



AFRICA/NIGERIA - "We denounce all perpetrators of this shameful conspiracy," say Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ibadan

Abuja (Agenzia Fides) – The Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ibadan completely denounce the recent incidents in Jos in a statement sent to Fides, published at the close of their meeting held January 18-19, 2010. "Our country, in the last few months has spent a huge amount of time and resources on a purported rebranding campaign," the Bishops write. "Of late, government, groups and individuals have berated the United States of America over its reaction to the unfortunate case of Farouk Abdulmutallab, a young Nigerian, accused of attempting to commit a terrible terrorist act," the statement continues. "We shouted ourselves hoarse to convince the whole world that we are no terrorist nation. Yet, unfortunately, the most recent religious crisis in Jos, Plateau State, has badly exposed our hypocrisy and ineptitude. Some extremists claiming to be Muslims suddenly set upon Christians in their Churches and homes, killing and burning. We as a nation have yet again been caught napping, and as a consequence, precious lives and property have been lost."

"It is sad that such occurrences in the recent past have not been convincingly investigated and addressed and are not found preventable. This persistent situation does not augur well for a nation claiming to be on the path of development and national integration," the Bishops continue.

"We are compelled, yet again, therefore to sympathize with the innocent victims of the current crisis and pray for the repose of the souls of the dead. We denounce all perpetrators of this shameful conspiracy against a particular segment of our nation and we call on the competent authorities to act decisively before things get out of hand. We also call on all religious leaders to speak up with courage to denounce and oppose religious extremism and fanaticism wherever they are found...May Mary, Mother of Good Counsel, intercede for us before God's throne that Nigeria may rediscover her unity, prosperity, strength and progress in the forthcoming years," the statement concludes. (LM) (Agenzia Fides 20/1/2010)

> LINKS

Complete version of Bishops' statement (in English):

http://www.fides.org/eng/documents/A_Communique_issued_at_the_end_of_a_two_day_meeting_held_at_the_Pastoral_Institute.rtf: