

AN APPRAISAL OF THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA IN NIGERIA'S POLITICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, 1999–2015

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Abstract

This study evaluated the role of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in national politics and social responsibility between 1999 and 2015. Using historical and documentary methods, it examined how CAN engaged political actors, public policy, and governance, and how its interventions shape debates on democracy and public morality. The analysis showed that CAN functions both as an interest group defending Christian concerns and as a civic actor promoting accountability, social welfare, and human development. Empirical evidence indicated that CAN and the wider Christian Church have made notable contributions to Nigeria's political life and to education, health care, poverty alleviation, and community rehabilitation. These interventions have expanded access to essential services, offered safety nets to vulnerable groups, and sustained public advocacy on justice and peace. The article argued that, beyond its symbolic religious role, CAN has emerged as a significant normative and institutional force in Nigeria's evolving democratic order, with continuing potential to advance responsible governance and community welfare.

Keywords: Politics, Christian, Social Responsibility

Introduction

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and the seventh most populous in the worldwide¹ is almost divided between Christians and Muslims, with a large Christian and Muslim population of over 50 million people each and a strong presence of adherents of indigenous and traditional religions.² The three major ethnic groups are Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. The Eastern Igbo are predominantly Christians, the northern Hausa-Fulani are mostly Muslims and the Western Yoruba are divided between the two faiths (Islam and Christianity). In Nigeria, religion is considered an important aspect of society and Nigerians are deeply religious. According to Nicholas Wade, religion expresses a society's collective wisdom, past and present as to how its members should best behave in order to enhance the society's survival.³

The return of democracy in Africa over the past two decades has enabled Christians to assume more prominent roles in the political sphere as they seek to address the social and moral ills of contemporary society.⁴

The ongoing debate whether Christian faithful should take part or not in active Nigeria politics resulted from the essence of providing credible and corrupt free leadership. Sad to

note that most Nigerians remain poor, lacking basic necessities of life and access to social services. This forms the backdrop for shifting political orientation of Christians under the umbrella body of Christian Association of Nigeria.

In the recent past, Nigeria has been witnessing an influx of religious leaders into the political arena with the hope of creating a social or political change in the country.⁵ Christian participation in politics is often regarded as a means of advancing the social transformation that many Nigerians earnestly seek and hope for. Pastor Tunde Bakare in 2011 said “the present administration is not competent enough to make the changes Nigerians are looking for and as such citizens should take action for themselves”.⁶ It is obvious that Christians are getting involved and participating more and more in the affairs of governance and socio-political activism, even though the percentage of Christians in politics is still small”.⁷ Several Christian leaders have actively sought political office, including Rev. Jolly Nyame and Rev. Father Moses Adasu as state governors, Pastor David Jonah Jang as Governor of Plateau State, Pastor Chris Okotie as a threetime presidential candidate, and Pastor Tunde Bakare as Muhammadu Buhari’s running mate in the 2011 presidential election. The nation needs people willing to live by God’s moral laws as society’s well-being depends on robust Christian influence. Christians made significant positive contribution to the development of modern democracy.

This study examined the areas in which the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has contributed to improving the welfare of the masses, using the Christian theory of human development as its theoretical framework. Proposed by R. Murray Thomas (1990), which emphasizes two primary goals: the pursuit of eternal life and the commitment to doing good through charity, justice, and service to the needy—principles reflected in the Church’s social engagement. In applying this framework, the study interprets CAN’s social and political engagements as expressions of Christian responsibility aimed at promoting human dignity, social welfare, and community development. This perspective provides a conceptual lens through which the organization’s contributions to societal transformation can be critically assessed. Adopting a phenomenological approach, the study encourages the Church to make its impact more visible in addressing societal challenges. It specifically seeks to highlight the contributions of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and its members to Nigerian politics and social welfare, while clarifying key concepts such as politics, Christians, and social responsibility.

Definition of Terms

Politics

Politics is a contested concept, but most definitions converge on the management of power and public affairs within a community or state. It encompasses the activities of government, law-making bodies, and individuals or groups who seek to influence how a country is governed, as captured in the Cambridge Dictionary’s emphasis on governmental activity and processes of rule.⁸ In this sense, politics involves both formal institutions and informal practices through which decisions are made, implemented, and contested in society.

