



# AFRICA METHODIST COUNCIL

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## **A CALL TO JOINT ACTION FROM THE AFRICA METHODIST COUNCIL SECRETARIAT**

Peace be unto you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Africa Methodist Council as a people of faith who uphold the teachings of scriptural and social holiness, in solidarity with all those who are lovers of peace, justice and equity especially those within the Wesleyan movement present the following statements to all on behalf of the President and Executives of Africa Methodist Council

1. In solidarity with the Democratic Republic of Congo Kairos, the Southern Africa Kairos, Nehemiah Hope Project, and The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, we present the case of Nobel Laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege. He is a Congolese gynaecologist and pastor who founded and works in Panzi Hospital in Bukavu. Mukwege has treated thousands of women who were victims of rape since the Second Congo War, some of them more than once. He condemned a massacre in Kipupu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and has been calling for the release of the UN Mapping Report that documents crimes against humanity committed in eastern Congo. Because of this, he, his family and patients have received numerous death threats via SMS, voicemail, and social media posts. These threats against Dr. Mukwege, his family, and the healthcare workers at Panzi Hospital is a direct attack upon free speech and the pursuit of a just and fair Africa. We must all stand against those who have chosen to inflict damage on the voices of those who stand up against Gender Based Violence. Nobel peace laureate Denis Mukwege is presently placed under the guard of United Nations security forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
2. The Africa Methodist Council stands with one voice against Religious and Civil violence. Despite the United Nations (UN) calls for ceasefires across the world to halt the spread of COVID-19, fighting and terror attacks have not stopped in many parts of the continent, with heavy civilian and military casualties. West Africa in particular has been hard- hit by the operations of extremist groups. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), said that despite intense efforts by concerned countries, violent extremists continue to attack security forces and civilians, forcibly recruiting children into fighting in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Presenting the Secretary-General's latest report (document S/2020/585), he described security conditions as "extremely volatile". In Burkina Faso alone, as of June, 921,000 people have been forced to flee, representing a 92 per cent rise over 2019 figures. In Mali, nearly 240,000 people are internally displaced — 54 per cent of them women — while in Niger, 489,000 people were forced to flee, including Nigerian and Malian refugees. In Nigeria, 7.7 million people will need emergency assistance in 2020.

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3. AMC aligns itself with the call from The Methodist Church of Southern Africa for the church to speak and act against Gender Based Violence. As a church called by Wesley to social holiness we commit to work together to destroy gendered social hierarchies and create a world where all of humanity, in its diversity, is embraced. We will focus on promoting multi-level, multi-pronged strategies because policy and institutional change as well as transformation in individual attitudes and behaviour are needed to end Gender Based Violence.

We call on all churches, organizations, Regional and International bodies to take the issue of Gender based Violence seriously and we should be accountable in dealing with the menace wherever it rears its ugly head. We should all be committed to playing our part to ensure that our Church premises and institutions are safe spaces, where the affected can find healing. Perpetrators who have truly repented should be counselled and reintegrated so that we may all encounter the merciful, compassionate and Risen Christ.

### **Conclusion**

We call on all Methodist people in the continent of Africa to reflect deeply on these issues and on our behalf and in the name of Christ to use your good offices in the Church and society to speak against these and many other ills which have been allowed to take root in our communities. Mass mobilization of grass root churches especially through our lay movements and religious bodies is still an effective means of building awareness and engaging these issues. We appeal to all Conferences to build awareness of these issues through all platforms at their disposal. We also call for deep intercession, for with God nothing shall be impossible!

John 17:21 “That they may be one”... As Methodists in Africa we need to reposition ourselves in Jesus Christ as stewards, peacemakers’ healers and justice-seekers. We appeal to all conferences to move beyond a localised view of ministry and see the World as our Parish so that we can join forces against deviant forces that are currently tearing the body of Christ apart from within and without.

As we call for prayers and affirmative action let us remember the words of our Hymn MHB 811

Thy kingdom come, O God, Thy rule, O Christ, begin;  
Break with thy iron rod, The tyrannies of sin.

Where is thy reign of peace, and purity and love?  
When shall all hatred cease, as in the realms above?

When comes the promised time, That war shall be no more,  
And lust, oppression, crime, Shall flee thy face before?

We pray thee Lord, arise, And come in thy great might;  
Revive our longing eyes, Which languish for thy sight.

O'er lands both near and far, Thick darkness broodeth yet:  
Arise, O morning Star, Arise, and never set.

Yours respectfully



**Very Rev Opeyemi Awe**  
General Secretary

CC: All Methodist Conferences in Africa  
: World Methodist Council  
: All African Conference of Churches  
: Africa Partnership Coordinator, Methodist Church in Britain  
: Africa Area Liaison, Global Mission Connections. GBGM