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PRESS RELEASE

DEBUNKING MISINFORMATION: EXPOSING FALSE NARRATIVES ON NIGERIA'S SECURITY CRISIS AND THE ABSOLUTE IMMUNITY OF THE NIGERIAN CHRISTIAN CLERGY

The recent testimony of a Nigerian Catholic priest before the U.S. Congress, in which he propagated hateful rhetoric and blatant falsehoods, is not only an embarrassment to the Nigerian government but also a matter of deep concern for its law-abiding citizens – both Muslim and Christian. His claim that "2% of Fulani (Islamists) have taken over lands occupied by 98% Christians" is not only false but dangerously misleading. Furthermore, his insinuation that the Nigerian government is complicit effectively suggests that the current Governor of Benue State, himself a Catholic priest, is part of the alleged conspiracy. This is a profoundly reckless and unfounded accusation against the very institutions responsible for governance, implying not only the complicity of the Federal Governments, and that even a Christian priest-governor is involved. Clearly the bishop has exposed the contradictions and malicious intent behind his claims, which appear to be deliberately aimed at fostering distrust and inciting religious tensions.

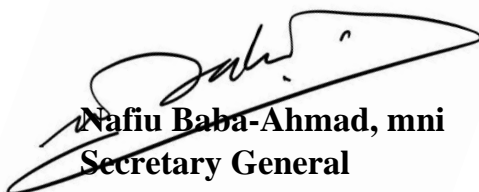
The Council remains committed to countering the malicious lies of conflict merchants who, under the guise of religious leadership, seek to sow seeds of discord and fuel violence in our fragile nation. Even in places where flags of islamophobia are allowed to blossom, the world is a lot wiser and no longer a place where falsehoods can thrive unchallenged, as facts are verifiable at the click of a button.

For instance, recent reports from multiple credible sources, including the *Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED)*, the *Global Terrorism Index*, and even Christian organizations such as the *East-West Christian Association*, paint a more accurate picture of Nigeria's security challenges. These reports emphasize that the country's insecurity crisis is a complex interplay of insurgency, banditry, and ethnic conflicts affecting all communities. The violence does not exclusively target Christians; rather, both Christian and Muslim civilians are victims of these challenges. Evidence suggests that factors such as insurgency, economic disparities, ethnic conflicts, and organized crime significantly contribute to the unrest. The overarching pattern points to a broader anti-state agenda rather than a purely religious conflict.

As an Islamic organization dedicated to the unity, peace, and development of our nation, we urge the Nigerian Christian community to dissociate itself from such inflammatory rhetoric and actively debunk these dangerous lies. Religious leaders have a responsibility to promote peace, not division. Silence in the face of such blatant misinformation not only serves to embolden those who seek to destabilize our nation, but is also a strong indication of criminal complicity.

Furthermore, we strongly call on the Nigerian government to thoroughly investigate and prosecute this bishop for his deliberate attempt to incite violence. His actions pose a direct threat to national security, and there is no difference between him and individuals like Nnamdi Kanu, who have used propaganda and hate speech to fuel conflict in Nigeria. The government must take decisive action to prevent such reckless incitement from leading to further unrest. We hope this case will not be treated as a non-issue just as the case of another Christian pastor in Abuja who appeared on the pulpit with AK47, threatening and inciting against other Nigerians about 2 years ago.

Although the Nigerian government has dismissed the recent U.S. Congress report as misleading and politically motivated, officials maintain that the violence stems from insurgency and criminal activities rather than religious persecution. However, the government must go beyond merely condemning such accusations and instead focus on finding a lasting solution to the lingering of insecurity ravaging the nation. It is only through decisive, inclusive, and strategic action that Nigeria can overcome its security challenges and foster lasting peace among its diverse communities



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