. The issues we face are urgent and interdependent. Climate crises threaten our future; social injustices undermine our common humanity; conflicts tear apart communities. Our response must be holistic, rooted in faith, guided by wisdom, and driven by love. The church, with its long-standing history as a beacon of hope and moral guidance, is uniquely positioned to influence societal transformation. To fulfill this role effectively, the church must transcend traditional boundaries, embracing innovative approaches that align faith with action.

The 2nd International Conference on Church and Society, jointly organized by Christian University of Leadership Education and Development Studies (CULED) and Center for Faith and Community Development (CFCD), in partnership with Global Interfaith University, Rudolph Kwanue University, College of Peace and Reconciliation Studies and Godman Soteria Academic of Theology, convened scholars, faith leaders, community activists, policymakers, and believers from around the world to deliberate on the vital question: how can the church effectively bridge its spiritual mission with its societal responsibilities in the contemporary world? Our sacred teachings emphasize compassion, justice, stewardship, and reconciliation. These timeless principles serve as a compass guiding us toward constructive responses to the pressing issues of our age. From October 11-12, 2025, at the National Merit House, No.12 Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria, the conference brought together, faith leaders, members of the academia, community advocates, policymakers, youths and representatives from diverse backgrounds—united by a common calling rooted in our shared spiritual values, to explore the theme: **“Bridging Faith and Community: The Role of the Church in Contemporary Society”**. This conference marks a pivotal moment in our collective journey to transform faith into action for the betterment of our world. The conference aimed to reflect critically on the church’s current engagement, identify best practices, and chart pathways for renewed commitment and strategic action.

The conference was more than an assembly of voices; it was a clarion call to action. Participants were reminded of the unique strengths that faith communities possess—spiritual authority, moral integrity, and deeply rooted networks—that can mobilize communities, influence policy, and inspire hope amid adversity. Recognizing that faith is not merely a personal journey but a collective mission that transcends borders, cultures, and denominations, participants reaffirmed their commitment to becoming agents of positive change, inspired by the divine mandate to love our neighbours and care for creation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

1. To examine the evolving relationship and responsibilities of the Church in addressing societal issues such as social justice, environmental stewardship, mental health, and community development.
2. To foster a spirit of cooperation and understanding among different faith traditions and secular organizations in tackling common societal challenges.
3. To provide church leaders and community organizers with tools, resources, and best practices to engage effectively with their communities.
4. To share successful case studies and models of grassroots initiatives led by churches that have made a significant impact on society.
5. To articulate a forward-looking vision for the church's role in shaping inclusive, resilient, and compassionate communities.

KEY THEMES AND DISCUSSION

1. **Faith as a Catalyst for Social Justice and Human Dignity:** The conference reaffirmed that faith communities are vital catalysts for advocating for the marginalized, defending human rights, and promoting dignity for all. Drawing inspiration from scriptural teachings and religious traditions, participants emphasized the church's moral obligation to serve as a voice for the voiceless, confronting injustice wherever it exists.
2. **The Church and Climate Justice:** Recognizing the existential threat posed by climate change, the church is called to be an active participant in environmental stewardship. This includes raising awareness, advocating sustainable practices, and mobilizing communities to care for creation as a spiritual imperative.
3. **Promoting Peace and Reconciliation:** In conflict zones and fragmented societies, the church's role in mediating, fostering dialogue, and promoting reconciliation is more critical than ever. The conference highlighted successful models of peacebuilding rooted in faith-based initiatives.
4. **Inclusivity and Social Cohesion:** The church must be a welcoming space for all, embracing diversity across race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. Promoting social cohesion involves challenging discrimination, fostering dialogue, and building bridges within and beyond faith communities.
5. **Education and Empowerment:** Education remains a powerful tool for social upliftment. The church's role in providing holistic education that emphasizes moral values, critical thinking, and leadership is essential in empowering communities.
6. **Technology and Digital Engagement:** Embracing digital platforms offers new avenues for faith expression, community building, and social activism. The church must harness technology responsibly to extend its reach and influence.
7. **Partnership and Collaboration:** Addressing complex societal issues requires collaboration among faith communities, governments, civil society, and the private sector. The conference underscored the importance of strategic partnerships rooted in shared values.

COMMITMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

In light of these discussions, the conference participants commit to the following:

1. **Deepening Faith-Based Social Engagement:** Churches and faith communities shall intensify their efforts to serve the vulnerable, advocate for justice, and promote ethical leadership. This entails establishing or strengthening social programs, clinics, schools, and advocacy platforms aligned with biblical and spiritual principles.
2. **Advocacy for Environmental Stewardship:** Faith institutions will integrate environmental concerns into their worship, education, and community outreach, advocating for policies that combat climate change and promote sustainable living.
3. **Fostering Peace and Reconciliation:** Faith leaders will actively participate in peacebuilding initiatives, mediating conflicts, and promoting dialogue at local, national, and international levels.
4. **Enhancing Inclusivity and Diversity:** Churches shall develop inclusive policies and practices that welcome marginalized groups, promote gender equality, and challenge all forms of discrimination.
5. **Promoting Education and Leadership Development:** Faith communities will invest in education programs that nurture moral integrity, civic responsibility, and leadership skills among youth and adults.
6. **Leveraging Technology for Social Good:** Embrace digital tools for evangelism, education, social activism, and community organizing, ensuring access and inclusivity.
7. **Building Strategic Partnerships:** Foster collaborations with government agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, and other faith groups to amplify impact and ensure sustainability.
8. **Research and Continuous Reflection:** Support research initiatives that assess the effectiveness of faith-based interventions and encourage ongoing theological and social reflection on the church's role in society.

CALL TO ACTION

The success of this conference's vision depends on deliberate, coordinated efforts by all stakeholders—faith leaders, congregations, community organizations, government agencies, and civil society. The conference calls upon all participants—faith leaders, community members, policymakers, and civil society—to translate commitments into tangible actions. This includes:

1. **Establish and Strengthen Local and National Programs**
 - a. **Develop Community Outreach Initiatives:** Churches should create or expand programs that address local needs—food security, healthcare, education, and shelter—ensuring these initiatives are inclusive and accessible.
 - b. **Mobilize Volunteer Networks:** Build dedicated volunteer groups to sustain ongoing social projects, fostering a culture of service rooted in faith.

- c. **Monitor and Evaluate Impact:** Implement mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of interventions, learning from successes and challenges to improve future efforts.
- 2. Embed Environmental Stewardship into Worship and Practice**
 - a. **Integrate Eco-theology:** Incorporate teachings on creation care into sermons, prayer services, and religious education.
 - b. **Organize Environmental Campaigns:** Launch community clean-up days, tree planting drives, and sustainability workshops.
 - c. **Advocate for Policy Change:** Engage with policymakers to support climate policies aligned with faith-based principles of stewardship.
 - 3. Foster Peace and Reconciliation**
 - a. **Conduct Interfaith Dialogues:** Organize regular forums where different faith communities can share perspectives, build trust, and collaborate on peace initiatives.
 - b. **Participate in Conflict Mediation:** Join local peace commissions or form faith-based peace teams to mediate conflicts and promote reconciliation.
 - c. **Support Victims of Violence:** Provide psychosocial support and advocacy for victims, emphasizing compassion and justice.
 - 4. Promote Inclusivity and Social Cohesion**
 - a. **Review and Reform Church Policies:** Ensure that church practices promote gender equality, racial inclusivity, and serve marginalized groups effectively.
 - b. **Create Safe Spaces:** Establish support groups and forums for marginalized voices within faith communities.
 - c. **Engage in Community Building:** Host cultural events, dialogues, and activities that celebrate diversity and foster unity.
 - 5. Invest in Education and Leadership Development**
 - a. **Launch Moral and Civic Education Programs:** Equip youth and adults with values of justice, compassion, and civic responsibility.
 - b. **Develop Leadership Training:** Cultivate community leaders who embody integrity, service, and faith-based principles.
 - c. **Partner with Educational Institutions:** Collaborate with schools and universities to incorporate faith-based ethics into curricula.
 - 6. Leverage Technology for Greater Impact**
 - a. **Digital Outreach:** Use social media, webinars, and virtual platforms to share messages of hope, educate, and mobilize communities.
 - b. **Create Online Resources:** Develop digital toolkits, training modules, and resource centers to support faith-based social action.
 - c. **Ensure Accessibility:** Prioritize inclusivity by making digital content accessible to all, including marginalized and remote communities.
 - 7. Build and Strengthen Partnerships**
 - a. **Collaborate Across Sectors:** Forge alliances with governments, NGOs, academic institutions, and secular organizations committed to justice and sustainability.
 - b. **Participate in Multistakeholder Forums:** Engage in policy dialogues and joint initiatives that amplify faith-based contributions.
 - c. **Share Best Practices:** Establish networks for exchanging successful models, lessons learned, and innovative approaches.

