

*IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE BENEFICENT THE MERCIFUL
(May the benedictions and salutations of Allah be upon our
beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW).*

NATIONAL HAJJ COMMISSION OF NIGERIA

COMMUNIQUE

THE NATIONAL ULAMA POST 2015-HAJJ CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY THE NATIONAL HAJJ COMMISSION OF NIGERIA (NAHCON), HELD IN ABUJA, NIGERIA BETWEEN 12TH-13TH JANUARY, 2016.

PREAMBLE:

Allah the Most High says: **“O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those charged with authority among you, if you differ in anything among yourselves refer it to Allah and His Apostle, if you believe in Allah and the last Day that is best and most suitable for final determination”** (Nisa’a, Verse:59). He also says: **“Those who hearken to their Lord and establish regular prayer: who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, who spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance”** (Shura, Verse:38). The Almighty Allah again says: **“And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves, and remember with gratitude Allah’s favours on you, for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace ye became brethren; and you were on the brink of the pit of fire and He saved you from it, thus doth Allah make His Signs clear to you that ye may be guided”** (Aal Imran, Verse:103).

The National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) has organized a two day Conference with a theme: The National Ulama Post 2015-Hajj Conference, held from 2nd -3rd Rabi'ū Thani, 1437 AH which was equivalent to 12th-13th January, 2016 at the Auditorium of the National Mosque Abuja, under the chairmanship of Sheikh (Dr.) Shariff Ibrahim Saleh Alhussaini, Chairman: Fatwa Committee of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Chairman: Fatwa Committee, Jama'atu Nasril Islam of Nigeria (JNI), and Chairman: Assembly of Muslims in Nigeria. The Conference was organized at the instance of the Emir of Kano Sanusi Lamido Sanusi II, who was also the Amirul Hajj for the 2015 Hajj. The Conference was also blessed by His Eminence the Sultan of Sokoto and the President General Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs: Allah Muhammad Abubakar Sa'ad IV.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The Conference was organized sequel to the most unfortunate incident of stampede that occurred during 2015 Hajj where about three hundred and twenty (320) Nigerian Pilgrims lost their lives, with the aim of articulating the issues surrounding the challenges that are usually encountered by Nigerian Pilgrims during the Hajj exercise, with a view to finding lasting solutions to these challenges and to prevent future occurrence of such scenario.

OPENING/ATTENDANCE

The Conference was declared open by the Chairman of the occasion Sheikh (Dr.) Shariff Ibrahim Saleh Alhussaini, *con*, Chairman: Fatwa Committee, Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (NSCIA). It was attended by the Emir of Kano, His Royal Highness Sanusi Lamido Sanuni II, who was also the 2015 Amirul Hajj, and many other Muslim Scholars as well as

various stakeholders from Nigeria, including a representative from the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Nigeria. Notable personalities in attendance include: Sheikh (Dr.) Shariff Ibrahim Saleh Alhussaini, Chairman Fatwa Committee of Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, and the Emir of Kano, His Royal Highness Sheikh Sanusi Lamido Sanusi II. Others were: Sheikh Yahya Jingir, Sheikh Abdullahi Bala Lau, Sheikh Ibrahim Khalil, Sheikh Saleh Abubakar, Sheikh Imam Jamiu Bello Kewulere and representative of Sheikh Dahiru Usman Bauchi, among others.

OBSERVATIONS

Nigerians at all levels had expressed shock and sympathy over the incident of stampede that occurred during 2015 Hajj operation, and are looking forward to see how the Muslim leaders and the Ulamas in Nigeria will use their wealth of knowledge and experience to provide a roadmap that will assist in solving the challenge through the sources of Shari'ah, considering the evolving human needs of the time and the possibility of providing safety and security for life and property as well as removal of difficulties and hardship encountered by Pilgrims in every season.

In pursuance of the foregoing, the Emir of Kano His Royal Highness, Sheikh Sanusi Lamido Sanusi II, may Allah guide, protect and assist him to achieve success in his future endeavours, had made a laudable move and called for a meeting where over fifty (50) scholars from Kano had met and discussed issues bordering on the possibility of providing some concessions for the Nigerian Pilgrims in spending three nights in Mina, and the rites of the three days Jamrah stoning, etc. with a view to preventing a repeat of such an ugly incident in future within the context of the Shari'ah.