Scholars further highlight politics as the allocation of resources and the struggle over authority. Akubor (via Ojewunmi) describes politics as the management and distribution of resources for the benefit of the greatest number in a given society, drawing attention to its socio-economic implications.⁹ Ayokunle stresses “the intrigue to gain authority or power to rule,” underlining the competitive and strategic nature of political engagement.¹⁰

Weber adds a classic formulation by defining politics as the activity of striving to share power or influence its distribution within or among states and groups, thereby foregrounding politics as an ongoing struggle over who gets what, when, and how.¹¹

These perspectives present politics as the structured and contested pursuit, exercise, and

regulation of power and resources in public life.

Christian

The name Christian (*Χριστιανός*) is of Greek origin, and means “follower of Christ” or “anointed.”¹² A Christian is a member of the church who believes in Jesus Christ and follows his teachings. The term first appears in Scripture in Acts 11:26, where “the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” In this paper, a Christian refers to one who believes in and follows Christ, submitting to his lordship in faith and practice.

Social Responsibility

Social responsibility is a moral obligation on a company or an individual to take decisions or actions that are favourable and useful to society.¹³ Simply put, to be socially responsible means acknowledging accountability for the impact of one’s choices on the larger world. Each individual or organization has the power to contribute through policies and practices that promote the well-being of society and the environment while lessening negative impacts. The basic tenet of this idea is that those with the ability to affect change have an imperative to use it.

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Nigerian Politics

Christians in Nigeria belong to different churches and denominations. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) “is an Association of Christian Churches with distinct identities, recognizable Church structures and a system of worship of one God in the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit”.¹⁴ The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) emerged primarily as a Christian pressure or interest-protection group, seeking to defend the concerns of Christians in the public sphere. Christianity and politics have long intersected, as religious leaders and institutions have often sought to promote public moral order grounded in biblical principles. A classic historical illustration is the reign of Constantine the Great, under whom Christianity moved from a persecuted and illicit religion to one legally recognized within the Roman Empire, with imperial support for church building and public Christian worship.

Political participation takes multiple forms, including freedom of expression and association, engagement in public affairs, and the opportunity to contest and hold office.¹⁵ Voting remains one of the most important expressions of citizenship. While only some Christians engage directly in partisan politics, CAN has encouraged members to participate actively in civic life, including party membership, grassroots mobilization, and electoral contests, while maintaining institutional neutrality toward political parties. Historically, Christians have contributed to democratic struggles in Nigeria, especially during elections held since 1999, even when outcomes were contested.¹⁶ Although Nigerian Christians were once politically passive, CAN established in 1976 initially adopted a conservative posture before later encouraging political engagement, as seen in its 1989 call for “born-again” Christians to contest elections.¹⁷

This shift produced visible participation, including clergy involvement in party primaries during the transition programmes of the early 1990s. The transition initiated by Abdulsalami Abubakar culminated in the Fourth Republic and the election of Olusegun Obasanjo as president in 1999. Supported by many Christian groups, especially Pentecostals, Obasanjo symbolized renewed Christian visibility in governance following his public profession of born-again faith.¹⁸ Prayer support and religious rhetoric accompanied his rise, illustrating the continued blending of religion and politics.¹⁹ During his administration, the church often acted as a moral critic of the state, particularly in response to the introduction of Sharia law in Northern states beginning with Ahmed Sani Yerima’s policy in Zamfara in 2000. CAN organized protests, reflecting Christian concern over religious equality and national unity.

Nigeria's constitutional framework attempted to balance religious freedom with state neutrality. Section 10 of the 1999 Constitution forbids adopting a state religion, while Section 38 guarantees freedom of conscience and worship.²⁰ These provisions underscore secularism as an enabling environment for religious liberty rather than hostility toward religion. Scholars such as Ben Nwabueze argued that religion provides moral foundations necessary for democracy and justice, suggesting that complete separation may undermine civic values.²¹ Consistent with constitutional interpretation, Obasanjo maintained that state adoption of religion was unconstitutional and predicted that politicization of Sharia would eventually decline.²²