8. Commit to Continuous Reflection and Learning

- a. **Conduct Regular Assessments:** Gather data and feedback to evaluate progress towards social and spiritual goals.
- b. **Encourage Theological Reflection:** Continually interpret and adapt faith teachings to contemporary social challenges.
- c. **Document and Disseminate Stories:** Highlight inspiring stories of faith-in-action to motivate wider participation.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Imagine a world where faith communities stand as beacons of hope, justice, and sustainability—where love and compassion guide every action, and reconciliation and peace flourish across all nations and cultures. The conference envisions a future where the church is recognized globally as a vital partner in building equitable, peaceful, and sustainable societies. This vision is rooted in the understanding that faith and community are interconnected; faith inspires action, and action embodies faith. In this future, churches are not isolated sanctuaries but vibrant hubs of social innovation, compassion, and justice. They serve as bridges—linking spiritual values with societal needs, and fostering a culture of solidarity, respect, and hope.

In this envisioned future, our collective efforts have transformed the social fabric, creating societies rooted in equity, respect, and care for the Earth. In this future:

1. Communities thrive in harmony, with every individual's dignity recognized and upheld, regardless of race, gender, or social status.
2. Environmental stewardship is a shared value, echoing through policies and everyday practices, resulting in a sustainable planet where creation's beauty and resources are preserved for generations to come.
3. Social inequalities are addressed and healed, as faith communities actively champion the rights of the marginalized, empowering them to participate fully in societal life.
4. Conflicts are resolved through dialogue and reconciliation, fostering peace and understanding among diverse groups, building bridges of trust and cooperation.
5. Education and moral development are prioritized, nurturing compassionate leaders and citizens committed to justice, integrity, and service.
6. Faith-inspired advocacy influences policies, leading to systemic change that upholds human rights, protects the environment, and promotes social cohesion.

This future is not a distant dream but a tangible reality within our reach—if we commit ourselves to deliberate action, rooted in our shared spiritual values. It is a future where faith is actively expressed through service, advocacy, and the unwavering pursuit of justice. Together, we can shape this future—one rooted in hope, driven by love, and sustained by unwavering faith. Our collective vision is a world transformed by the power of faith communities working hand-in-hand to create a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world for all.

CLOSING REFLECTION

As we conclude this historic gathering, let us remember that the journey toward bridging faith and community is ongoing and collective. The challenges are many, but so are the opportunities for transformative impact. Guided by faith, driven by compassion, and committed to justice, the church can continue to be a powerful force for good in the world.

Let us take a moment to reflect on the profound insights, renewed commitments, and heartfelt connections we have shared. Together, we have explored the power of faith to inspire action, to heal wounds, and to transform our communities and our world. The journey we are on is ongoing. The seeds of hope and change planted at this conference require nurturing, perseverance, and collective effort. Each of us carries a sacred responsibility—to be ambassadors of love, justice, and stewardship—embodying the principles we hold dear in our daily lives.

May the bonds forged here strengthen our resolve to advocate for those in need, to protect our planet, and to foster peace and reconciliation wherever we go. Let our faith be a catalyst for action, inspiring others to join in this vital work. In the words of our shared spiritual traditions, may we be guided by wisdom, driven by compassion, and rooted in hope. Remember that even small acts of kindness and justice ripple outward, creating waves of transformation that can reach far beyond our immediate sight.

May this communiqué serve as a beacon and a call to action for all who seek to embody the divine mandate to love, serve, and transform communities for the betterment of all humanity. Together, let us build a future where faith and community are truly inseparable in the pursuit of a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

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