Following the directive of His Royal Highness the Emir of Kano Sanusi II, a lead paper on the resolutions made by the Kano Scholars at a Round-Table-Meeting was presented by Dr. Bashir

Ali Umar to the Conference, for the deliberations, contributions, review and considerations of the Nigerian Scholars at the national level. After a four-hour exhaustive deliberations, comments and contributions, the following resolutions were made:

1. That Hajj is the fifth Pillar in Islam, therefore, every Muslim who has the means must undertake it (once in a life time); (means could be physical ability, security for life and property 'money' etc.);
2. That one of the bounties of Allah to this Ummah is the growing number of its population. Looking at the number of Pilgrims today vis-a- viz the size of the space in Mina, and the Jamrah sites. Thus it has become imperative for the Ulama to look diligently at the possibility of facilitating the Hajj rites in Mina and at the Jamrah stoning, without prejudice to the existing consensus of the Muslim Scholars. It is common knowledge that everybody is complaining about the issue of over three million (3,000,000) Pilgrims will start moving towards stoning the Jamrah at the same time in the afternoon, which will in most cases lead to some unfortunate incidences like stampede, suffocation, etc. Therefore, there is need for provision of safety measures to protect people from any danger.
3. That the Kano Round-Table-Resolutions had touched on all the views of the four schools of thoughts: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hambali schools of thoughts on the issue of spending three nights in Mina and the Jamrah stoning during the three days of Tashriq, vis-a-viz the challenges usually encountered by the Nigerian Pilgrims every year. In view of this, the Nigerian Ulamas consented to making the required concessions.
4. The basic thing in Hajj is to emulate the actions and words of the Prophet (SAW) for the fact that he (SAW)

said: "Take/learn your (Hajj) rites from me. Therefore, staying over nights in Mina was the basic Sunnah that was done by the Prophet (SAW) and as if he was saying: Do as I do in actions and in words. But when the unexpected happens or something unusual comes up, then the scholars have a duty to sit in a round table to discuss the issue with a view to facilitating things for the Muslim Ummah. Thus, the Prophet (SAW) had given some concessions to the herdsmen and those who had something to do in Mecca like water supply, security guards etc. by permitting them to sleep outside of Mina on the three days of Tashriq.

5. Islam taught us to be more organized and law abiding, as it is always teaching us to operate within the dictate of the Shari'ah law and the consensus of the Ulama in all matters including lawful political matters. We therefore, called on all Nigerians to strictly observed the issue of detachment and rotation that were suggested by the Saudi Authorities in order to ensure safety;
6. That the resolution of the Kano Round-Table-Meeting over the issue of spending three nights in Mina and the issue of Jamrah stoning during the three days of Tashriq, before noon, or in the afternoon before Maghrib, or in the evening after Maghrib up to midnight, considering the situation we found ourselves now, the resolution is a welcome development. Thus, this resolution will fit with the Nigerian Pilgrims and it will go a long way to help ease out the future problems for them in Mina and at the Jamrah stoning.
7. That for the fact Islam has made it compulsory for the Prophets, and Messengers of Allah, peace be upon them, as well as the entire Muslim Ummah to protect the five faculty of senses i.e. Religion, Soul, Sense,

Dignity, and Wealth/Money and lately Environment was also added to the list. Thus, the idea of the Nigerian Authorities liaising with the Ulamas on matters affecting the general welfare of the people such as rotational detachment that was suggested by all the Muslim countries, is indeed the right step in the right direction.

8. That concession is not something permanent, it is rather an exception and a temporary measure to solve a problem, therefore, it should be treated as such, and when the problem is over the concession will cease to exist;
9. That there is no need for any argument over the issue of facilitating the Hajj for every individual Pilgrim to perform his Pilgrimage easily and peacefully and to do everything possible not to expose him to any danger that can lead to lost of lives and property, e.g. the stampede that happened in Hajj 2015.
10. That the Nigerian Ulamas wish to send a message to the Saudi Arabian Authorities through Mr. Ibrahim Asiri, the representative of the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Abuja-Nigeria, and to extend the compliments of all Nigerians to the Kingdom and to assure them of our continued support and cooperation.
11. The participants called on Saudi Authorities, with due respect to the efforts of facilitations being put in place by the Kingdom in favour of the Pilgrims, to fast-track the process of the DNA identification for over 320 Nigerian Pilgrims who lost their lives, and to expedite action on the process of compensation, as we also urge them to take appropriate measures for the prevention of future occurrence of such incidents.

