

# KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS



KENYA CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT

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Our Ref:

Your Ref: **MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY**

*“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no more. And neither mourning, nor crying out, nor grief shall be anymore. For the first things have passed away,” (Revelations 21:4).*

The Catholic Church in Kenya joins other Kenyans and the international community in mourning the 148 young students, staff members and security personnel who lost their lives through massacre at Garrisa University College. We condole with the parents and relatives who lost their loved ones and assure them of our continued prayers, especially during this painful period. For those still in hospital, we pray for their quick recovery and peace of mind. For those who survived with minor or no injuries, we wish them speedy recovery from the psycho-social trauma and resumption of their studies.

We have been touched by the generous support of Kenyans to the victims of the terror attack and their families and extend our gratitude and prayers to all who have touched the lives of these people in one way or the other. We call on Kenyans and all people of good will to continue lending their support even as the affected students and their families go back to their homes. The Catholic Church commits to activate the parish networks for our Christian faithful to lend their support and prayers.

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INCORPORATING: THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE

1.) Commission for Doctrine, 2.) Commission for Liturgy, 3.) Commission for Missions, 4.) Commission for Pastoral and Lay Apostolate, 5.) Commission for Ecumenism, 6.) Seminary Episcopal Commission, 7.) Commission for Clergy and Religious, 8.) Commission for Inter-Religious Dialogue, 9.) Commission for Education and Religious Education, 10.) Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, 11.) Caritas Kenya, 12.) Catholic Health Commission of Kenya, 13.) Commission for Social Communications, 14.) Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Seafarers, 15.) Commission for Finance 16.) Ad- Hoc Commission for AIDS Relief, 17.) Canon Law National Office, 18.) Family Life National Office, 19) Apostolate to the Nomads (A.N.A)

***“You shall be my Witnesses”, (Acts 1:8) for the Sanctification and Salvation of all People.***

At the same time, we call on our priests, Church institutions and other Christian Churches to journey with the victims and families of the terror attacks by providing them with psycho-social support at the Parish community levels.

We strongly condemn the heinous terror attack visited on innocent promising young Kenyans and all those others going about their duties at the University College.

We hope the Government will get to the bottom of this problem of terrorism and radicalization with a view to proactively stemming such incidences from recurring. In the meantime, we urge the Government to beef up security especially in all educational institutions in the Country and also address the now obvious breakdown in the security intelligence system.

It is saddening that many Kenyan youths are being radicalized to commit acts of terrorism against their fellow citizens. We all need to join efforts and embrace a spirit of nationalism and patriotism among all of us. It is unfortunate that some terrorists are living among us yet we are not reporting them to the relevant authorities. We need to respect the dignity of all human persons.

While the Government is expected to provide security to all the people in all parts of the Country, we observe that all of us have a responsibility to support the Government by being vigilant and providing information on any suspicious persons and items within our immediate environment. In addition, parents, guardians and teachers need to be more observant of the behaviour of their

children for purposes of identifying any unusual, negative, suspicious or violent tendencies.

Such behaviour should be dealt with immediately or support sought from relevant institutions or authorities. Time has come for Kenyans to be more patriotic. Let us all be our brothers' and sisters' keepers.

The Ministry of Education, the Teachers Service Commission, Boards of Management and University Councils should carefully and continuously vet all employees to ensure that they are not used to radicalize students and recruit them to join subversive groups.

Religious leaders should desist from teaching and preaching hatred for people who do not subscribe to their religion and doctrines, and recognize that everybody believes in a Supreme Being. Everybody has an inalienable right to life and fundamental freedoms, especially to religious beliefs, and as such they should not be perceived as non-believers.

In the wake of regular attacks in the Country, we call on the Government and security agencies to formulate an emergency response strategy for the Country. Time has come for us to ask ourselves certain questions: as institutions, how prepared are we to respond to terror attacks? How have we prepared our students and by extension, all Kenyans, to respond under attack? How can we minimise casualties during emergencies? We call on the Government to move with speed and, through the National Youth

Service, provide mandatory emergency response training at all our learning institutions and to all other vulnerable groups.

Fellow Kenyans, despite all the difficulties we are facing as a Country, we urge you to remain united. Let us continue to pray for our Country so that security, peace and unity may prevail.

God bless you and God bless Kenya.

Signed: 

**His Eminence John Cardinal Njue,  
Chairman  
Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops**

Date: 8th April, 2015