



ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES (AACC) CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE (CETA)

AACC-CETA

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STATEMENT BY THE ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES ON THE KILLINGS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN KUMBA, CAMEROON

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) has learnt with great sadness of the horrific massacre of schoolchildren by yet to be identified gunmen while in a classroom in Mother Fransisca International Bilingual Academy in Kumba, Southwest region of Cameroon. Several other students who were in the same class were seriously injured, and are fighting for their lives in hospital.

AACC condemns this dastardly act in the strongest terms possible. We note that the involvement of children as targets in the ongoing civil conflict in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon is a dangerous escalation of this war. It will lead to harming of innocents who have no idea what the conflict is about, and who deserve to be protected by all sides to the conflict.

For how long will the blood of innocents be spilled in Africa due to political differences? Africa must say enough is enough, and learn to disagree and negotiate political disagreements without resorting to violence and bloodshed.

We are all children of one God, and all life is sacrosanct. Nobody should take away a life that he or she did not give. We call on all sides of the conflict to give an unequivocal pledge that there will be no targeting of civilians by their combatants.

Even as we grieve those killed, we call on the Government of Cameroon to move as quickly as possible to investigate this heinous act, apprehend the perpetrators, and prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. The current finger-pointing and blame game must stop forthwith, and the truth established.

We note a very worrying trend in this conflict, where combatants now seem to have accepted innocent civilians as legitimate targets. It is barely 8 months ago in February 2020 that 22 civilians were killed in Ngurbah, Northwest region of Cameroon, in another blatant attack on civilians by gunmen.

PRESIDENT: Rt. Rev. Arnold C. Temple • GENERAL SECRETARY: Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki

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We also call on the international community, notably the African Union, The United Nations, and the Economic Community of Central African States, to take note of the worrying escalation of the conflict by way of targeting innocent civilians, with the aim of holding accountable parties that perpetrate such senseless massacres.

The time has come for these bodies to intervene more forcefully in protecting civilians, by imposing harsh sanctions on any of the parties to the conflict who target civilians.

Once again, the AACC calls on all parties to this conflict to sheath their swords, and return to the negotiating table to discuss a mutually acceptable peace settlement. This conflict has gone on for too long needlessly. We reiterate, none of the parties can wish the other away, and the longer this conflict continues, the more suffering is inflicted on innocent civilians for nothing.

AACC will not tire to continue walking with Cameroon and engaging all parties for the sake of peace, even as we are saddened at the slow pace of complete cessation of hostilities from all sides as discussed during our recent peace mission there in March 2020.

We continue praying that God gives wisdom and courage to all involved to do the right thing for the suffering people of Cameroon, and for peace to prevail.

Rev. Dr Fidon Mwombeki
General Secretary

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