



GKKE

Gemeinsame Konferenz
Kirche und Entwicklung

Joint Conference Church
and Development

October 22, 2020

GKKE Working Group „Contribution of Churches to Just Peace in Africa“

Church Actors Striving for Justice and Peace – Opportunities and Threats of Churches' Involvement in Zimbabwe and Nigeria Online Expert Talk - October 26th, 2020

Churches and church-actors, rooted in and guided by the Christian faith, render a significant contribution to the prevention of violence, to the peaceful overcoming of conflicts and to the development and well-being of societies. Churches provide space for dialog and can mobilize for development. Churches provide healing of memories and reconciliation. Christian faith motivates for social and political action. Furthermore, Christian belief strengthens the faithful in situations of crisis.

For a deeper understanding of this involvement of churches in Africa, a working group of GKKE (Joined Conference Church and Development) looked over a period of three years into activities and practice of church actors, particularly in Zimbabwe and Nigeria. In February 2019 a GKKE-delegation was invited by the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) to understand and accompany their struggle for justice, peace and National Dialogue in the turbulent post Mugabe times. In the first half of 2020, GKKE commissioned a study in Nigeria in the Middle Belt region to acquire better understanding of the involvement of church actors in peace education in the youth sector.

The debate on the relationship of religion, peace and development has gained momentum in Germany during the last years. In 2016, the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has published a comprehensive policy on “Religion and Development” and increasingly seeks cooperation with religious actors. The German Foreign Office too has discovered an interest in religion and established the desk “Religion and Foreign Policy”. Against this background, GKKE aims to contribute to this debate with a special focus on Christian actors in Zimbabwe and Nigeria. We also include perspectives from other countries without trying to be exhaustive.

With this expert talk, GKKE wants to some extent conclude this work by identifying key insights and lessons learned and discuss these with a selected audience.

Due to the current political crisis in Zimbabwe and unprecedented levels of poverty, hunger, repression and violence, the churches, in particular ZCC and ZCBC, have become very active and outspoken by denouncing corruption and calling for National Dialogue and transformation. The churches already do and will play an important role in paving the way for democracy and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. This contribution of churches to justice and peace in Zimbabwe will be a major topic to be discussed.

- 10.00 h Welcome and opening remarks:
Prelate Dr. Martin Dutzmann, GKKE-Chairperson, Berlin
Welcome and introduction:
Marie-Luise Frost, Humboldt-University, Berlin, moderator
- 10.10 h Keynote: The Potential of Churches as Agents for Justice and Peace in Africa – Some Observations, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Mtata, Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Harare
- 10.30 h The Zimbabwe Example
- Key stories and comments from Mutare: Getrude Chimange, Justice and Peace Commission, Mutare
 - Reflecting the Zimbabwe experience: Rev. Dr. Kenneth Mtata, Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Harare
- Discussion - questions and comments raised by the audience via chat

11.10 h	Break
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- 11.15 h GKKE-Study on church actors, just peace and education in the Middle Belt region, Nigeria - Presentation of main findings, Frederick Njobati, Otto-Friedrich-University Bamberg
- 11.30 h Comments
- Simon Afala, Justice, Development and Peace Commission, Jos
 - Msgr. Prof. Dr. Obiora Ike, Globethics, Geneva
- Discussion - questions and comments raised by the audience via chat

12.10 h	Break
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- 12.30 h How to enhance the contribution of Churches to Justice and Peace in Africa?
Panel discussion
- Msgr. Prof. Dr. Obiora Ike, Globethics, Geneva
 - Rev. Dr. Kenneth Mtata, Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Harare
 - Prof. Dr. Heribert Hirte MP, Berlin
 - Sylvia Servaes, FRIENT/Misereor/GKKE, Bonn/Aachen
- Moderator: Philipp Öhlmann, Humboldt-University, Berlin
- Discussion - questions and comments raised by the audience via chat

13.55 h Closing remarks, Karin Döhne, GKKE, Berlin

14.00 h End

Registration by e-mail to info@gkke.org until October 23