Subsequent administrations continued to reflect the religious dimension of politics. Goodluck Jonathan emphasized national unity despite religious differences, and many Christians supported his developmental agenda.²³ The 2011 elections, contested between Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari, revealed voting patterns shaped by religious identity, underscoring religion's continuing political salience. Religion thus remains intertwined with national life, shaping ethical discourse and civic activism. Christian leaders have periodically intervened in governance debates, promoting national unity and social justice. As observers note, Nigeria's development requires collective commitment to cooperation, tolerance, and responsible leadership grounded in shared moral vision.²⁴

Politics and Social Responsibility: Examples from Nigerian Churches

Churches in Nigeria are involved in many facets of public life, often extending their mission beyond worship to address concrete social needs. While the provision of basic amenities such as health care, roads, and quality education are primarily the responsibility of government, persistent governance and development failures have left significant gaps in these sectors. In response, churches have increasingly complemented the state by providing social services and advocacy, contributing to social justice, humanitarian relief, peacemaking, moral formation, education, rehabilitation centres, hospitals, and youth empowerment programmes. Beyond political participation narrowly defined, Christian churches have thus become important actors in national development, particularly in education, health care, and poverty alleviation.

Education

Christian missions established some of the earliest schools that introduced Western education in Nigeria, laying foundations that later churches continued to develop.²⁵ Across the country, many Christian denominations have founded primary and secondary schools as well as community-based institutions, often providing scholarships for indigent students and other vulnerable groups.²⁶ These initiatives have made the church a prominent actor in Nigerian education and, in many contexts, a key partner in sustaining standards where public provision has been inadequate.

Church schools typically combine academic instruction with moral and spiritual formation. They often maintain strict codes of conduct, admit students irrespective of religious background, and extend financial support including sponsorships or free tuition to the poor, orphans, and children of widows.²⁷ Historically, mission schools aimed not only to expand access to education but also to address concerns about moral decline, secularization, and the weak teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge in public institutions.²⁸ Over time, they have produced generations of professionals—lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, academics, and public servants—whose training reflects this legacy.

According to Oladipo, one of the church's strategic advantages in poverty alleviation lies in its educational impact in both urban and rural communities.²⁹ It is by equipping individuals with knowledge and skills, church schools help liberate people from the "clutches of poverty and ignorance," enabling fuller participation in society.³⁰ In the tertiary sector, church-owned universities—such as Covenant University, Babcock University, IlisanRemo, Bowen University, Iwo, Redeemer's University, Ede and Caritas University, AmorjiNike —have set benchmarks in academic quality and relatively stable academic calendars compared with many public institutions, underscoring the continuing influence of mission education on national educational development.³¹

Health Development

In the health sector, churches and other faith-based organizations have become significant stakeholders in Nigeria's healthcare landscape. Through the establishment of medical facilities and outreach programmes, they have helped alleviate human suffering by bringing services closer to underserved populations.³² Primary and community healthcare initiatives provided by these organizations complement public health delivery, especially where state capacity is limited. The inability of the national health system to adequately address public health challenges has contributed to persistent poverty and structural weakness, and available services are often unaffordable for poorer citizens.³³

While the Federal Ministry of Health remains the principal public provider, private and faith-based facilities play a crucial role in expanding access, particularly in remote communities. Collectively, they account for a substantial share of service delivery despite operating a smaller proportion of facilities nationwide.³⁴ Historically, medical centres founded by Christian missions were concentrated in rural areas as part of evangelistic outreach, and churches have consistently initiated programmes that benefit host communities and their environments.³⁵

Hospitals established to supplement public healthcare provision include Seventh-day Adventist Hospital Ile-Ife; Anglican Hospital Kubwa; Iyi Enu Mission Hospital; St Philomena Catholic Hospital; Our Lady of Apostles Catholic Hospital Oluyoro; St Gerard Catholic Hospital; Ancilla Catholic Hospital; Regina Mundi Catholic Hospital Mushin; Baptist Medical Centre; Wesley Guild Hospital; Sacred Heart Hospital Abeokuta; and St Luke's Medical Centre Ibadan, among others. These institutions reflect the longstanding commitment of churches to supplement public healthcare provision.³⁶

More broadly, the church's mission of care extends to maternal health, treatment of the sick, and the promotion of holistic human development. Rooted in its salvific mandate, this engagement expresses compassion and hope for vulnerable populations while contributing to social transformation.³⁷ Churches therefore maintain a longstanding role in health service delivery, complementing their wider involvement in poverty alleviation.

