



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## NIGERIAN MUSLIMS NETWORK

*And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah, and be not disunited*

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### NMN CALLS FOR AN END TO RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

The Nigerian Muslims Network (NMN) joins millions of Nigerians in strongly condemning the recent horrific religious violence in some parts of Northern Nigeria that resulted in the death of a number of Christian compatriots and the wanton destruction of their properties and places of worship. In the same vein, the NMN utterly condemns the equally barbaric reprisal attacks perpetrated against the Muslim brethren in the Christian-dominated South Eastern Nigeria, especially in Onitsha.

The Network believes that while the alleged source of the conflict was the publication of some blasphemous cartoons by a Danish newspaper which is very much despicable and insulting to the billions of Muslims around the world, the brutal attacks against innocent Christian population, who had nothing to do with those cartoons, was completely against the teachings of Islam and must be strongly condemned by all decent human beings. Islam is a religion of peace, and enjoins its followers to live in harmony and mutual respect with their non-Muslim compatriots at all times and place. The NMN is pleased to note that Muslim organizations, such as the Jama'atul Nasril Islam and the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, have offered strong and unambiguous condemnation of these horrific acts. Also, the contribution of the Christian Association of Nigeria by joining forces with Muslim organizations to help calm the situation indeed demonstrated good leadership, and so commendable.

We condemn the recent criminal and unacceptable upheavals that led to the burning of places of worship, unjustifiable destruction of properties and senseless killing of innocent Nigerians. We want the public to know that these avoidable disturbances have nothing to do with religion and urge Nigerians to reject any religious or ethnic interpretation that might be given as the cause of these tragic events.

The NMN also condemns the actions of some of the law enforcement officials of these states, including some of the state governors, being the respective Chief Law Enforcement Officers of their States, for failing to effectively curb the violence and for, allegedly, playing a part in fuelling it by being heavy-handed and unprofessional. Although Nigerian governments (of all tiers) have, historically, been notorious for failing to impose the laws of the land in times of religious and ethnic crises, and people who commit murderous acts almost always go scot-free, the NMN demands that this time a thorough investigation be carried out immediately and all guilty persons be made to face the full force of the law. The life of every Nigerian is sacred, and the government must discharge its responsibility to protect the life and property of every citizen of Nigeria. We must not continue to lose the lives of innocent Nigerians because of the intolerance, ignorance and barbarism of a few. Furthermore, the NMN calls on the government to adequately compensate all the victims of these horrific acts.

Although many reasons have been attributed to igniting these riots, including the sad fact that most mass protests in Nigeria often end in violence because thugs and other criminals tend to hijack these protests and commit their atrocities and loot, massive poverty, unemployment, insecurity, intolerance and ignorance are among the contributing factors.

The Nigeria Muslim Network is an Internet based discussion group of Nigerian Muslim Professionals living within Nigeria and in the Diaspora.

Signed:

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