



SUPREME COUNCIL FOR SHARI'AH IN NIGERIA (SCSN)

المجلس الأعلى للشريعة في نيجيريا

Plot #6, West College Road,
Off Gwamna Road,
Kaduna Nigeria
shariahcouncilng@gmail.com

IT 19529

PRESS STATEMENT

Clarification on the Call for the Removal and Prosecution of the INEC Chairman


Sequel to the Communiqué issued after the Supreme Council for Shariah in Nigeria (SCSN) Annual Pre-Ramadan Conference and General Assembly held on Wednesday, 9th *Sha'aban* 1447 AH (28th January 2026), which adopted far-reaching resolutions on national development, national security, the economy, tax reforms, the national budget, peaceful coexistence, electoral governance, including a resolution calling for the removal of the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) which attracted heightened public attention due to its political sensitivity. Regrettably, this resolution has been amplified out of context and grossly misconstrued by some individuals, thereby necessitating this clarification in the interest of the general public.

1. Accordingly, the Council decided to issue this clarification to address the misrepresentations and deliberate distortions surrounding its call for the removal and prosecution of the Chairman of INEC, Prof. Joash Ojo Amupitan. The Council states unequivocally that its position is not motivated by religion or sectarian considerations, but by grave concerns relating to national cohesion, institutional integrity, constitutionalism, sovereignty, and the dangerous trajectory trailing the Chairman's antecedents.
2. Nigeria has conducted elections since independence in 1960 through successive electoral bodies. The country's electoral history provides irrefutable evidence that religion has never been a basis for opposition to, or acceptance of, electoral leadership by Nigerian Muslims. These bodies include the Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN), the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO), the National Electoral Commission (NEC), and since 1998, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).
3. From Eyo Esua in 1964 to date, the overwhelming majority of those who have headed Nigeria's electoral institutions have been Christians. Of the thirteen (13) chairmen who have led the Commission, only two (Prof. Attahiru Jega and Prof. Mahmood Yakubu) are Muslims. At no point in Nigeria's history have Muslims mobilised opposition against any electoral chairman or any other leadership position on religious grounds. All were accepted on the basis of institutional legitimacy, not faith. This historical record decisively invalidates the claim that the present call is rooted in religious bias.

4. What distinguishes Prof. Amupitan's case is therefore not his religion, but the documented record of conduct and views attributed to him, which fundamentally contradict the neutrality required of an electoral umpire. Of particular concern is the 2020 legal brief that he authored, which contains toxic, provocative, and deeply prejudicial assertions against Nigerian Muslims, the historical Caliphate, and Northern Nigeria as a whole.
5. Most troubling are the baseless claims of "Christian genocide" and the attempt to link contemporary insecurity in Northern Nigeria to the 19th-century Jihad of Sheikh Uthman bin Fodio. These assertions are not only historically inaccurate and myopic, but profoundly destabilising in a fragile, multi-religious federation such as Nigeria. While some have argued that the statements reflect only the opinion of the client, it must be noted that legal briefs are professional opinions prepared and presented by counsel.
6. Even more alarming is the reported presentation of these claims to foreign actors, thereby portraying Nigeria as a theatre of religious extermination and inviting external scrutiny, pressure, and interference based on false premises. Such conduct constitutes a serious breach of patriotic responsibility and is grossly incompatible with the neutrality, restraint, and national loyalty expected of the Chairman of INEC.
7. The Council categorically rejects the fabricated narrative of a "Christian genocide." Credible humanitarian data and independent international reports consistently demonstrate that violence in Northern Nigeria is complex and multi-dimensional, driven by terrorism, banditry, criminality, poverty, governance failures, and social injustice.
8. Both Muslims and Christians have suffered grievously. However, available data incontrovertibly show that Muslims constitute the majority of victims, particularly in states such as Borno, Yobe, Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto, Kebbi, Niger, and parts of Kaduna that are overwhelmingly Muslim-majority. To ignore these realities and advance a one-sided persecution narrative is intellectually dishonest and morally irresponsible.
9. Presiding over Nigeria's electoral system demands the highest standards of impartiality, credibility, inclusiveness, and public trust. An individual whose documented writings reveal deep-seated prejudice, historical distortion, and hostility toward a major faith community cannot reasonably command the confidence of Nigerians in a plural society.
10. Since these issues were exposed by credible media outlets, Prof. Amupitan has neither denied authorship of the said document nor issued any apology or

retraction. More tellingly, the Federal Government has reportedly been compelled to publicly debunk these claims and has been expending significant financial and diplomatic effort to reassure foreign governments and institutions that the allegations are false.

11. Nigeria has consequently suffered embarrassment, distraction, financial cost, and reputational damage. Recent media reports alleging that millions of dollars were paid to foreign lobbyists to counter the fallout from these falsehoods further underscore the gravity of the harm caused. In any responsible society, such consequences alone constitute sufficient grounds for resignation, removal, and legal accountability.
12. Accordingly, the Council reiterates its position that any individual who has demonstrated a pattern of falsehood, bias, or conduct inimical to national unity cannot be entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing elections, which is the very foundation of democratic governance. This position is grounded strictly in considerations of character, conduct, and credibility, and not in religion. Consequently, the Council maintains that appropriate constitutional and legal processes should be invoked to secure his removal and to address any attendant liabilities in accordance with the law.
13. The Council affirms clearly and without reservation that it does not oppose the appointment of Christians to any position in Nigeria. It has consistently supported, and will continue to support, just, fair, and competent leadership at all levels, irrespective of faith, as amply demonstrated throughout Nigeria's history.
14. Finally, the Council calls on the Nigerian Christian community not to allow itself to be misled by individuals pursuing personal or ideological agendas through divisive and diversionary narratives. The Nigerian Muslim Ummah remains firmly committed to peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, justice, and the protection of the rights and dignity of all Nigerians, regardless of faith.



Nafiu Baba Ahmad, mni
Secretary General

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