Poverty Alleviation

Poverty and underdevelopment remain among Nigeria's most pressing challenges, with estimates suggesting that around seventy per cent of Nigerians live below the

poverty line.³⁸ Poverty in this context is multidimensional, rooted in factors such as corruption, unemployment, overpopulation, illiteracy, and weak institutions, and its effects are visible in the daily struggles of beggars and other vulnerable groups in urban and rural areas.³⁹ As Sider observes, patterns of wealth and deprivation are often linked to structural injustice, with the rich sometimes benefiting from systems that oppress the poor.⁴⁰ Successive governments have introduced programmes such as the Better Life Programme, the Directorate of Employment, the Family Economic Advancement Programme, the Poverty Eradication Programme, and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, but these initiatives have yielded only limited and uneven results.⁴¹ Despite numerous programmes or empowerment initiatives by the government little lasting impact has been recorded.

Within this context, many churches have developed social arms tasked with identifying and supporting the less privileged in their communities, including the rural poor, widows, and orphans. The Social and Economic Development Commission of Osun Anglican Diocese (SEDECOAD), for example, provides welfare packages across religious lines, while other denominations run comparable schemes aimed at cushioning the effects of hardship. These interventions typically combine relief with empowerment by establishing skillacquisition centres and other peopleoriented programmes designed to enhance livelihoods and promote selfreliance.

Christian social teaching presents the church as an agent of transformation, and many Nigerian churches understand their engagement in poverty alleviation as a sacred responsibility under God's direction.⁴² It is by encouraging hard work, providing training opportunities, and extending material assistance, that they seek not only to meet immediate needs but also to challenge structures that perpetuate deprivation. In this way, the church's response to poverty in Nigeria forms part of a broader global Christian effort to stand with the poor and to work toward more just social and economic arrangements.⁴³

Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts

Drug abuse among Nigerian youths has become a serious social and public health concern, with many young people depending on one substance or another for their daily functioning and, in some cases, using these drugs illegally and intentionally in ways that are harmful to the body.⁴⁴ Drug abuse and addiction carry devastating consequences for users and those around them, including heightened risks of mental health disorders, violence, bloodborne infections, insanity, and even death.⁴⁵ Although substance use is one important factor, mental illness among youths arises from multiple interacting causes, so it cannot be assumed that most affected young people are drug users.⁴⁶ In response, churches in Nigeria have taken an active role in discouraging drug abuse through preaching, counselling, and the creation of employment and empowerment opportunities, recognizing that "an idle mind is the devil's workshop" and that engaging youths in meaningful work reduces their vulnerability to substance use.

Christ Against Drug Abuse Ministry (CADAM), an outreach of the Redeemed Christian Church of God established in 1991, exemplifies this faithbased response to addiction, having provided residential rehabilitation and support to roughly two thousand beneficiaries over the years.⁴⁷ Studies and national surveys indicate that drug use in Nigeria is most common among persons aged 25 to 39, with one in every four drug users being a woman.⁴⁸ In line with these findings, CADAM's DirectorGeneral, Dr Dokun Adedeji, notes that women constitute about 25 per cent of drug abusers in Nigeria and therefore require specially tailored interventions alongside those designed for men.⁴⁹ These data have reinforced calls within church circles for more gendersensitive programmes and better access to treatment for women, who are often underrepresented in

rehabilitation centres.⁵⁰

Beyond CADAM, many churches in Nigeria engage in ongoing education to curb drug abuse, organize awareness campaigns, and operate or support rehabilitation centres that offer treatment, counselling, and skills acquisition programmes for recovering addicts.⁵¹ At the end of rehabilitation, beneficiaries are frequently empowered with vocational skills and other forms of support to aid reintegration and reduce the likelihood of relapse, reflecting a shift from merely receiving from congregants to giving back to both members and the wider community.⁵² In this way, church-based initiatives in drug rehabilitation form part of a broader Christian commitment to social transformation, aimed at restoring broken lives and contributing to healthier, safer communities.⁵³ Having considered the church's practical engagement in rehabilitating drug addicts and restoring vulnerable youths to wholeness, it is pertinent to turn to the broader question of social justice, where these compassionate interventions intersect with the church's prophetic responsibility to challenge structural injustice in Nigerian society.