12. The Conference had adopted the Kano Round-Table-Resolutions as amended to be treated as the resolutions of the Nigerian Scholars as a whole, and called for the resolutions to be translated into various Nigerian languages and to be distributed to all States in Nigeria. The Ulamas wish to recognize the laudable initiative of the scholars in Kano whose initiative is timely and is highly commendable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. That the Ulamas have unanimously condemned the unholy activities of some Nigerian Pilgrims, especially women such as untidiness and the dazzling display or improper dressing by women during Hajj. The Nigerian Ulamas therefore, wish to recommend that the Saudi Authorities be contacted and advised to use their appropriate agencies to properly tackle this menace. However, with regards to the issue of untidiness of the tents of the Nigerian Pilgrims, the Ulamas viewed it as the sole responsibility of the Amirul Hajj and therefore he should address the matter in an appropriate manner. Submitting that it was because of these kinds of responsibilities that the leadership position of Amirul Hajj was established in Islam.
14. Concerning the issue of proper accommodations for the Nigerian Pilgrims, the distinguished scholars have resolved that it is the responsibility of the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (and the States Hajj Commissions) to find befitting accommodations for the Nigerian Pilgrims and to give them at least the minimum comfort they deserved, better than what is obtainable now and to also get them accommodations with a reasonable proximity to the Haram so that they can link up with the Haram at ease. They observed with dismay, that despite the huge amounts of money the Nigerian Pilgrims pay as packages for Hajj, they

are still not enjoying good services and comfortable accommodations like their counterpart Pilgrims from other countries of the World. The Ulamas therefore, called on the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria and the respective States Hajj Commissions to stand up to billing and treat the Nigerian Pilgrims in a much better way than what it is used to be.

15. The Conference called on all Nigerian Muslim Scholars to unite and to disregard all forms of disunity as commanded by Allah the Most High when He says: **“Hold fast all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves”** (Aal Imran, Verse:103) as it also called on them to unite over this issue and all other matters that need the unity of the Muslim scholars.
16. The participants called on themselves, their other colleagues and the entire Muslim Community wherever they may be, to desist from controversial and futile disputes that will lead them to no where, as Allah the Most High says: **“And obey Allah and His Apostle and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering, for Allah is with those who patiently persevere”** (Anfal, Verse:46). Thus, lack of patience can cause clausal damages such as disunity and rancor, may Allah the Almighty protect us.
17. The participants wish to consider and treat their colleagues who were unavoidably absent as duly present and recommended that they should be adequately informed of what transferred in the Conference and that these resolutions be personally and individually delivered to each and everyone of them to enable them go through and submit their comments, and or contributions (if any) to the Secretariat;

CONCLUSION:

18. In conclusion, the Conference wishes to express gratitude to the Federal Government of Nigeria for their continued support and cooperation, while we pray for the peaceful coexistence of our dear country Nigeria, we wish to pray for the success of Mr. President and Commander-in-Chief in the times ahead.

The communiqué was adopted by acclamation/consensus at 1.30 pm on Wednesday 13th January, 2016 at the Auditorium of the National Mosque, Abuja in the presence of His Eminence the Sultan of Sokoto & the President General of Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Alhaji Muhammad Abubakar Sa'ad IV.

Finally, Allah the Most High says: **“And say: work (righteously) soon will Allah observe your work and His Apostle and the believers: soon will ye be brought back to the Knower of what is hidden and what is open: then will He show you the truth of all that ye did”** (Tauba, Verse:105). Allah is our guide and to Him is our praise and gratitude.

Signed:

Sheikh (Dr.) Shariff Ibrahim Saleh Alhussaini, *con* Chairman: Fatwa Committee, Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Chairman: Fatwa Committee, Jama'atu Nasril Islam of Nigeria (JNI), and Chairman: Assembly of Muslims Nigeria (AMIN).

Abuja, Nigeria

Wednesday, 3^d Rabi'ul Thani, 1437 AH. 13th January, 2016 AD.