Social Justice

Social justice, within Christian thought, is inseparable from the recognition of God and the dignity bestowed upon humanity as bearers of the divine image. Social Christian theories of human development maintain that authentic progress occurs when spiritual awareness informs moral responsibility toward others. Human development is therefore not merely material advancement but the cultivation of justice, compassion, and communal wellbeing grounded in divine purpose. From this perspective, social justice implies equitable access to wealth, health, opportunities, privileges, and social participation, ensuring that each person can fulfil their God-given potential.⁵⁴

Within the Nigerian context, the church has remained a significant moral voice advocating fairness and equal rights across economic, political, and social spheres. Guided by theological convictions about human worth and accountability before God, ecclesiastical leadership promotes an impartial distribution of societal benefits and resists discrimination based on religion, political affiliation, gender, or class. As Ezeanya warns, attempts at nationbuilding that exclude spiritual foundations risk instability, for moral structures detached from transcendence lack enduring support.⁵⁵ Such insights align with Christian developmental thought, which views social equity and ethical governance as prerequisites for holistic human flourishing.

The activities of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) demonstrate an institutional expression of these principles. The organization has sustained its founding vision of fostering unity, peace, and justice across religious and ethnic divides, and public acknowledgement of this role including Professor Yemi Osinbajo's description of CAN as a "veritable force for peace, unity and social justice" underscoring the perception of the church as a stabilizing moral force in national life.⁵⁶ Christian teaching further frames ethical action—service to the poor, support for the vulnerable, and reconciliation—as an essential dimension of discipleship. Consequently, churches frequently provide welfare assistance, community support, and peacebuilding initiatives, reinforcing their societal influence and illustrating how Christian human development theory situates social justice not as optional charity but as a theological obligation central to spiritual and societal growth.

Peace Making

The Church has historically made significant contributions to peacebuilding at both global and local levels. In Nigeria, ecclesiastical leaders have frequently spoken and acted in support of peaceful coexistence, recognizing that violent conflict constitutes a major impediment to societal development. Conflict produces suffering, loss of life,

destruction of livelihoods, displacement, and pervasive insecurity. Within Christian theology, peace is both an ethical command and a developmental necessity grounded in divine instruction. Scripture repeatedly calls believers to cultivate harmony: “Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it”;⁵⁷ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God”;⁵⁸ and “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”⁵⁹ These teachings reinforce a Christian theory of human development that links spiritual maturity and social wellbeing, insisting that reconciliation and justice are indispensable for holistic human flourishing.

Peace, therefore, extends beyond the mere absence of conflict to include sincere reconciliation, healthy intergroup relations, economic wellbeing, equality, and political structures that serve the common good. This broader understanding is reflected in contemporary ecclesiastical initiatives. For instance, Rev. Caleb Ahima of the Reformed Churches in Nigeria has emphasized communal responsibility in peacebuilding, arguing that lasting harmony must be locally owned and transmitted across generations.⁶⁰ His remarks at a peace, justice, and reconciliation conference in Makurdi—attended by religious leaders, traditional authorities, and government officials following violent unrest—illustrate the Church’s active engagement in mediation and reconciliation. Recurring tensions in Nigeria, including disputes over natural resources, grazing rights, farmland, and other environmental stressors, have generated cycles of violence, displacement, and economic disruption, thereby deterred investment and hindered development. While conflict may be inevitable in human interaction, its escalation into crisis often reflects a breakdown of dialogue and lawful order, spaces where church leadership frequently intervenes by promoting negotiation, discouraging violence, and advocating moral responsibility rooted in Christian ethical teaching.

The Church’s peacemaking role is further expressed through preaching, mediation, and the exercise of social influence. CAN and Christian leaders encourage respect for constituted authority, tolerance, and nonviolence, thereby shaping attitudes and behaviours conducive to coexistence. Their moral authority and the trust they enjoy within communities often position them as mediators who can address disputes before they escalate. By advocating justice and speaking against oppression, CAN and church leaders function as agents of social transformation. Their engagement—through teaching, advocacy, and pastoral action—demonstrates that peacebuilding is not peripheral to Christian practice but integral to it. Consequently, the contributions of church leadership to fostering reconciliation, stability, and communal harmony remain indispensable to Nigeria’s social and economic development.

Some argued that Christian preachers should remain confined to the pulpit, implying that they ought not to speak publicly against injustice. This study contended, however, that church leaders and Christians are called to function as the conscience of the nation, challenging society whenever it deviates from moral and ethical standards. This prophetic responsibility is observable globally and within the historical experience of Nigeria, where church leaders have repeatedly condemned the shedding of innocent blood and criticized the failure of authorities to hold perpetrators accountable. Episodes of violent attacks—including killings, maiming, and sexual violence attributed to armed groups—have often gone unpunished, reinforcing the need for a moral voice that confronts impunity and advocates justice.

For CAN leadership to serve credibly in this role, excesses must be avoided, yet intimidation by political power must also be resisted. Their vocation includes demanding justice, exposing wrongdoing through preaching and teaching, and calling both public

institutions and individuals to righteousness. Historical and biblical precedents support this engagement. In the United States, many leaders of the civil rights struggle emerged from church communities, while scriptural narratives depict figures such as John the Baptist confronting wrongdoing despite persecution. Similarly, Jesus Christ challenged hypocrisy and injustice among religious and political authorities, modelling discipleship that refuses silence in the face of oppression.

This tradition persists in contemporary Nigeria, where church leaders such as Matthew Hassan Kukah regularly employed public platforms to denounce violence, corruption, and governance failures, emphasizing the state's responsibility to protect citizens. The Church functions as a moral barometer for society. By speaking truth to power, confronting structural injustice, and defending vulnerable populations. As Howard Bess observes, "from the beginning the Christian movement was a protest movement that demanded hospitality for all... Jesus was the conscience of his own day. Today's believers do not dare be anything less."⁶¹ This perspective positions prophetic witness not as political intrusion but as a faithful expression of ecclesial identity and mission.

Conclusion

This study has sought to document and situate within proper analytical perspective the role of the churches—particularly the Christian Association of Nigeria—in Nigerian politics and evaluated her social responsibility between 1999 and 2015. The evidence demonstrated that Christian leaders and communities have functioned as active social actors whose engagements transcended purely liturgical concerns. Their participation in public discourse, moral advocacy, and community development reflects a politically conscious ecclesial presence grounded in scriptural ethics and civic obligation. Rather than existing at the margins of national life, the church has operated as a sacred institution of enduring societal significance, shaping values, influencing public morality, and contributing to socioeconomic empowerment within its congregations and host communities.

Interpreted through the Christian theory of human development, these contributions assume deeper meaning. This framework holds that human flourishing is holistic, integrating spiritual formation, moral responsibility, and material wellbeing under divine purpose. Accordingly, the church's promotion of biblical virtues, ethical discipline, and communal responsibility represents not only religious instruction but a developmental intervention aimed at nurturing persons capable of contributing constructively to society. The prominence of ecclesiastical initiatives in education and health services further illustrates this paradigm. Through schools, hospitals, welfare programmes, skillsacquisition schemes, and relief interventions during crises, churches have advanced conditions necessary for the realization of human dignity and capacitybuilding across communities in Nigeria, embodying the conviction that spiritual growth must be accompanied by social transformation and compassionate service.

Ultimately, the study affirmed that the church's engagement in the political and social spheres embodies the developmental vision embedded in Christian anthropology—that those individuals transformed by faith become agents of justice, peace, and communal uplift. When leaders and citizens are guided by love of neighbour and commitment to the common good, the moral and structural renewal sought within Nigerian society becomes genuinely attainable. The Christian theory of human development thus reinforces the conclusion that national progress is inseparable from ethical leadership, spiritual consciousness, and collective responsibility. In this regard, the church stands not merely

as a witness to societal change but as an indispensable partner in the pursuit of political stability, social equity, and sustainable human development.

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